

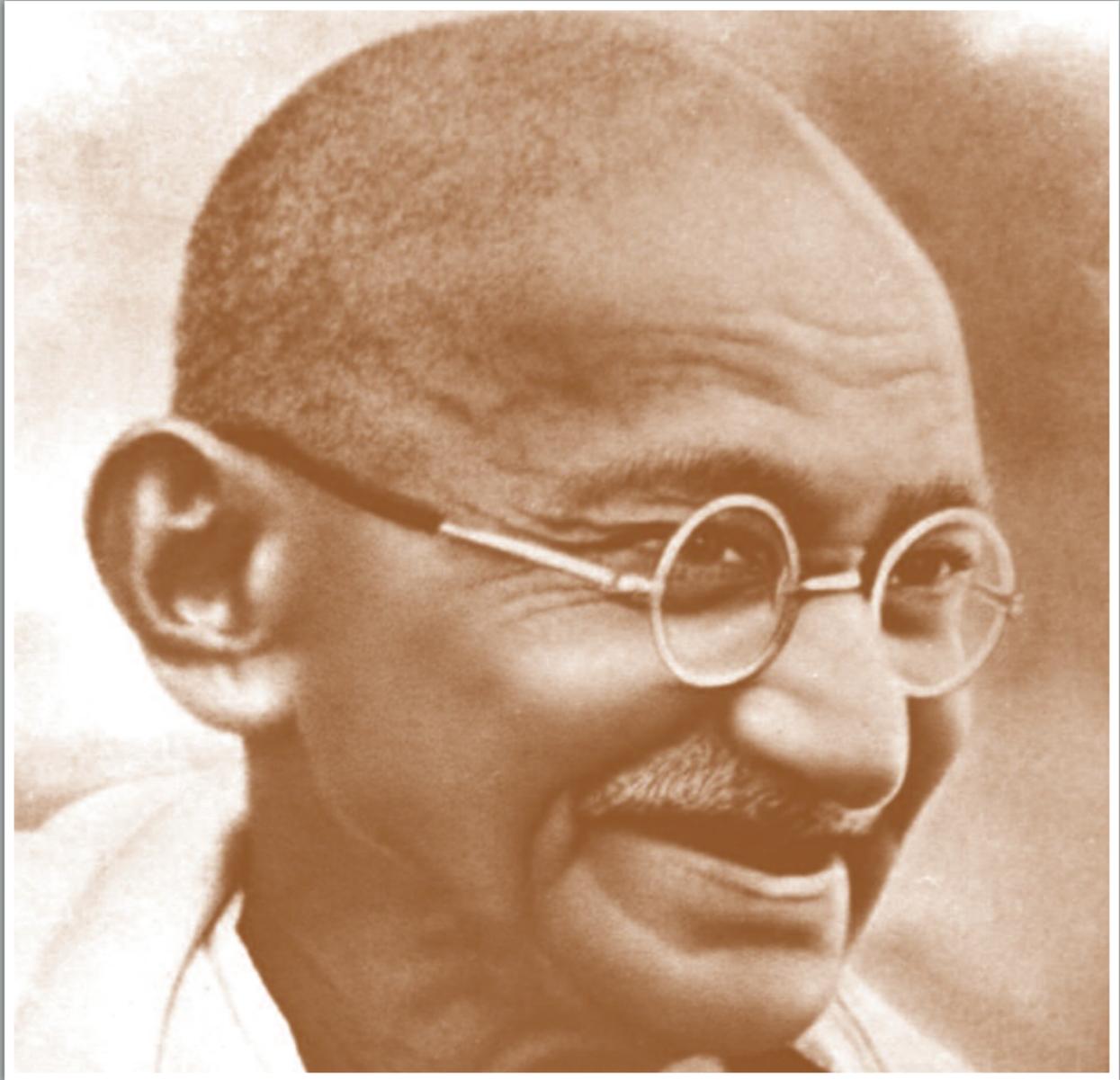
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‘Mahatma Gandhi’s importance timeless’

■ INDIA, US TO DEEPEN
ECONOMIC COOPERATION

■ AMBASSADOR RAO
INAUGURATES CGI ATLANTA

■ ‘KING OF ROMANCE’ YASH
CHOPRA PASSES AWAY

Global Leadership in 2020

I was invited to participate at a panel discussion at the Global Leadership Summit organized by the Meridian International Center on October 12, 2012 in Washington DC. I spoke at the Ambassador's panel on 'What a Good Global Leader (and Citizen) Looks Like in 2020'.

