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Members of the Makela Jewish Acapalla Group singing traditional Hanukkah songs.



Members of the St. Augustine Gospel Choir singing a series of traditional Christmas hymns and contemporary gospel music.

Embassy celebrates Hanukkah and X-mas

■ INDIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH IS LIKELY TO CROSS 9 PC IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, SAYS FINANCE MINISTER

■ EXPORTS FROM INDIA INCREASE BY 26.8 PERCENT TO TOUCH \$18.9 BILLION IN NOVEMBER 2010

■ MOBILE PHONE MARKET GROSSES 706.69 MN WITH THE ADDITION OF 18.98 MN SUBSCRIBERS IN OCTOBER 2010

AMBASSADOR ADDRESSES ROUNDTABLE ON MARITIME POWERS

Ambassador Meera Shankar delivered the inaugural address at the annual roundtable organized on December 13, 2010 by the Center for Naval Analyses, U.S.A. and the National Maritime Foundation of India. This was the second such roundtable.

The first roundtable was organized in New Delhi earlier this year.

The theme of this roundtable was “Major Powers and the Indian Ocean Region (IO): Interests, Implications and Policy Responses”.

In her address, the Ambassador said, “India’s destiny has always been intricately linked to the Indian Ocean. Maritime trade across the Indian Ocean was a constant feature in Indian history.”

She highlighted that maritime trade routes in the Indian Ocean were vital for “global trade and global energy security”. One fifth of the world’s energy supplies traveled across the Indian Ocean and major trade routes passed through it. The Ambassador also underscored that the Indian Ocean would continue to be “crucial for India’s growth”.

At present most of India’s energy supplies and more than 70 percent of its external trade by value was carried through these sea lanes.

These figures were only likely to increase as India continued on its high economic growth trajectory.

Ambassador Shankar observed that the Indian Ocean region represented a diverse set of countries — from the fastest-growing economies of the world to others who faced severe challenges.

Most of the security challenges that the global community was facing today, be it terrorism fueled by extremist ideologies, piracy or transnational crimes, could be found in this region.

The region was also at the center of the shifts in the global balance of



The Ambassador referred to the Joint Statement issued during the recent visit of President Obama to India wherein the two countries had agreed that the stability of and access to the global commons including in the maritime domain was vital for their security and economic prosperity; and had committed to work together, and with others in the region towards this

power. It was in this overall context that the issue of maritime security assumed importance. It was also clear that the issue of maritime security could not be addressed by any one country alone.

The Ambassador emphasized that what was required was development of an “architecture of maritime security based on the principles of shared security and shared prosperity”.

She said that since it was in the interest of all countries to have stability of the Sea Lanes of Communication in the Indian Ocean Region, we could look at “initiating a discussion with all stake holders to develop a suitable framework for enhancing maritime security in the region and beyond”. India believed that the “evolution of a stable, open, inclusive and balanced security and cooperation architecture based on broad consensus of all the powers who have a presence in the region and can contribute to enhancing security” would be in everyone’s interest and India and the U.S. as two leading maritime powers in the region could work together for this objective.

The Ambassador referred to the Joint Statement issued during the recent visit of President Obama to India wherein the two countries had agreed that the stability of and access to the global commons including in the maritime domain was vital for their security and economic prosperity; and had committed to work together, and with others in the region towards this.

While noting the suggestions in some quarters that the shifts underway might lead to greater competition in the region, the Ambassador stressed that this did not imply that a paradigm of security based on competition was inevitable.

Instead she underscored that the challenge was to harness these shifts in a positive way for development of a more cooperative framework. ■

Ambassador condoles the demise of Richard Holbrooke and Stephen J Solarz

Ambassador Meera Shankar expressed her deep condolence at the passing away of former Congressman Stephen J Solarz. In her condolence statement, the Ambassador said, “His love for India was passionate and showed in his nickname — “the Congressman from Bombay”— and in his fondness for “Nehru jackets”.

Following is the statement issued on December 2:

“I am deeply grieved at the passing away of former Congressman Stephen J Solarz, who died on November 29, 2010, after a long battle with cancer.

While Congressman Solarz was widely acclaimed as a respected foreign policy leader and an energetic supporter of democracy and human rights all over the world, he had many ardent admirers in India, who greatly valued his tireless espousal of closer Indo-US relations. He was ahead of the curve in supporting causes dear to India, especially in the years before Indo-US relations reached the take-off stage in the late 1990s. He was driven by a strong conviction that India and the US were natural allies, and was one of the early architects of a policy of enhanced engagement between the two largest democracies in the world.

His love for India was passionate and showed in his nickname — “the Congressman from Bombay”— and in his fondness for “Nehru jackets”.

It is with a great sense of loss that we bid good-bye to a true friend of India. As a mark of our respect for Mr. Solarz, and the deep affection in which he is held in India, I participated in the memorial service held in his honor at Temple Rodef Shalom this morning. Our hearts go out to his family and friends, who have indelible memories of their long association with him. On behalf of the government and people of India, and on my own behalf, I convey our sincere condolences to them.”

The Ambassador also signed the



Richard Holbrooke (April 24, 1941 – December 13, 2010)



Stephen J Solarz (September 12, 1940 – November 29, 2010)

Condolence Book for Ambassador Richard Holbrooke at the State Department on December 16. The U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan died on December 13 2010.

She offered condolences over the death of Richard Holbrooke, describing him as a “giant of diplomacy” in the cause of world peace.

“I am deeply saddened by the passing away of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke,” she wrote, signing the condolence book at the State Department.

Shankar said she had been in regular touch with Holbrooke over the past two years and had come to respect his intellect and remarkable determination and energy.

“I admired his commitment to the challenging task he had been assigned. I will miss him as a valuable colleague and interlocutor.

“Our prayers are with his family at this time of grief. I convey my deepest condolences on behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf,” she wrote in her condolence message.

Richard C. Holbrooke, America’s

high profile diplomatic trouble-shooter and the Obama administration’s point man in the war-torn Af-Pak region, died after surgery to repair a tear in his aorta. He was 69. Holbrooke’s five-decade-long career spanned the Vietnam War era to the war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, coinciding with presidencies of John F. Kennedy to Barack Obama.

Here is the Ambassador’s statement:

“I am deeply saddened by the passing away of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. He was a giant of diplomacy and leaves behind an extraordinary legacy in the service of his nation and in the cause of world peace. We had been in regular touch over the past two years and I had come to respect his intellect and remarkable determination and energy.

“I admired his commitment to the challenging task he had been assigned. I will miss him as a valuable colleague and interlocutor. Our prayers are with his family at this time of grief. I convey my deepest condolences on behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf.”

EMBASSY CELEBRATES HANUKKAH



Ambassador Meera Shankar lighting the Menorah, the traditional oil lamp, to begin the function.

A Hanukkah celebration was held at the Embassy Residence on December 7. Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT) addressed the audience of over 400 guests on the occasion and also spoke on contemporary India-US relations. Michael Oren, the Ambassador of Israel, Jason Issacson, Director, Office of Government of International Affairs, American Jewish Committee and Dan Mariaschin, Executive Vice President, B'nai Brith International, also addressed the guests.



Singing of the Hanukkah invocation song in Indian-Jewish tradition.



Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT) wished the guests and spoke on the growing relations between India and the United States.



A section of the audience.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE

The annual Christmas celebration was hosted at the Embassy Residence on December 21. At the function, Ambassador Meera Shankar

conveyed her best wishes to the community and also spoke about the rich cultural and religious diversity of India. Dr. Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, and Mr. Kalpen

Modi, Associate Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement were among the honoured guests who attended the function.



Ambassador Meera Shankar welcoming guests during the celebrations.



Dr. Rajiv Shah, USAID Administrator, addressing the guests.



Mr. Kalpen Modi, Associate Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement, shares his thoughts on the occasion.



Ambassador Meera Shankar with the St. Augustine Gospel Choir.



Ambassador Meera Shankar with members of the Mizo Society of America. The members sang Christmas hymns at the function.



Members of the Southern Asian Seventh Day Adventist Carolers singing Christmas classic in English and other Indian languages, including Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam.

EMBASSY RECEPTION



Ambassador Meera Shankar with representatives of the U.S. Federal Government at a reception hosted at the Embassy on December 8.



Ms. Anwsha Banerjee, a Georgetown University sophomore, sings contemporary Indian songs at the gathering.



Members of GU Jawani, Georgetown University's South Asian dance team, perform a variety of Indian dances for the audience.

ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BRIEFING



Deputy Chief of Mission Arun K. Singh briefing a group of students from the Anne Arundel Community College, Maryland, at the Embassy on December 8, on India and India-U.S. relations.



A section of the audience.

ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY EVENT



Ambassador Meera Shankar addressing guests at an event to commemorate the Armed Forces Flag Day at the Embassy on December 10.



Guests in attendance.

AMBASSADOR DELIVERS KEYNOTE ADDRESSES IN MISSISSIPPI AND GREATER DALLAS



During her visit to Jackson, Mississippi, on December 3-4, 2010, Ambassador Meera Shankar delivered a Keynote Address on India-U.S. relations at the Janos Radvanyi Executive Lecture Forum. Here the Ambassador and Mr. Shankar are seen in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue at the Millsaps College, along with Prof. Radvanyi (far right), Consul-General Sanjiv Arora (far left), and Ms. Monica Harrigill & Mr. Sunny Sethi, alumni of Millsaps College.



Ambassador Meera Shankar gave a Keynote Address at the Annual Awards Function of the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (GDIACC) on December 16, 2010. The Ambassador is seen presenting an award to Dr. Narinder Monga. Others in the photo are (left to right): Dallas City Councilman Ron Natinsky, Consul-General Sanjiv Arora and GDIACC Founding President A.K. Mago.

5th Annual Gala of Alabama India Business Partnerships



Consul-General Sanjiv Arora (4th from right) and Counsellor (Economic) B.S. Bhalla (2nd from left) addressed the 5th Annual Gala of Alabama India Business Partnerships on December 13 at Birmingham, AL. The others (L to R) are: Mr. Amrik Walia, Past President, AIBP; Mr. Anil Agrawal, Founding President, AIBP; Col. R.P.S. Bhalla, community leader from Houston; Dr. Navin Nanda, an awardee; Prof. Sanjay Singh, President, AIBP and Dr. Ashok Singhal, Past President, AIBP.

10th Annual Gala of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce



Consul-General Sanjiv Arora (5th from right) and renowned chef & restaurateur Mr. Jehangir Mehta (6th from left) were the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker, respectively, at the 10th Annual Gala of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce held in Houston on December 28. In the photo, they are seen with some of the organizers and participants. The Consul-General highlighted the versatility and accomplishments of India's Parsi community at home and abroad.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS AT INDIAN CONSULATE, NEW YORK

The Consulate General of India, New York, hosted a reception on the occasion of Christmas at the Consulate on December 20, 2010. Around 150 people, including members of the Christian community from the Tri-State Area, media personalities and members of eclectic associations, participated in the celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, Consul-General of India, reflected on the secular traditions of India and said that the Indian Consulate has paid special attention to celebrations of various religious festivals. He added that the Consulate's inclusive approach for all Indians and their well-wishers was reciprocated by various religious and cultural groups in celebrations like Dussehra, Diwali, Baisakhi, Eid, etc., at the Consulate.

Archbishop Frances A. Chullikatt, Permanent Observer of Vatican City at the United Nations, spoke about the relevance of Christmas, and India's inclusive spirit that gave equal importance to all religions.

Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, Consul-General of India, speaking on the occasion of Christmas at the Indian Consulate in New York on December 20, 2010



Archbishop Frances A. Chullikatt, Permanent Observer of Vatican City at the United Nations, addressing the gathering on December 20, 2010

CG Mukta Tomar addresses US-India Business Opportunities Reception



Left: Mrs. Mukta D. Tomar, Consul-General, with Governor-elect of Wisconsin, Mr. Scott Walker and others.

Top: Consul General Tomar addressing the US-India Business Opportunities Reception.

Mrs. Mukta D. Tomar, Consul-General in Chicago, addressed the US-India Business Opportunities Reception held on December 7, 2010 at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Governor-elect Mr. Scott Walker and five Representatives of the State of Wisconsin, Mr. Brett Davis, Mr. Robin Vos, Mr. Mike Huesch, Mr. Frank Lasee and Mr. Jeff Stone

also attended the event. The Consul-General in her address spoke about the recent historic visit of President Barack Obama to India and of the various agreements signed between the Governments of India and the USA.

She also highlighted the business opportunities that India offers to U.S. companies and invited Wisconsin-based companies to participate in infrastructure sector development

projects in India, and share the experience and high technology that Wisconsin has developed in the agricultural and dairy sectors.

Governor-elect Walker in his remarks recalled the strong links of Wisconsin with India and shared his views on improving the excellent relations that the U.S. enjoys with India.

Mr. Walker assumes office in January 2011.

CG visits Santa Fe for 400th Anniversary Project

Consul-General Susmita G. Thomas visited Santa Fe, New Mexico, on November 18, 2010 to 'gift' mini-replicas of the Taj Mahal and the Golden Temple for inclusion in the 400th Anniversary Time Capsule. The function was held at the New Mexico History Museum.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Maurice Bonal, Chairman of the Santa Fe 400th Anniversary Committee, said that the State of New Mexico had formed the 'Santa Fe 400th Anniversary Committee' to celebrate 400 years of its existence.



He thanked Consul-General Thomas for visiting the city and for the gifts

for inclusion in the Time Capsule, which would be hermetically sealed and opened after 50-100 years. Apart from the gifts from India, the time capsule will also include various artefacts from Mexico, the U.S. and Spain. Bhai Sahib Satpal Singh Khalsa and Pawan Singh Dhindsa, two prominent community leaders, donated the gifts. State Senator Phil Grigo, Mr. Stuart Ashman, Governor' Cabinet Secretary of Department of Cultural Affairs, and Mr. Daya Singh Khalsa, among others were also present.

Economy could grow more than 9 pc this fiscal: FM

India's economic growth is likely to cross 9 percent in the current fiscal on the back of better than estimated 8.9 percent expansion in the first two quarters, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a mid-term analysis of the economy for fiscal 2010-11.

"Growth rate for the fiscal 2010-11 will be 8.75 percent plus minus 0.35 percent. In the first two quarters we have grown 8.9 percent. That is quite encouraging," Mukherjee told reporters after tabling the mid-year analysis of the economy in both houses of parliament on December 7.



India's gross domestic product (GDP) grew 8.8 percent and 8.9 percent in the first and second quarter respectively beating the budgetary estimate of 8.5 percent. "This growth is also broadly based, with recovery in

all three sectors, agriculture, industry and services, and in private consumption and investment. Abundant late rainfall is boosting agriculture," the mid-year analysis said. "All indicators, therefore, portend well for output growth crossing 9 percent for the entire fiscal year 2010-11, although some risks remain in the global economy which widens the band of expected growth outcomes (plus or minus 0.35 percent around a revised projection of 8.75 percent; up from a baseline level of 8.5 percent plus-minus 0.25 percent projected in the Economic Survey 2009-10," it said.

CMIE sees 9.2 pc growth this fiscal

India's real GDP growth in fiscal 2010-11 is likely to be at 9.2 percent, a leading think tank said.

"We expect a 9.2 per cent growth in real GDP in fiscal 2010-11," the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)

said in its latest review of the Indian economy in Mumbai.

According to the think tank, all the three broad sectors of the economy — industrial, services and agricultural and allied sectors — are expected to fare well.

"The industrial sector (including construction) is projected to grow by 9.4 percent in fiscal 2010-11, better than the 9.2 percent growth in 2009-10," the CMIE said.



On the services sector, it said that the sector is projected to expand by 10 per cent this fiscal as compared to 8.6 percent in the fiscal year (FY) 10. "The trade and transport segment will lead this growth," CMIE said. With an impressive growth in

the commodities sector, trade activities are projected to grow by a robust 10.5 percent in 2010-11, as against a 7.3 percent rise estimated in 2009-10 and a 6.3 per cent growth achieved in 2008-09, it said.

The agricultural and allied sector is projected to grow by 5.1 percent and foodgrain production is projected to rise by 5.2 percent, as compared to an estimated 7 percent decline in FY 10, the think tank said.

Factory output up 10.8 pc

led by strong growth in the automobile, manufacturing and power sectors, India's factory output expansion sped to 10.8 percent in October, from just 4.4 percent in the previous month, raising hopes of double-digit growth this fiscal.



"Figures suggest the industrial growth for the past seven months averaged at 10.3 percent. We hope double-digit momentum in industrial growth will be sustained," Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said.

"The growth is coming from all sectors. We will be able to achieve balance and growth in the coming financial year," Mukherjee told reporters while reacting to the growth figures released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO).

The fresh data on the index of industrial production revealed that the output of the three major sectors — mining, manufacturing and electricity — expanded by 6.5 percent, 11.3 percent and 8.8 percent, respectively.

Fitch upgrades economic growth forecast to 8.7 percent this fiscal

Buoyed by 8.9 percent growth in the first half, global consultancy Fitch revised upwards its growth forecast for India to 8.7 percent this fiscal, from its earlier estimate of 8.5 percent.

This is almost similar to the growth projection of 8.75 percent, plus or minus 0.35 per cent made by the government in its mid-year Economic Review released in December.

For 2011-12 and 2012-13, however, Fitch said that economic growth is likely to fall further to 8.5 and 8 percent, respectively.

"Fitch has revised up its forecast for India's GDP growth to 8.7 percent for financial year ending March 2011 from 8.5 percent as economic activity has proved more buoyant than previously expected," it said.

The consultancy had earlier forecast an

annual growth of 8.5 percent for the current fiscal. "GDP rose 8.9 percent year-on-year in Q3, identical to the Q2, underlining the strength of the economy," Fitch further added.

Fitch said that economic activity in the country remains broad based, with public and private consumption, fixed investment and exports registering high single-digit growth.

It, however, cautioned against inflation.

INDIAN OIL CORP TOPS FORTUNE INDIA 500 LIST

Four state-run enterprises led by Indian Oil Corporation figure among the top-five companies in terms of revenue in Fortune magazine's first India list of 500 largest corporations released on December 9.

Reliance Industries has been ranked second, followed by the State Bank of India, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum — all of which along with Oil and Natural Gas Corp, Tata Steel and Tata Motors also figure in the Fortune 500 list of global corporations.

"The total revenue of the Fortune India 500 companies stands at nearly \$850 billion. That's more than 60 percent of India's total gross domestic product (GDP)," the

Top Ten Performers

- Indian Oil Corporation
- Reliance Industries
- State Bank of India
- Bharat Petroleum
- Hindustan Petroleum
- Oil and Natural Gas Corp
- Tata Steel
- Tata Motors
- Hindalco Industries
- ICICI Bank

American financial magazine said. It also reveals that the largest company on the list is 266 times the size of the smallest — much the same as in China, where the top company is 382 times the size of the 500th.

The disparity in the US list is lower: the largest being 100 times bigger.

The rankings are based on the total revenues of the organizations. Other individual data points include year-on-year change in revenues, net operating income, profit, assets, net worth, dividend and total salaries. The

issue also ranks top players in 42 sectors, including airlines, automobiles, banking, cement, consumer durables, pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, infrastructure, media, oil and gas, power, real estate, retail and telecommunications.

Exports may touch \$500 billion by 2014-15: Trade forum

The Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) on January 10 said that Indian exports, helped by better infrastructure and emerging markets like Africa and Latin America, could reach \$500 billion by 2014-15.

"The government should identify the requirement of investment to meet the milestone. Investment would be required in roads, ports, airports, power and warehousing segments," said Ramu S. Deora, President, FIEO.

According to him, reaching the \$500 billion target would require infrastructure at par with major exporting countries like China, South Korea and Japan. "We need to have better roads, like we have in China and other major exporting countries, once the infrastructure is in place, this would help in having better linkages and reducing bottlenecks to exports," Deora said.

With world trade growing at its highest rate of 13.5 percent in the last 50 years in 2010, Deora said he was hopeful that the country would be able to export more by diversifying the destinations of exports.

"The major chunk of the \$500 billion exports would come from the emerging markets of southeast Asia, Africa, Latin American countries and Commonwealth of Independent States," Deora said.



India's urban population will double in 25 years: Mukherjee

India's urban population will more than double to over 600 million by 2035 as increasing number of people migrate to cities because of better infrastructure and employment opportunities, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said on December 17.

"With sustained high economic growth, the pace of urbanization is set to accelerate. The next 25 years should see the urban population living in Indian towns and cities doubling," Mukherjee said at the 10th National Convention of Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India.

Currently, nearly 300 million people live in urban areas in India, which is almost equal to the population of the United States and larger than the population of many countries put together.

However, the percentage of population living in urban areas is quite low in India. Only 28 percent Indian people live in cities and suburbs against the worldwide average of over 50 percent.

The finance minister said the trend in India was set to change on the back of high economic growth.

"We already have 393 urban agglomerations and towns with more than one lakh population and about 400 smaller towns with a population of more than 50,000," Mukherjee said at NATCON 2010 conference in New Delhi on December 17.

He said rising urbanization gives birth to many challenges and at the same time offers opportunities for development.

Addressing the gathering of nearly 600 real estate developers and heads of financial institutions, Mukherjee said providing housing facilities to people in urban areas was becoming a big challenge.



INFOSYS RANKED TOP FOR RETAIL IT SERVICES

India's IT bellwether Infosys Technologies Ltd has been ranked number one among retail IT services providers worldwide for 2010 in a global evaluation, the company said on December 20.

The Bangalore-based global software major emerged top in the evaluation by the US-based Retail Info Systems News (RIS) IT Services LeaderBoard when placed in a head-to-head ranking among 32 global service providers, the company said in a statement.

"Our overall ranking in the master LeaderBoard chart is the result of evaluations primarily in seven categories — domain expertise, depth of offerings, integration capabilities, on time and on budget, meeting expectations, strategy and innovation," Infosys' vice-president (retail) Sandeep Dadlani said.



The \$5-billion company provides innovation, transformation and operations related solutions and services to top retailers worldwide in digital commerce, mobility, in-store effectiveness, competitive intelligence, analytics, merchandising and supply chain.

"The recognition for our commitment to excellence is noteworthy. Our early investments in building true industry expertise and solutions have paid off. This accolade reinforces our position as partner of choice for leading retailers worldwide," he said.

Reckitt Benckiser to acquire Paras

British consumer goods giant Reckitt Benckiser (RB) on December 13 said it would acquire Indian pharmaceuticals firm Paras Pharma for \$728 million, joining other global companies who have acquired firms to advance their footprint in India.

Ahmedabad-based Paras Pharma is the maker of popular products in the Indian market such as Moov, a topical analgesic pain ointment, D' Cold, a cold and flu remedy, and Krack, a medicated ointment for cracked heels.

Reckitt will buy the 63-percent stake of private equity firm Actis and shares of the promoter Patel family, including Paras founder Girish Patel, the firm said in a statement.

"The acquisition of Paras is another



step forward in Reckitt Benckiser's growth strategy in consumer health-care. It creates a material healthcare business in India, one of the most promising healthcare markets in the world with the addition of a number of strong and leading brands," said Bart Becht, chief executive of Reckitt Benckiser. Reckitt has a strong portfolio led by 19 global power brands including Dettol, Harpic, Durex, Lysol and Vanish.

Girish Patel, founder and chairman of Paras, said: "We have been on a rewarding journey with Actis and the quality of our partnership has proved to be the key reason for the recent success of the company. I believe RB will take our already strong brands to the next level."

Exports in November 2010 touch \$18.9 billion

Exports from India have increased by 26.8 percent to touch \$18.9 billion year-on-year (y-o-y) in November 2010, urging the Government to exude confidence that overall shipments in 2010-11 may touch \$215 billion.

For the April-November 2010 period, exports have grown by 26.7 percent to \$140.3 billion, while imports clocked \$222 billion, expanding 24 percent.

"Exports are doing pretty well. At this rate, four months from now, you are looking at anywhere between \$210 billion



and \$215 billion," according to Rahul Khullar, Commerce Secretary. Earlier, the government had set an export target of \$200 billion for 2010-11, against the shipments of \$179 billion in 2009-10.

Infrastructure spend doubles in 11th Plan

The projected investment in the infrastructure sector is expected to double to \$1,025 billion during the 11th five year plan period (2007-2012).

Further, private companies are estimated to contribute 36 per cent or around \$186 billion to the infrastructure spend by the end of 2007-2012, registering an increase of 25 percent from the 10th Plan spend, according to the Planning Commission.

Several initiatives by the Indian government that created opportunities for the private players to invest into the infrastructure sector include provision of incentives and tax holidays, introduction of sector specific policies, permission of 100 percent foreign direct investment (FDI) in infrastructure sector and public-private partnership (PPP) approach.

The government has also announced various policies in core sectors providing a blueprint for the development of the sector. The country is expected to require investments worth around \$1 trillion in the sector during 2010-2019.

A national manufacturing policy soon: Sharma

A national policy aimed at making India a manufacturing hub will roll out by the end of January, Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma said in New Delhi on December 23.

“We are in dialogue with the Planning Commission and it is my expectation that by the end of January 2011, we should be able to roll out the National Manufacturing Policy,” Sharma said at a press conference in New Delhi.

The Minister said the new policy will seek to attract high-technology from

advanced economies. “Our aim is to make India one of the manufacturing hubs. It will create jobs and boost economic growth,” he said. Sharma said the Commerce Ministry had recently sent out a note for inter-ministerial consultation for formulating the policy.