Leadership involves certain constants regardless of the era or time zone in which we are placed. Human beings are not very different from each other regardless of the languages they speak or the cultures they belong to.

Of course, the scale and extent of the challenges that humankind faces today is of a different order from even fifty years ago. When I was growing up in Bangalore, we would never have imagined the evil of suicide terrorism, or the rise of Al Qaeda. Today we have leaders and leaders. Leaders who advocate hate and violence have a larger following across the planet than ever before. Good leadership and good leaders have to develop effective strategies to overcome and vanquish this opposition, and the fear, ignorance and the alienation that fuels violence and terror.

It has been said before, and I would like to repeat it here, there has never been greater need for an equal representation of women in positions of leadership and responsibility in government, in parliaments, in business, in the non-profits and NGOs, and in academics. It's a fifty-fifty representation we must aspire for. That should be the mission for our century.

Everybody recognizes the need for inspirational leadership. The word charisma is also a natural attachment to this definition. To be inspirational and charismatic means more than just inspiring with words and flights of eloquence. It is about walking the talk and moving people to walk alongside you, as Mahatma Gandhi did when he defied the might of the British Raj in India, when he led thousands of people to march to the seashores to harvest salt and defy the pernicious salt laws.



Ambassador Nirupama Rao speaking at the first Meridian Global Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. on October 12. Also seen is Ambassador Stuart Holliday, President and CEO of Meridian International Center.

The demand for better education, for jobs and livelihoods, for equality and inclusion and better opportunities, will be topmost on the people's agenda in all our democracies. Our leaders will have to listen and read the faces well

In 2020, the revolution of rising expectations in the developing world is going to define the character of our times. The youth demographic in countries like India is going to acquire overriding importance. The demand for better education, for jobs and livelihoods, for equality and inclusion and better opportunities, will be topmost on

the people's agenda in all our democracies. Our leaders will have to listen and read the faces well. They will have to be leaders who deliver. The people will ask for no less.

If our people, especially our young, have to be global citizens with open, searching minds, we must have leaders with a global outlook. Leaders who value diversity, leaders who are sensitive to the needs of minorities, who propagate the importance of education, the protection of the environment, sustainability and conservation, the need for a civil society that is tolerant and not divisive, who promote inclusiveness and who eschew narrow and religiously intolerant agendas.

The full text of my speech can be viewed at: <http://www.indianembassy.org/prdetail2044/ambassadors-blog%3A-global-leadership-in-2020>

How would Gandhi have viewed the world of 21st century?

Ambassador Nirupama Rao dwells with several pertinent questions

Speaking on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary at the Gandhi Memorial Center in Bethesda, Maryland, on October 2, Ambassador Nirupama Rao underlined the "timeless importance of Gandhian thought and values in our daily lives".

She said Mahatma Gandhi would continue to inspire political, social and religious wisdom to successive generations across the world. "There is," she said, "an undeniable and essential universality about Gandhian ideas and ideals that were, are and will remain relevant across generations."

Ambassador Rao said Gandhi's philosophy showed the "immeasurable reserves of humility and compassion that exist within the human mind." Leading a simple life, Gandhi worked tirelessly for the upliftment of the weak as part of the larger nation-building exercise, she said.

Excerpts from Ambassador Rao's speech on the occasion

As we remember Mahatma Gandhi and recall his principles and ideals today, one question that crosses our mind is — how would Gandhiji have viewed the world of the 21st century? What would he write today in the *Indian Opinion* or the *Harijan* — journals where he often expressed his inner voice? Can you visualize an electronic version, or a Facebook or Twitter account for these journals? I certainly can, because Gandhiji was a communicator par excellence. How would he have reflected on the Euro-zone crisis, or the Arab Spring, or the terrorist attacks of 9/11 in this country and of 26/11 in Mumbai?