On liberalization of foreign direct investment (FDI) policy, especially allowing FDI in multi-brand retail, he said: “Policy

formulation is a dynamic process. We are very progressive and forward looking.”

The Minister further said: “We have initiated several measures for simplification and rationalization of FDI regime and have initiated stakeholder consultations for further liberalizing the FDI regime in certain sectors.”

The Minister said India’s foreign trade growth had been robust.



Sony India eyes 54 percent sales growth in FY11

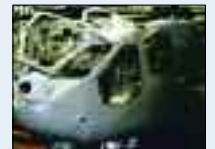
Consumer electronics giant Sony India said it expected to witness a 54-percent jump in sales to \$1.25 billion this fiscal on the back of its enhanced distribution network, aggressive marketing campaign and newly launched products. The company said it clocked sales worth \$575 million in the first half of the financial year 2010-11, an increase of 46 percent compared to the same period last fiscal. “Sony aims to clock a turnover of \$1.25 billion this financial year, which would



be a 54-percent increase over the last fiscal year,” the company said in a statement. Sony India had reported sales worth \$818 million last fiscal. The key strategic pillars of growth include sales channel expansion, service operation enhancement, aggressive brand promotion and introduction of an innovative product line-up. A major chunk of its overall revenue during the first six months of the current fiscal came from its Bravia range of televisions and Vaio computers and laptops.

Indian-designed sensors delivered to Boeing for P-8I aircraft

State-run Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has delivered to Boeing a key sensor to be fitted in P-8I long-range maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare aircraft, being produced by the US aerospace major for the Indian Navy.



The Indian defense PSU delivered the Indian-designed Identification Friend or Foe Interrogator — a battle management system — recently, the aerospace major said in a statement. It will be installed by Boeing during P-8I’s final assembly at its facility in Washington.

“The sensor is a battle management system which enables the P-8I aircraft to distinguish friendly aircraft and forces,” Boeing Company said. Boeing Defense, Space and Security India Vice-President Vivek Lall said: “The delivery of the sensor is a positive step in our industrial participation effort with India, as our partnership with BEL is in line with the Indian government’s objectives.”

India had signed a deal worth \$2.1 billion in January 2009 with Boeing for procuring eight P-8I maritime surveillance aircraft to augment and replace its Russian-origin fleet.

India is the first international customer to acquire eight P-8I planes for its naval fleet from Boeing at a cost of \$2.1 billion.

ISB inks pact with Tufts University

The Indian School of Business (ISB) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, to support the setting up of the Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the upcoming ISB campus in Mohali, Punjab.



lowing areas: faculty-exchange opportunities, curriculum development, research and teaching support in areas such as trade policy, energy and natural resource policy, environment and security policy. The collaboration would also cover joint research projects, and development of educational material relevant to India.

The foundation stone for the ISB campus in Mohali was laid on August 11, 2010.

BMW LAUNCHES SPORTS UTILITY VEHICLE

German luxury car manufacturer BMW's Indian subsidiary on December 23 launched its compact-sports utility vehicle (SUV) X1 with the price range of \$48,517 to \$65,938 (ex-showroom Delhi).

"X1 is a modern vehicle that, for the first time, brings premium BMW characteristics into compact vehicle segment," BMW India's President Andreas Schaaf said, adding the SUV will be preferred by customers looking for leisure activities and lifestyle vehicles. X1's three variants which were launched includes X1 sDrive18i (petrol), X1 sDrive20d (diesel) and



luxury model X1 sDrive20d Exclusive (diesel). The SUV is powered by four-cylinder diesel/petrol engine with turbocharger with variable intake geometry and common-rail fuel injection system and is equipped with six-speed

automatic transmission. According to the company, the car has top-of-the-line fuel efficient engine which gives 15.24 km per liter mileage for diesel variety and 11.24 km per liter mileage for the petrol model.

Schaaf said that the company had registered 1,000 orders for the car. "We have 1,000 orders for the X1 and we are sold out for the first quarter of the next year," Schaaf said, adding that the company has registered a growth of 60 percent and the capacity of the car manufacturer's Chennai plant was raised from 5,400 to 8,000 units per annum this month to meet the rising demand.

Honeywell Technology allotted land in SEZ

The Electronics Corporation of Tamil Nadu Ltd (Elcot) on December 24 said it had allotted 4.5 acre land to Honeywell Technology Solutions Lab in the Elcot Madurai-Ilandhaikulam Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for information technology (IT) and IT Enabled Services (ITES) sector.

Elcot has developed the SEZ over 28.91 acres and has invested around \$7 million.

According to Elcot, the Bangalore-based Honeywell Technology Solutions is expected to start construction as soon as the necessary approvals are obtained for the construction of the building.

Honeywell Technology Solutions provides technology, product and business solutions to clients of its US-based \$37 billion Honeywell International.

Honeywell Technology Solutions has around 6,000 employees, including 2,500 aerospace engineers, with centers in Madurai, Hyderabad, Brno in the Czech Republic and Shanghai and Beijing, China.

According to Elcot, the IT/ITES SEZ is expected to attract an investment of around \$88 million and provide direct employment to around 10,000 people.



India has 706 million mobile connections: TRAI

India's mobile phone market added 18.98 million new subscribers to its network in October, taking the total number of connections to 706.69 million, official data has showed.

According to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the wireless phone user base grew 2.76 percent to 706.69 million in October from 687.71 million in the previous month.

With this, the total telephone subscriber base in the country, both wireless and wireline connections combined, touched 742.12 million. The overall tele-density reached 62.51 percent. The growth in India's wireless phone category was led by Bharti Airtel, which added three million users to take its subscriber base to 146 million users.

Vodafone Essar was next with 2.49



million new subscribers, that raised its subscriber base to 118 million, while new telecom player Uninor added 2.48 million connections, taking its subscribers to 13.74 million.

According to the fresh data, the broadband subscriber base grew 2.24 percent from 10.29 million in September to 10.52 million in October 2010.

However, the wireline segment declined further. "Wireline subscriber base declined from 35.57 million in September 2010 to 35.43 million at the end of October 2010," the TRAI statement said.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd, the two state-run operators, hold 83.31 percent of the wireline market share.

IAF gets Super Hercules C-130J Airlifter

Giving a boost to India's air power, U.S. aerospace and defense giant Lockheed Martin has delivered the first of the six state-of-the-art C-130J military transport aircraft to the Indian Air Force. The new fleet was ordered under an approximately \$1 billion U.S. Foreign Military Sale (India's first) in late 2008.

"There are few mottos that impart such passion as that of the Indian Air Force, which is 'Touch the Sky With Glory'," said Lorraine Martin, Lockheed Martin's vice-president for C-130 Programs.

"Today begins a new glorious, enduring partnership with India as the fourth largest air force in the world proudly joins the worldwide C-130 family," she said.

Lockheed Martin C-130J Hercules is the most advanced airlifter ever built.

The C-130J combines the latest in aerospace technology with a proven, rugged airframe design, resulting in an aircraft that gives an operator more capability with greater operational efficiency.

The IAF's new Super Hercules will be the longer fuselage or "stretched" variant of the C-130J, similar to those



being delivered to the U.S. Air Force.

With this, India joins the growing number of nations with C-130J fleets including the US, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom.

The C-130J carries eight 463L pallets, 97 medical litters, 24 CDS bundles, 128 combat troops and 92 paratroops.

Equipped with an Infrared Detection Set (IDS), the aircraft will be able to perform precision low-level flying, air-drops, and landing in blackout conditions.

Self protection systems and other features are included to ensure aircraft survivability in hostile air defense environments. In addition, the aircraft is equipped with air-to-air refueling capability for extended range operations.

Lockheed Martin will integrate this equipment and other capabilities into

the Indian configuration as agreed between the governments.

The aircraft is being provided to India under a package which includes six aircraft, training of aircrew and maintenance technicians, spares, ground support and test equipment, servicing carts, forklifts, loading vehicles, cargo pallets, and a team of technical specialists who will be based in India during a three year initial support period.

Also included in the package is India-unique operational equipment designed to increase special operations capabilities.

In addition, the C-130J Super Hercules will provide the Indian Air Force with modern and effective airlift to support a wide range of national requirements.

The C-130J takes full advantage of the global positioning system (GPS) and other highly reliable, automated navigation and route planning aides.

This allows the cockpit crew to focus on the mission and on flying rather than on managing aircraft systems.

The military transport aircraft was received by the Indian Air Attache Air Commodore J.S. Walia at a ceremony held in Marietta, Georgia.

DRDO plans nano-foundry

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) plans to set up a nano-foundry by investing approximately \$111 million to \$133 million. This project will be implemented in collaboration with IITs and other academic institutions of India.

The breakthroughs in various labs under the DRDO are not only enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces, but also contributing to businesses and the public outside the purview of the defence sector.



Nanotechnology has several applications in areas such as agriculture and defense.

"DRDO has invested \$44 million exclusively for nanotechnology applications," said W Selvamurthy, chief controller (R&D), DRDO, in Bangalore.

"These applications will enhance strength and capabilities of missiles. These outcomes are also highly useful to churn out products in healthcare, medicine, sensors, and energy harvesting," he added.

Asia's first biodegradable stent implanted

Asia's first biodegradable stent has been successfully implanted in a 65-year-old man for treating his artery blockage, doctors said in New Delhi, on December 10.

M.P. Singh, a native of Bihar, was the first patient to undergo the surgery.

The surgery at the Escorts Heart Institute was a part of the trials going on for the new Bioresorbable Vascular Scaffolds, a stent made of biodegradable polymer.

The operation places a stent, a spring like structure in the artery, mounted on a balloon. The balloon, which breaks the blockage, is placed as a support so that the artery does not block again. So far, metallic stents were being used for the surgery.

INDIA TESTS PRITHVI-II MISSILE

India on December 22 successfully conducted two tests of its indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-II ballistic missile from a military base in Orissa, an official said.

The surface-to-surface missile, which has been inducted into the Indian armed forces, first blasted off from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur at 8.15 AM and then at 9.15 AM again.

This is the second time that two Prithvi missiles were successfully tested within a gap of one hour, an official said.

“The tests were done by the armed forces. Both were perfect launches,” Integrated Test Range (ITR) director S.P. Dash said.

The tests were conducted as part of a user trial in the presence of senior scientists of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).



The two missiles were taken from a production lot and were test fired by the Army’s Strategic Forces Command (SFC), Dash added.

All radars, electro-optical tracking systems and telemetry stations along

the coast monitored the trajectory parameters of the missiles throughout the mission, he added.

Prominent among those who witnessed the test included Defence Research and Development Laboratory (Hyderabad) director P. Venugopalan, program director V.L.N. Rao, project directors D.S. Reddy and Adalat Ali.

V.K. Saraswat, Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister, congratulated the scientists and armed forces for the successful flight tests.

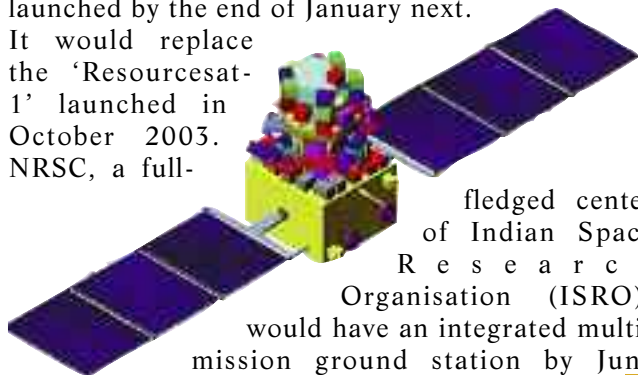
Prithvi-II has a maximum range of 350 km and can carry a 500 kg payload. Earlier, the missile was successfully testfired on June 18. DRDO has developed the Prithvi range under India’s Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme. “The Prithvi missiles, equipped with state-of-the-art guidance systems have reached the specified targets with very high degree of accuracy,” Dash said.

India to launch 30 satellites for data collection

India plans to launch 30 satellites in the next 10 years to strengthen its lead role in data collection and dissemination, a top scientist said on December 28. “We expect (to launch) not less than 30 satellites,” V Jayaraman, director of the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), India’s one-stop center for all the users of remote sensing data solutions, said in Bangalore. He said that the ‘Resourcesat-2’ satellite was expected to be launched by the end of January next.

It would replace the ‘Resourcesat-1’ launched in October 2003. NRSC, a full-

fledged center of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), would have an integrated multi-mission ground station by June 2011 to receive all the satellite data, he said.



Balloon-mounted radar launched successfully

India’s first indigenously-developed balloon-mounted radar that will significantly enhance the surveillance capabilities of the armed forces has been successfully launched in Agra, an official said. The aerostat radar was launched from a military compound and remained at a height of about one km for the next couple of days. All its systems worked satisfactorily, Sudhir Gupta, the project director, said.



The helium-filled aerostat was equipped with night vision cameras and sound recorders, weighs around 300 kg, and can be reused.

Gupta said the aerostat can survey areas up to 20 km away and with advanced cameras, its range can go beyond 100 km.

At the initiative of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Agra-based Aerial Delivery Research Development Establishment designed and fabricated the high-tech platform. The aerostat will be used for communication and surveillance.

Indian-American finds diamond-studded planet

Astronomers led by Indian-American Nikku Madhusudhan have discovered a giant planet with an atmosphere and core dominated by carbon, raising the prospect that diamond-studded stars may exist.

Madhusudan, a Banaras Hindu University (BHU) alumnus now at Princeton University, New Jersey, and his colleagues have observed that an extremely hot planet discovered last year has more carbon than oxygen — a feature never observed on a planet until now.

The planet, called WASP-12b, orbits a star about 1,200 light-years from Earth, and appears to have tempera-



tures of nearly 2300°C — hot enough to melt stainless steel, the scientists said in the journal *Nature*.

A computational technique developed two years ago by Madhusudan while he was at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge,

Massachusetts, was used to analyze the atmosphere of the planet.

Like Jupiter, WASP-12b is made largely of gas, only its core contains carbon-based minerals such as diamonds and graphite, said Madhusudhan, now a post-doctoral scientist in the department of astrophysical sciences at Princeton.

“A carbon-rich planet has dramatic implications for its interior, its atmosphere, and may compel us to rethink our long-ingrained ideas of planetary formation,” he said. The planet, larger than Jupiter, is windy, blazing hot and so near its star that it circles in a single day compared with the 365 needed for Earth to go round the sun. (IANS)

Indian-American’s ‘Panchatantra’ rings in New Year

Instead of the traditional TV fare of ‘Sesame Street’ or ‘Harry Potter’, Colorado will ring in the year 2011 with a telecast of ‘Panchatantra’ fables brought to animation by an Indian-American



whose films are acknowledged as cultural bridges between the East and West. The Rocky Mountain PBS station of Denver had announced that the animation classics of Manick Sorcar will be telecast across the state at all its affiliate stations on New Year’s Day. Sorcar is the son of the legendary Indian magician P.C. Sorcar.

The approximate two-hour programme will include ‘Deepa and Rupa: A Fairy Tale from India’, winner of the Gold Plaque at the Chicago International Film Festival, ‘The Sage and the Mouse’, ‘Sniff’, ‘Rule of Twenty One’, ‘Bronze Plaque’ and ‘The Woodcutter’s Daughter’.

‘Deepa and Rupa’ is based on a popular folktale of Bengal; ‘The Sage and

the Mouse’ and ‘The Woodcutter’s Daughter’ are from the ‘Panchatantra’; ‘Sniff’ and ‘Rule of Twenty One’ are from two popular ‘nonsense poems’ from the satirist Sukumar Ray.

Manick Sorcar first came to the limelight in the early 1990s when his ‘Deepa and Rupa: A Fairy

Tale From India’ went on to receive a host of prestigious international film festival awards, including in New York, where it outdid Children’s Workshop’s ‘Sesame Street’ and Hanna Barbera’s ‘The Greatest Adventure’.

Sorcar’s animation films are popular in US elementary schools and over the years, critics have paid tribute to Sorcar for his attempts to teach the West the culture of India through his art. In a recently released book, ‘East meets West: the animation of Manick Sorcar’ the author Wendy Luna notes that he is a man of many talents — writer, artist, animation film director and cartoonist. (IANS)

Mukherjee’s book on NYT bestsellers’ list

Indian-American cancer specialist Siddhartha Mukherjee’s book *The Emperor of All Maladies* on the history of cancer and its treatment has made it to the *New York Times* list of Best Sellers.

The book figures 12th in the hard cover non-fiction category with rankings reflecting sales for the week ended November 21.

New Delhi-born Mukherjee’s “powerful and ambitious first book”, as the *Times* said



in a recent review, tells “one of the most extraordinary stories in medicine: a history of cancer, which will kill about 600,000 Americans by the end of this year, and more than seven million people around the planet.”

He frames it as a biography, “an attempt to enter the mind of this immortal illness, to understand its personality, to demystify its behavior”. “It is an epic story that he seems compelled to tell, the way a passionate young priest might attempt a biography of Satan,” the US daily said. Mukherjee started work on this book when he began advanced training in cancer medicine at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston in the summer of 2003. (IANS)

AR Rahman nominated for Golden Globe Award

Music maestro AR Rahman has been nominated for the 68th Annual Golden Globe Awards. The Oscar-winning musician has been nominated in the Best Music Category for Danny Boyle's film *127 Hours*.