How would Gandhiji apply the precepts of his ideals and values in



Ambassador Nirupama Rao speaking at the Gandhi Memorial Center on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on October 2. (Photo: Susan Hayden)

explaining, or searching for an answer, to these and myriad other challenges the world confronts today? How do we establish the relevance of his thoughts and ideals in this new century?

Let me begin by recalling five iconic individuals, who have believed in Gandhiji's ideas. They were and are inspired by the Gandhian philosophy of humanism, compassion and non-violence. They showed courage and conviction in standing up to adversity and embracing the truth. They, in their own way, became the change they wanted to see in the world.

And they did so decades after Gandhiji had lived and walked on our planet. One of them dared to "have a dream" — of equality, opportunity and liberty, and to heal a nation wounded by racial segregation. Inspired by Gandhiji, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. saw the spirit of the historic Salt March at Dandi resonating in his own courageous Montgomery Bus Boycott.

Another man, lovingly called Madiba by his compatriots, and whom the world knows as Nelson Mandela, emulated Gandhiji in choosing to suffer a long incarceration in order to humble a tyrannical

regime. He empowered his people, but told them never to hate their oppressors. He ended apartheid by showing the power of courage and truth, as he laid the foundations of a new era in South Africa and promoted a path of reconciliation.

The third icon, who is admired in both India and the United States, and across the world, for her fearless non-violent resistance is Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi who I was privileged to personally meet when I visited Yangon in June last year, when I was the Foreign Secretary of India. She has often acknowledged Gandhiji's influence in a life she has dedicated to freedom and democracy.

Gandhiji has been a great light for another great spiritual leader, who, much like the Mahatma, uniquely blends spiritualism with humanism, religiosity with courage, and faith with conviction. His Holiness the Dalai Lama views the success of Gandhian philosophy in its most tangible outcomes.

And finally, President Obama. Speaking before India's Parliament in November 2010 about how he was influenced and inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, President Barack Obama



1. Srimati Kamala, Founder, Gandhi Memorial Center, addressing the gathering at the Gandhi Memorial Center on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on October 2.
2. Carrie Trybulec, Director, Gandhi Memorial Center, speaking on the occasion.
3. From left, Krishna Ramdas, Rebecca Rahman, Renu Suri, Samia Mahbub Ahmad, Rashad Ullah, and Rishi Das presenting 'Vaishnavajanato'.
4. Charu Narasimhan presenting a Bharatanatyam dance.
5. Supriya Dutt and Jeffery Bauer presenting 'Jibon Jokhon'.
6. Sudeshna Basu and Jeffrey Bauer presenting 'Aguner Poroshmoni'.
7. Guests in attendance.

(Photos: Susan Hayden)

said, "I am mindful that I might not be standing before you today, as President of the United States, had it not been for Gandhi and the message he shared with and inspired America and the world".

It is no coincidence that all these five

personalities, who embodied in one way or the other Gandhiji's ideas and ideals, were recognized — long after the death of Mahatma Gandhi — for their contributions to global peace and harmony. Each of them went on to be a Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

The full text of Ambassador Nirupama Rao's speech on the occasion can be viewed at: <http://www.indianembassy.org/prdetail2036/speech-by-ambassador-nirupama-rao-at-gandhi-jayanti-celebrations>



Finance Minister P. Chidambaram addressing the press conference of the G-24 Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on October 11. (Photo: IMF)

Expedite IMF quota reforms: India

At the Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, India's Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said the policy makers must bring about the necessary changes in the institutional and operational architecture of the IMF

Addressing the 26th Meeting of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) in Tokyo on October 13, during the Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said that to address the uncertainties facing the global economy and put the global economy on a sustainable growth path, the authorities need to find long-term solutions. "The immediate challenge is to prevent the adverse feedback loop between banks and sovereigns. However, in the absence of long-term measures, uncertainty will continue, which will pose risk to global macroeconomic and financial stability," Minister Chidambaram said.