127 Hours also bagged nominations for Best



Actor (Drama) and Best Screenplay. After the phenomenal success of the *Slumdog Millionaire*, Boyle had once again teamed up with Fox Searchlight Pictures, producer Christian Colson, writer Simon Beaufoy and Rahman for the action drama starring James Franco.

The film is a true story of mountain

climber Aron Ralston's (played by Franco) adventure to save himself after a fallen boulder crashes on his arm and traps him in an isolated canyon in Utah. *127 Hours* is slated for release in India in January 2011 by Fox Star India.

Fox Star Studios India CEO Vijay Singh said, "A.R. Rahman being nominated once again for his brilliant music score in the film makes it very special for every Indian." 

Lahore' director signs Hulk cinematographer for sci-fi movie

Still basking in the glory of two National Awards for his debut film 'Lahore', filmmaker Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan has roped in *Hulk* cinematographer Frederick Elmes for his next venture.



Touted to have the finest of Hollywood and Bollywood crew, parts of the yet-to-be-titled sci-fi movie will be shot at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Elmes' credits also include *Blood Brother*, *Blue Velvet*, *Namesake* and *Wild at Heart*.

Chauhan has teamed up again with Wayne Sharpe for the background score of the movie after *Lahore*. He has roped in other international talent like Golden Globe winning Hollywood singer Lisa Gerrard, who has sung for movies like *Gladiator* and

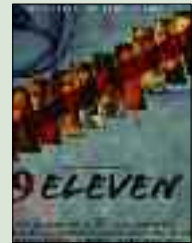
Mission: Impossible II as well as Senegalese Babba Maal, the singer-guitarist who crooned for *Black Hawk Down*. *Lahore* won the Indira Gandhi award for best debut film by a director and the National Film Award for best supporting actor for Farooque Shaikh.

9 Eleven, A Bollywood recipe prepared in US

It's a Bollywood film complete with an item number, but it's made by Indian Americans for the desi crowd at home and abroad and touted as the first Hindi film shot entirely in Washington.

Called *9 Eleven*, "it has nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks", says young filmmaker Manan Singh Katohora, who describes it as a fast-paced thriller with an "undertone of terrorism — it's about characters and about life decisions".

Made under the banner of Amar Durga Films, the feature-length film now in the post-production stage is set for release in North America and in South Asia in June. Set in Mumbai, the film portrays the life of 10 people from different walks of life thrown together in an unfamiliar place and terrorized to the core by an unknown entity. "I really can't give too much away about the plot, but the title is crucial to the story," Katohora said. Katohora, whose previous films include *Arya* (2003), a psychological thriller, and *When Kiran Met Karen* (2008), — both in English — said he chose to make the film in Hindi because the screenplay so demanded. There are no big stars, but each of over a dozen Indian-American actors has some acting experience.



Watch Indian movies, TV shows on internet

Databazaar Media Ventures (DMV), a leading provider of Indian content in North America, has launched a media channel on the Roku platform, a leading internet streaming television device.

The Databazaar Media channel is a subscription channel that will carry a rapidly growing



selection of popular Indian movies, television shows and events in six Indian languages. The Databazaar Media channel is the first Indian content channel on the IPTV platforms of the future and brings a tremendous opportunity for Indian content owners to reach the growing Indian audience in North America.

Roku, with a subscriber base of 1.2 million in North America, has become the first to feature a full Indian content channel that serves a major ethnic market in the U.S. Databazaar Media, the media and entertainment offshoot of Databazaar.com, has been working to bring its experience in technology and ecommerce to the distribution of Indian content in North America.



THE SCIENCE OF SUCCESS

The Indian pharmaceuticals industry is poised for phenomenal growth. It's the world's third-largest in volume and 14th in sales value. A report from the leading market analysis firm PricewaterhouseCoopers says that India will join the league of top-10 global pharmaceuticals markets by 2020. By then, sales will double to \$50 billion, says the report.

Promising future

The positive outlook is mostly attributable to growing urbanization. Hospitals are mushrooming in cities and health insurance coverage is expanding. Better incomes ensure increasing demand for medicines. More people are now working in cities. There are newer, better and more widely available drugs for treating lifestyles-related ailments such as dia-

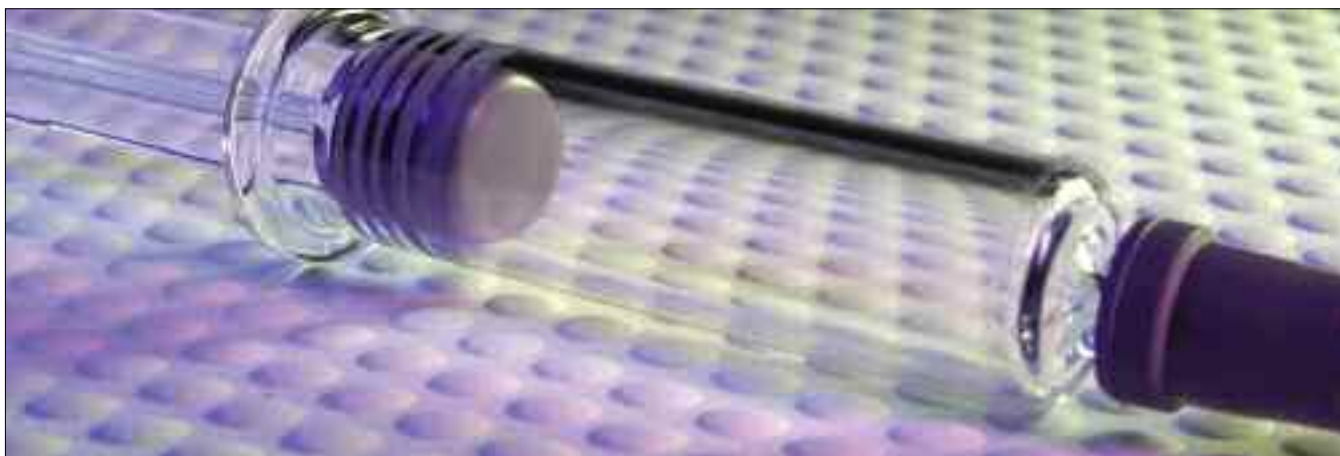
betes, hypertension and gastric conditions. However, three-fourths of the domestic pharmaceutical market is still dominated by drugs for acute therapies. Shushmul Maheswari, CEO of research organization RNCOS, says, "Anti-infective drugs alone had a market share of 19 percent last year. The spread of infectious diseases is expected to keep this trend unchanged in the coming years, aiding the pharma industry."

A report from market analysis firm PricewaterhouseCoopers says India will join the league of top-10 global pharmaceuticals markets by 2020

International consultancy firm Ernst & Young recently conducted a study with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry on the Indian pharmaceuticals industry. Called 'The Glorious Metamorphosis — Compelling Reasons for Doing Clinical Research in India', it said the market for patented drugs would grow exponentially. By 2015, the growing highest income group could help open up a \$5-billion market for multinational corporations with patented drugs, accounting for up to 10 percent of the market.

Nutraceuticals: The next big thing

Urbanization is adding affluent nuclear families focused on improved lifestyles and health. Better media penetration is driving this group toward consuming wellness products. An entire class of over-the-counter formulations combining nutrition and well-



ness has come to be known internationally as nutraceuticals. Last year, this market attracted over \$1 billion in revenues. The nutraceutical segment is dominated by multinational giants such as Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, Novartis, Abbott, and the Indian subsidiary of Merck Limited. A report published by Ernst & Young titled 'Nutraceuticals — Critical Supplement for building a Healthy India', says this market is growing at more-than-twice the global growth rate of 7 percent.

Pharma outsourcing

Last year, exports made up 42 percent of the industry's total revenue. Exports will remain important, especially in the light of India's growing attractiveness for outsourcing generic drug manufacturing facilities. Four leading factors contribute to this development: favorable pricing, low production costs, world-class manufacturing facilities, and a rising number of US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved plants. These factors have ensured that more than one-fifth of the world's generics are manufactured in India. Many of these generics are life-saving formulations. Over time, Indian companies have emerged as world leaders in producing generic drugs.

America and Japan are now increasingly accepting generics produced in India; leading Indian producers of such drugs have aggressively expanded their overseas distribution networks. America and Europe are cutting healthcare costs, and the patents of many blockbuster drugs are expiring,

paving the way for generics. In a report called Booming Generics Drug Market in India, RNCOS says that the generics segment will grow by 17 per cent annually in the next two years. It is worth US\$11 billion at present.

Clinical trials

At present, an overwhelming 85 per cent of business for India's pharmaceutical outsourcing industry, comes from contract manufacturing. Pre-clinical and clinical trials contribute a mere three per cent to this turnover. Maheshwari of RNCOS says this share will grow as more international companies outsource their clinical trials to India. Companies can quickly recruit subjects for clinical trials from India's available population of patients of cancer, diabetes and other diseases. It is natural, therefore, for India to emerge as a preferred global hub for quality clinical trials.



Cost advantage

According to US-based research firm Center Watch, clinical research in India costs less than half of what it does in the US. Releasing its findings last year in a study called the 'State of the Clinical Trials Industry', it said mature drug development trials in European markets are expensive. Since such trials can cost nearly US\$150 million in the US, multinationals stand to save substantially in India, largely owing to cheaper manpower.

Government initiatives

The government's Pharma Vision envisages developing India as a leading destination for end-to-end drug discovery and pharma innovation hub by 2020. To this end, it is going all out to ensure that the sector shines. It has introduced 100 per cent foreign direct investment under the automatic route in this sector. A US\$640 million venture capital fund to boost drug discovery and strengthen the pharmaceutical infrastructure is also on the anvil.

The Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Manufacturers Association recently broached the possibility of establishing a special economic zone (SEZ) for pharmaceuticals, bulk drugs and formulations in the industrially developed port city of Visakhapatnam in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. The government has approved the request in principle.

It will take astute planning and concentrated effort, but India is on track to joining the league of top 10 global pharmaceutical markets by 2020. ■

THE RENUNCIATION

By Rabindranath Tagore

It was a night of full moon early in the month of *Phalgun*. The youthful spring was everywhere sending forth its breeze laden with the fragrance of mango-blossoms. The melodious notes of an untiring *papiya* (One of the sweetest songsters in Bengal), concealed within the thick foliage of an old *lichi* tree by the side of a tank, penetrated a sleepless bedroom of the Mukerji family. There Hemanta now restlessly twisted a lock of his wife's hair round his finger, now beat her churl against her wristlet until it tinkled, now pulled at the chaplet of flowers about her head, and left it hanging over her face. His mood was that of an evening breeze which played about a favorite flowering shrub, gently shaking her now this side, now that, in the hope of rousing her to animation.

But Kusum sat motionless, looking out of the open window, with eyes immersed in the moonlit depth of never-ending space beyond. At last Hemanta clasped both the hands of his wife, and, shaking them gently, said: "Kusum, where are you? O, do come closer to me, dear. See how beautiful the night is."

Kusum turned her eyes from the void of space towards her husband, and said slowly: "I know a *mantra* (A set of magic words.), which could in one moment shatter this spring night and the moon into pieces."

"If you do," laughed Hemanta, "pray don't utter it. If any mantra of yours could bring three or four Saturdays during the week, and prolong the nights till 5 P.M. the next day, say it by all means." Saying this, he tried to

draw his wife a little closer to him. Kusum, freeing herself from the embrace, said: "Do you know, tonight I feel a longing to tell you what I promised to reveal only on my death-bed. Tonight, I feel that I could endure whatever punishment you might inflict on me."

Hemanta was on the point of making a jest about punishments by reciting a verse from Jayadeva, when the sound of an angry pair of slippers was heard approaching rapidly. They were the familiar footsteps of his father, Haribar Mukerji, and Hemanta, not



knowing what it meant, was in a flutter of excitement.

Standing outside the door Harihar roared out: "Hemanta, turn your wife out of the house immediately."

Hemanta looked at his wife, and detected no trace of surprise in her features. She merely buried her face within the palms of her hands, and, with all the strength and intensity of her soul, wished that she could then and there melt into nothingness. It was the same *papiya* whose song floated into the room with the south breeze, and no one heard it. Endless are the beauties of the earth-but alas, how easily everything is twisted out of shape.

II Returning from within, Hemanta asked his wife: "Is it true?"

"It is," replied Kusum.

"Why didn't you tell me long ago?"

"I did try many a time, and I always failed. I am a wretched woman."

"Then tell me everything now."

Kusum gravely told her story in a firm unshaken voice. She waded barefooted through fire, as it were, with slow unflinching steps, and nobody knew how much she was scorched. Having heard her to the end, Hemanta rose and walked out.

Kusum thought that her husband had gone, never to return to her again. It did not strike her as strange. She took it as naturally as any other incident of everyday life so dry and apathetic had her mind become during the last few moments. Only the world and love seemed to her as a void and make-believe from beginning to end. Even the memory of the protestations of love,

which her husband had made to her in days past, brought to her lips a dry, hard, joyless smile, like a sharp cruel knife which had cut through her heart. She was thinking, perhaps, that the love which seemed to fill so much of one's life, which made even the briefest separation so exquisitely painful and a moment's union so intensely sweet, which seemed boundless in its extent and eternal in its duration, the cessation of which could not be imagined even in births to come — that this was that love! So feeble was its support! No sooner does the priesthood touch it than your "eternal" love crumbles into a handful of dust! Only a short while

ago Hemanta had whispered to her: “What a beautiful night!” The same night was not yet at an end, the same *papiya* was still warbling, the same south breeze still blew into the room, making the bed-curtain shiver. All this was unreal! Love was more falsely dissembling than she herself!

III

The next morning Hemanta, fagged after a sleepless night, and looking like one distracted, called at the house of Peari Sankar Ghosal. “What news, my son?” Peari Sankar greeted him.

Hemanta, flaring up like a big fire, said in a trembling voice: “You have defiled our caste. You have brought destruction upon us. And you will have to pay for it.” He could say no more; he felt choked.

“And you have preserved my caste, presented my ostracism from the community, and patted me on the back affectionately!” said Peari Sankar with a slight sarcastic smile.

Hemanta wished that his Brahmin-fury could reduce Peari Sankar to ashes in a moment, but his rage burnt only himself. Peari Sankar sat before him unscathed, and in the best of health.

“Did I ever do you any harm?” demanded Hemanta in a broken voice.

“Let me ask you one question,” said Peari Sankar. “My daughter — my only child-what harm had she done your father? You were very young then, and probably never heard. Listen, then. Now, don’t you excite yourself. There is much humour in what I am going to relate.

“You were quite small when my son-in-law Nabakanta ran away to England after stealing my daughter’s jewels. You might truly remember the commotion in the village when he returned as a barrister five years later. Or, perhaps, you were unaware of it, as you were at school in Calcutta at the time. Your father, arrogating to himself the headship of the community, declared that if I sent my daughter to her husband’s home, I must renounce her for good, and never again allow her to cross my threshold. I fell at your father’s feet,

and implored him, saying: ‘Brother, save me this once. I will make the boy swallow cow-dung, and go through the *prayaschittam* ceremony. Do take him back into caste.’ But your father remained obdurate. For my part, I could not disown my only child, and, bidding good-bye to my village and my kinsmen, I betook myself to Calcutta. There, too, my troubles followed me. When I had made every arrangement for my nephew’s marriage, your father stirred up the girl’s people, and they broke the match off. Then I took a solemn vow that, if there was a drop of Brahmin blood flowing in my veins, I would avenge myself. You understand the business to some extent now, don’t you? But wait a little longer. You will enjoy it, when I tell you the whole story; it is interesting.

The same night was not yet at an end, the same papiya was still warbling, the same south breeze still blew into the room, making the bed-curtain shiver. All this was unreal! Love was more falsely dissembling than she herself!

“When you were attending college, one Bipradas Chatterji used to live next door to your lodgings. The poor fellow is dead now. In his house lived a child-widow called Kusum, the destitute orphan of a Kayestha gentleman. The girl was very pretty, and the old Brahmin desired to shield her from the hungry gaze of college students. But for a young girl to throw dust in the eyes of her old guardian was not at all a difficult task. She often went to the top of the roof, to hang her washing out to dry, and, I believe, you found your own roof best suited for your studies. Whether you two spoke to

each other, when on your respective roofs, I cannot tell, but the girl’s behaviour excited suspicion in the old man’s mind. She made frequent mistakes in her household duties, and, like Parbati (The wife of Shiva the Destroyer), engaged in her devotions, began gradually to renounce food and sleep. Some evenings she would burst into tears in the presence of the old gentleman, without any apparent reason.

“At last, he discovered that you two saw each other from the roofs pretty frequently, and that you even went the length of absenting yourself from college to sit on the roof at mid-day with a book in your hand, so fond had you grown suddenly of solitary study. Bipradas came to me for advice, and told me everything. ‘Uncle’, said I to him, ‘for a long while you have cherished a desire to go on a pilgrimage to Benares. You had better do it now, and leave the girl in my charge. I will take care of her.’