Noting that adverse feedback loop of weak growth, weak fiscal position and weak banks as a major risk to global financial stability, the Finance

Minister said, "Actions by central banks by providing liquidity may have helped calmed the markets and averted aggravation of the crisis, but they cannot be a substitute for a longer-term solution."

He said that policy uncertainties in the advanced economies were also affecting the growth prospects of emerging market economies. "Growth is faltering across regions, including in emerging market economies (EMEs)," he said. Fragile financial market conditions, volatile capital flows, increasing global commodity prices, especially energy had dented business confidence in many EMEs, he said. "The sharp rise in global food prices is another major challenge that many emerging market economies, especially those which are already facing inflationary pressures, may have to contend with," Minister Chidambaram said.

To quell doubts about the long-term sustainability of the monetary union, the policy makers must bring about the necessary changes in its institutional and operational architecture, the Finance Minister said.

In the interest of safeguarding global economic and financial stability in future, the Finance Minister called for global cooperation and urgent implementation of the 2010 Quota and governance reform of the IMF. "We must not let the Quota Formula discussions meander into areas which are not part of the overall understanding reached at different G 20 and IMFC summits — that there will be a clear shift of the quota shares in favor of the Emerging Market and Developing Countries, (EMDCs) to reflect more clearly the shifting global economic scenario and to make decision-making in the IMF more equitable," the Finance Minister said.

“We must also adhere to the time-line for completing this reform by January 2013 so that it becomes the basis for the 15th General Review of quotas to be completed no later than January 2014,” he added.

Stressing that GDP was the most important variable in the quota formula “as it is the most robust measure of relative economic weight and stake in the global economy”, the Finance Minister said the “most appropriate way to measure the real size of an economy was in terms of purchasing power parity”. He therefore called for substantially increasing the weight of the blended GDP variable in the formula “through a simple formula with GDP blend as the predominant variable and with a higher share of GDP-PPP.”

Minister Chidambaram noted that the financial contributions made by the member-countries to the IMF need not be linked with governance reforms. “These contributions need to retain their temporary character; they should not be looked upon as a substitute to quota resources,” he said. He also stressed that the innocent bystanders affected by the crisis, particularly the low income countries, should be adequately protected and sufficient resources must be made available for them.

Minister Chidambaram called for urgently resolving the issues of fiscal cliff and the lifting of the debt ceiling in the US. “The need is to put in



Finance Minister P. Chidambaram at the BRICS Finance Ministers’ and Central Bank Governors’ (CVG) meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on October 11.

place a medium-term fiscal plan while avoiding excessive fiscal correction in the short run,” he said. He said that the emerging market economies would be severely affected if the economic situation in the U.S. were to worsen. “Its impact on emerging market economies will be much more severe than in the case of the situation in the euro area.”

He said that to offset the decline in external demand in the context of uncertain global macroeconomic environment, the emerging market economies should focus on strengthening domestic demand. He said the EMEs should also introduce structural reforms and formulate appropriate supply responses to deal with the sharp increase in food prices.

Minister Chidambaram noted that to

put the economy on a sustainable higher growth path, India had taken several measures in the recent period such as liberalizing FDI norms for aviation and multi-brand retail and significant pass through in fuel prices. Saying that inflation had been a major concern for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Finance minister remarked, “The RBI has, therefore, kept the policy rate unchanged at 8 per cent since April 2012. However, in order to ensure that credit flows to productive sectors of the economy, the RBI has been managing liquidity actively.”

“We maintain that the IMF is ideally placed for anchoring global policy coordination so as to remove the vulnerabilities and revive growth in the global economy on a sustainable basis,” he concluded.

G-24 TO FOCUS ON JOB CREATION, STRESSES ON IMF QUOTA REFORMS

At its eighty-eighth meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on October 11, with P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance of India, in the Chair, the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development said it would “focus on job creation and the establishment of effective and fiscally sustainable social safety nets that protect the poor and vulnerable”. Expressing concern about the fragility of the global economic and financial situation, the G-24 countries called on the

advanced economies (AEs) to take decisive steps towards addressing the policy uncertainties.

“We also believe that immediate and concerted action is needed to boost global growth through appropriate macroeconomic policies, the promotion of open trade and investment, the repair of financial sectors, particularly in the major financial centers and vigorous structural reforms, while preparing the foundations for credible medium-term fiscal consolidation, once the recovery is on a sound footing,” it said.

It also urged the AEs to phase out export subsidies and resist protectionism.

The G-24 also underlined the importance of meeting the 2010 IMF’s quota and governance reforms — comprehensive review of the quota formula by January 2013 and the completion of the Fifteenth General Review of Quotas by January 2014. “In our view, the ultimate goal must be to better reflect the growing role of EMDCs (Emerging Market and Developing Countries) as a whole in the global economy,” it said.

India, US to deepen economic cooperation

During the third cabinet-level meeting of the Indo-US Economic and Financial Partnership in New Delhi, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner discussed ways to further lower trade and investment barriers between the two countries

India and the U.S. on October 9 agreed to deepen cooperation at various multilateral fora, including the G20, and discussed ways to remove trade and investment barriers.

“We agreed to deepen our cooperation bilaterally and in multilateral fora, including the G20, to contribute toward steering the global economy out of uncertainties,” India’s Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said in a joint statement after a meeting in New Delhi.

During the third cabinet-level meeting of the Indo-US Economic and Financial Partnership, the two leaders discussed ways to further lower trade and investment barriers.

“We realize that continued investment in our infrastructure, in our people and in our institutions is critical to driving innovation, and increasing job creation and growth in our economy,” the joint statement said.

Addressing a press conference, Treasury Secretary Geithner welcomed the economic reform measures announced by the Indian government recently, saying it would help boost private investments.

“India has achieved remarkable economic success in the last 15 years. The recent reforms advanced by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Minister Chidambaram will help provide a foundation for stronger economic growth, an increase in investment, and more widespread gains in income,” he said.

India had announced a series of reforms measures, including allowing FDI in retail trade and cutting subsidies on petroleum products earlier.

The cabinet had also approved a



Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner exchanging the joint statement at the Indo-US Economic and Financial Partnership meeting in New Delhi on October 9.



From left, U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, Chairman of U.S. Federal Reserve Board Ben Bernanke and RBI Governor Dr. D Subbarao at the Reserve Bank of India in Mumbai on October 10.

proposal to hike the FDI limit in insurance.

Treasury Secretary Geithner said India and the U.S. had agreed on the importance of improving coordination on bilateral tax matters, including with respect to the tax treaty and implementation of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) to address

offshore tax evasion. “We agreed to strengthen mutual cooperation on issues relating to illicit finance, including efforts to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and other financial crimes,” he said.

“Both countries are committed to pursue close cooperation,” Minister Chidambaram said.

Ambassador Rao's interview to WTOP Radio

Besides maintaining a crucial relationship with the US, Ambassador Rao deals with many other important issues, reports WTOP's JJ Green. *Excerpts:*

India's Ambassador to the U.S. hasn't had a weekend to herself since she came to Washington, in September 2011.

"It's a 24/7 assignment," says Nirupama Rao.

Terrorism originating from Pakistan, close ties with Iran, a special bond with Russia and maintaining and growing a crucial relationship with the United States dominate her time.

Seated in the large sunny, sitting room on the park-side of the official residence in Washington's trendy Cleveland Park neighborhood, Rao, clad in an exquisitely tailored sari, made it clear she's not just a pretty face in Washington.

She pulled no punches when discussing difficult and delicate problems facing her country - beginning with Pakistan.

"India is concerned about terrorism and extremism which has flown in the direction of India from Pakistan over the years," said Rao.

She suggested Pakistan has not been forgiven, and no one has forgotten, what happened on Nov. 26, 2008, in the Indian capital of Mumbai.

During shocking and expertly planned attacks that lasted several days, "more than 170 people were killed in the attack by terrorists who had planned this in Pakistan," said Rao.

These were operatives she said, "who came across from Pakistan, launched the attack on the Taj Mahal hotel and other installations."

While India's government says it's committed to exploring ways to create a normalized relationship with Pakistan, Rao makes it clear: It is not talking about amnesty.

The Indian government is convinced it was a terrorist attack from beginning to end.