“So he went. I lodged the girl in the house of Sripati Chatterji, passing him off as her father. What happened next is known to you. I feel a great relief today, having told you everything from the beginning. It sounds like a romance, doesn’t it? I think of turning it into a book, and getting it printed. But I am not a writing-man myself. They say my nephew has some aptitude that way — I will get him to write it for me. But the best thing would be, if you would collaborate with him, because the conclusion of the story is not known to me so well.”

Without paying much attention to the concluding remarks of Peari Sankar, Hemanta asked: “Did not Kusum object to this marriage?”

“Well,” said Peari Sankar, “it is very difficult to guess. You know, my boy, how women’s minds are constituted. When they say ‘no,’ they mean ‘yes.’ During the first few days after her removal to the new home, she went almost crazy at not seeing you. You, too, seemed to have discovered her new address somehow, as you used to lose your way after starting for college, and loiter about in front of Sripati’s

house. Your eyes did not appear to be exactly in search of the Presidency College, as they were directed towards the barred windows of a private house, through which nothing but insects and the hearts of moon-struck young men could obtain access. I felt very sorry for you both. I could see that your studies were being seriously interrupted, and that the plight of the girl was pitiable also.

“One day I called Kusum to me, and said: ‘Listen to me, my daughter. I am an old man, and you need feel no delicacy in my presence. I know whom you desire at heart. The young man’s condition is hopeless too. I wish I could bring about your union.’ At this Kusum suddenly melted into tears, and ran away. On several evenings after that, I visited Sripati’s house, and, calling Kusum to me, discussed with her matters relating to you, and so I succeeded in gradually overcoming her shyness. At last, when I said that I would try to bring about a marriage, she asked me: ‘How can it be?’ ‘Never mind,’ I said, ‘I would pass you off as a Brahmin maiden.’ After a good deal of argument, she begged me to find out whether you would approve of it. ‘What nonsense,’ replied I, ‘the boy is well-nigh mad as it were, what’s the use of disclosing all these complications to him? Let the ceremony be over smoothly and then — all’s well that ends well. Especially, as there is not the slightest risk of its ever leaking out, why go out of the way to make a fellow miserable for life?’

“I do not know whether the plan had Kusum’s assent or not. At times she wept, and at other times she remained silent. If I said, ‘Let us drop it then,’ she would become very restless. When things were in this state, I sent Sripati to you with the proposal of marriage; you consented without a moment’s hesitation. Everything was settled.

“Shortly before the day fixed, Kusum became so obstinate that I had the greatest difficulty in bringing her round again. ‘Do let it drop, uncle,’ she said to me constantly. ‘What do you mean, you silly child,’ I rebuked her,

‘how can we back out now, when everything has been settled?’

“Spread a rumour that I am dead,’ she implored. Send me away somewhere.’

“What would happen to the young ‘man then?’ said I.’ He is now in the seventh heaven of delight, expecting that his long cherished desire would be fulfilled tomorrow; and today you want me to send him the news of your death. The result would be that tomorrow I should have to bear the news of his death to you, and the same evening your death would be reported to me. Do you imagine, child, that I am capable of committing a girl-murder and a Brahmin-murder at my age?’

“Eventually the happy marriage was celebrated at the auspicious moment, and I felt relieved of a burdensome duty which I owed to myself. What



happened afterwards you know best.”

“Couldn’t you stop after having done us an irreparable injury?” burst out Hemanta after a short silence. “Why have you told the secret now?”

With the utmost composure, Peari Sankar replied: “When I saw that all arrangements had been made for the wedding of your sister, I said to myself: ‘Well, I have fouled the caste of one Brahmin, but that was only from a sense of duty. Here, another Brahmin’s caste is imperilled, and this time it is my plain duty to prevent it.’ So, I wrote to them saying that I was in a position to prove that you had taken the daughter of a sudra to wife.”

Controlling himself with a gigantic effort, Hemanta said: “What will become of this girl whom I shall abandon now? Would you give her food

and shelter?”

“I have done what was mine to do,” replied Peari Sankar calmly. “It is no part of my duty to look after the discarded wives of other people. Anybody there? Get a glass of coconut milk for Hemanta Babu with ice in it. And some *paan* too.”

Hemanta rose, and took his departure without waiting for this luxurious hospitality.

IV

It was the fifth night of the waning of the moon — and the night was dark. No birds were singing. The *lichi* tree by the tank looked like a smudge of ink on a background a shade less deep.

The south wind was blindly roaming about in the darkness like a sleep-walker. The stars in the sky with vigilant unblinking eyes were trying to penetrate the darkness, in their effort to fathom some profound mystery.

No light shone in the bedroom. Hemanta was sitting on the side of the bed next the open window, gazing at the darkness in front of him. Kusum lay on the floor, clasping her husband’s feet with both her arms, and her face resting on them. Time stood like an ocean hushed into stillness. On the background of eternal night, Fate seemed to have painted this one single picture for all time — annihilation on every side, the judge in the centre of it, and the guilty one at his feet.

The sound of slippers was heard again. Approaching the door, Harihar Mukerji said: “You have had enough time, — I can’t allow you more. Turn the girl out of the house.”

Kusum, as she heard this, embraced her husband’s feet with all the ardour of a lifetime, covered them with kisses, and touching her forehead to them reverentially, withdrew herself.

Hemanta rose, and walking to the door, said: “Father, I won’t forsake my wife.”

“What!” roared out Harihar, “would you lose your caste, sir?”

“I don’t care for caste,” was Hemanta’s calm reply.

“Then you too I renounce.”



HAFLONG: BEYOND THE BLUE HILLS

Nestling in the lap of the Borail Hills range, Haflong, in the Dima Hasao district (earlier, North Cachar Hills District) of Assam, is an exceedingly picturesque hill station, in fact, the only one in this North-Eastern state. If you ever visit this sleepy hilly town by the Hill Queen train connecting Lumding (in Naogaon) with Haflong, you are bound to be mesmerized by its breathtaking beauty, the quietude of the place, and above all, the diverse cultural ethos, enriched by as many as 13 tribes.

The mystique of the verdant hills at once captivates your imagination. With the whistling winds swirling around undulating hills, Haflong gradually unfolds its pristine, unspoilt charm... its gushing streams and awesome waterfalls playing phantasmal music. The azure hills are resplendent with a variety of orchids. Haflong is veritably the land of blue hills, the ideal getaway for a leisurely vacation. The sun now rises from behind the Borail Hills...

As you move from one point to another, Haflong's panorama changes rapidly. Haflong's spectacular natural setting tempts many to dub this hill town the "Switzerland of Assam". With an average elevation of 513 metres (1700 feet), Haflong is

perched in the Borail range (about 3117 feet) and the town appears like a jewel from a number of vantage viewpoints.

The town has added attractions in the form of splendid, colonial Tudor style bungalows, such as Gumaigajo, Taradevi, Hurst Lea, Groveland,



HOW TO REACH

By Air: Silchar (110 km) and Guwahati (350 km) are the two nearest airports.

By Rail: Nearest broad gauge railway station is Lumding. From Lumding, board a meter-gauge train to Haflong. The route from Lumding to Haflong passes through many tunnels and it is an exciting journey somewhat resembling the Kalka-Shimla track.

By Road: It takes around 10-11 hours from Guwahati as you have to negotiate bumpy roads.

DC's Bungalow, Circuit House, Railway Guest House, SP's Bungalow and so on.

The Haflong Lake in the heart of the town is a man-made beauty. The lake, spread across 509,760 sqft, was built by two British engineers, A. Bayajen and J. C. Carting, who had come to lay a railway track for the British.

Haflong's Main Road resembles the archetypal Mall Road one finds in any other hill station of the country. It is abuzz with activities from dawn to dusk. The hub of the town, it bustles with activity every Saturday when the weekly market is set up. For many the Saturday market is an important part of their lives. Come Friday, people from far-flung areas are already in! In the wee hours of Saturday itself, the market becomes a festival, replete with color and ethnic diversity.

Flora and Fauna

Mother Nature has endowed the hill tracts with flora and fauna of a great variety. The evergreen, semi-evergreen, and deciduous forests grow in abundance with numerous herbs, shrubs, climbers, and grasses. Bamboo, the 'green gold', grows here in plenty. Haflong is rich in medicinal plants that have tremendous commercial value. A true nature's trove, Haflong is home to as many as 80 species of orchid.

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■ The White Winter



Snow-clad Srinagar! A Kashmiri woman walks in a snow-covered garden during the first snowfall in Srinagar on December 30, 2010. Tourists are visiting the picturesque locales of Kashmir to enjoy snowfall, especially Gulmarg and Pahalgam, the most sought after destinations in the valley.

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