"And the fact that there was a



Ambassador Nirupama Rao. (Photo: WTOP/JJ Green)



Pakistani role, there were Pakistani agents, Pakistani citizens who were involved in this cannot be denied," said Rao.

Almost four years after the attack, "we have yet to really see a satisfactory closure to the investigations into that attack. We have conveyed and constantly stressed to Pakistan that it is necessary for our two countries to cooperate meaningfully in bringing those people who were responsible for this attack to book to see that justice is done."

Rao said there's serious concern within India that it could happen again.

"Because there are safe havens in Pakistan. There are groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba, as you know, a group that is described globally, who are able to move around pretty freely to broadcast, to address their constituencies within the country," she said.

The U.S. "pivot" toward the Asia-Pacific region confirms that the rising economic and military power of the East could outmatch Western powers if it loses focus. The U.S. decision to turn its attention to that part of the world is largely centered on counterbalancing Chinese power in the region, the increased importance of sea lanes as a conduit of global commerce and the free flow of information in cyberspace.

In doing so, the polite U.S.-India relationship since the end of the Cold War, has developed into "a very important, very crucial, very fundamental relationship," said Rao.

The full text of the interview may be seen at: <http://www.indianembassy.org/prdetail2065/text-of-ambassador-nirupama-raoandrsquo%3Bs-interview-with-national-security-correspondent-j.j.-green-of-wtop-radio-on-october-16%2C-2012>

Ambassador calls on Governor Beverly Perdue



Ambassador Nirupama Rao meets with Governor of North Carolina Beverly Eaves Perdue on October 8.

Ambassador hosts pre-Meridian Ball dinner at Embassy Residence



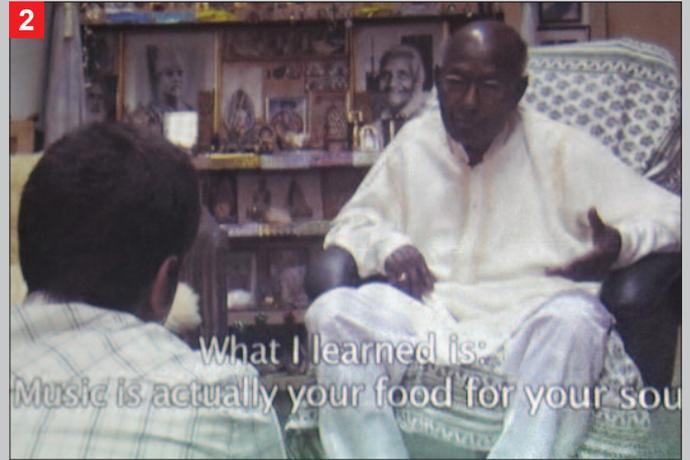
1. Ambassador Nirupama Rao welcoming and addressing the guests at the pre-Meridian Ball dinner hosted at the Embassy Residence on October 12.
2. Former Governor of Michigan and former U.S. Ambassador to Canada James Blanchard thanking Ambassador Nirupama Rao for hosting the pre-Meridian Ball dinner at the Embassy Residence.
3. Violinist Nistha Raj performing on the occasion.
4. Guests in attendance at the event.

Dr. Vishakha N. Desai at Embassy



1. Ambassador Nirupama Rao addressing the guests at the reception hosted in honor of Dr. Vishakha N. Desai, President Emerita, Asia Society, at the Embassy Residence on October 18.
2. Dr. Desai addressing the audience on the occasion.
3. Ryan Brown, conductor and artistic director of Opera Lafayette, speaking on the occasion.
4. Anuradha Nehru, founder, Kuchipudi Kalanidhi, addressing the guests.
5. Pianist Jeffery Watson presenting Barcarolle from Act 2 of Felicien David's opéra comique *Lalla Roukh*.
6. Dancers Silpa Nanan, Asha Dwarka, Deviga Valiyl and Pragnya Thamire from the Kuchipudi Kalanidhi performing to the music of Pandit Ravi Shankar and Philip Glass.
7. Guest in attendance.

Play Like a Lion screened at the Embassy



1. Dr. Masum Momaya, Curator of the Smithsonian's Indian American Heritage Project, addressing the guests at the screening of the film *Play Like a Lion: The Legacy of Maestro Ali Akbar Khan*, hosted by the Embassy of India in collaboration with the Smithsonian's Indian American Heritage Project at the Embassy on October 26.
2. A still from the film *Play Like a Lion: The Legacy of Maestro Ali Akbar Khan* directed by Joshua Dylan Mellars.

3. Joshua Dylan Mellars interacting with the guests during the screening of his film.
4. Prof. S.V. Srinivas, ICCR visiting professor, discussing the film with Joshua Dylan Mellars.
5. A section of the audience interacting with Joshua Dylan Mellars at the screening of his film.
6. Guests in attendance at the event.

Embassy hosts Fulbright scholars



1. Deputy Chief of Mission Ambassador Arun K. Singh addressing the gathering at the reception hosted in honor of the visiting participants of the Fulbright-Nehru International Education Administrators Seminar at the Embassy on October 23.
2. Dr. Vandana Chakrabarti, Pro Vice Chancellor, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, addressing the gathering.
3. Dr. Viresh Kumar Bhawra, Humphrey Fellow – India, Human Rights Center, University of Minnesota Law School, Minneapolis, speaking on the occasion.
4. Jim Moore, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, addressing the gathering.
5. A section of the audience at the event.

Other Events

Fourth Annual World of Montgomery Festival

To showcase the rich cultural heritage of Montgomery County through music, dance, visual art, cuisine and story-telling, the Fourth Annual World of Montgomery Festival was organized in Downtown Wheaton on October 21. The International Village exhibition this year featured India, China, El Salvador and Ethiopia. The Montgomery County government and the Wheaton Urban District were major partners in organizing the festival with the help of active community-based participation. Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett and Embassy representatives also attended the event.

India Celebrations at the Fourth Annual World of Montgomery Festival on October 21.



Gandhi statue unveiled in Davie, Florida

Unveiling the seven feet tall bronze statue, former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam applauded the ‘creative leadership’ of the organizers

Former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam and Davie Mayor Judy Paul unveiled a seven feet tall bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2 in the Town of Davie, Florida. Thousands of residents from the area, including Indian American families joined the festivities despite the heavy rains.

The 800 pound statue was sculpted by Matt Glenn of Big Statues, Provo, Utah, in cooperation with Sculptor’s Guild. As a token of respect to Gandhi, they also contributed toward the cost of the statue.

Babu Varghese, a member of the Board and an Engineer by profession, designed the Gandhi Square with half an acre of land that houses the statue. The square patterns with alternating colored step stones leading to the statue represent the steps Gandhi took in his

lifetime struggle to achieve freedom for India. These steps are bordered by lighted stone pillars which represent a “pathway of light” leading up to the statue itself. Then there are concentric circles with the curved wall behind it as if showing the letter G (for Gandhi) from above in an abstract form. The palm trees in the surrounding symbolize life, eternity, wisdom and victory.

Unveiling the statue, Dr. Kalam reflected on Gandhi’s life and the relevance of his teachings in today’s world. He applauded the “creative leadership” of the Board of Trustees of the Mahatma Gandhi Square Florida — a corporation organized for creating the Gandhi Square in Davie. Dr. Kalam said that “creative leadership” meant exercising the vision to change the traditional roles from commander to coach, manager to mentor, director to

delegator and from one who demands respect to one who facilitates self-respect. He thanked the leadership of Davie, Broward County, state of Florida and the Indian-American community for the warm reception accorded to him.

Declaring the day as the “World Peace & Mahatma Gandhi Day”, Mayor Judy Paul called the ceremony a “living tribute to world peace and the quest for social justice”. Mayor Paul welcomed the former President and enumerated many of his accomplishments. She particularly drew attention of her audience to Dr. Kalam’s humble beginnings and urged the children in the audience to follow his path. The members of the Town Council, State Senators Nan Rich and Eleanor Sobel and several elected officials were present on the occasion.

For the task bestowed on him, Varghese said, “What an honor for an Indian living in America to design a Gandhi Square here!” Joy Kuttiyani who initiated the project, called it “a wonderful achievement for the Indian community!”

Among the members of the Board of Trustees of the Mahatma Gandhi Square Florida, who were present on the occasion, were Dr. Piyush C. Agrawal, Joy Kuttiyani, Babu Varghese, Shekar Reddy, Chacko Philip, Hemant Patel, Vivek Swaroop and Dr Sajan Kurian.

1. Former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam (center), Mayor Judy Paul (right) and Dr. Piyush Agrawal at the event.
2. Mayor Judy Paul receiving a commemorative token of appreciation from President Dr. Kalam and Dr. Piyush Agrawal on behalf of the Indian Community.
3. Gandhi Square Board of Trustees: From left, Hemant Patel, Joy Kuttiyani, Babu Varghese, Piyush Agrawal, Vijay Narang, Sajan Kurian, and Chacko Philip.



Ambassador Rao inaugurates CGI Atlanta

For passport services, the jurisdiction of the new Consulate will be Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virgin Islands



Ambassador Nirupama Rao addresses the audience at the inauguration of the of the Consulate General of India in Atlanta on October 22.



Mayor of Sandy Springs Eva Galambos addressing the gathering at the inauguration of the Consulate.



From left, Margret Kumar, Congressman Rob Woodall, Dr. Galambos, Mayor of Sandy Springs Eva Galambos, Ambassador Nirupama Rao, Consul General Ajit Kumar, Manager of City of Sandy Springs John F. McDonough at the event.



Ambassador Nirupama Rao addresses the gathering at the reception at Heritage Hall of the city of Sandy Springs following the inauguration of the Consulate.

The new Consulate General of India in Atlanta is now open. Ambassador Nirupama Rao formally inaugurated the new Consulate on October, 22 in the presence of Mayor of Sandy Springs Eva Galambos, Congressman Rob Woodall, Chairman of the Democratic Party of Georgia Michael Berlon, several leaders of the Indian-American community and media.

Located at 5549 Glenridge Drive

NE, Atlanta, GA-30342, the new Consulate, however, started offering passport and miscellaneous consular services from October 1. For these services, the consular jurisdiction of the Consulate will be Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virgin Islands.

Ambassador Rao and Mayor Galambos addressed the audience at a reception held at the Heritage Hall in Sandy Springs following the inau-

guration. Dean and several members of the Consular Corps, President of the University of the West Georgia Michael Berlon, President of the University of Columbus State University Dr. Beheruz Sethna, Dr. Timothy S. Mescon, Professor Jagdish N. Sheth of Goizueta Business School, leaders of the Indian-American community, industry leaders, representatives of chambers of commerce and media attended the reception.



Ambassador Nirupama Rao at the new Consulate General of India in Atlanta with Sandy Springs Mayor Eva Galambos, US Representative Rob Woodall and the Indian community.



Ambassador Nirupama Rao and Consul General of India in Atlanta Ajit Kumar with Governor of Georgia Nathan Deal on October 23.

During her visit to Atlanta, Ambassador Rao also called on the Governor of Georgia Nathan Deal on

October 23 and discussed matters of mutual interest to improve relations between India and Georgia.

Detailed information about the new Consulate can be accessed at: <http://www.indianconsulateatlanta.org>

Consul General Ajit Kumar meets Indian community in South Florida

With the aim of familiarizing the Indian community on how his office intends to handle its passport and miscellaneous services operation, Consul General of India in Atlanta Ajit Kumar visited Miami, Fort Lauderdale and the Palm Beach area immediately after the announcement of the new consular

jurisdiction of the Embassy of India and its consulates in the U.S. Consul General Kumar noted that visa/OCI/PIO related services for the state of Florida would continue to be handled by the Houston Office for the time being.

The Indian community welcomed Consul General Ajit Kumar and held

a reception in his honor during the visit. On behalf of the community, Dr. Piyush C. Agrawal, in his welcoming remarks, highlighted Consul General Kumar's accomplishments during his various foreign service assignments. He also introduced the leadership of the community to the Consul General.



Consul General Ajit Kumar addressing the Indian community in South Florida.



Consul General Ajit Kumar with the Indian community leaders in South Florida during his visit.

Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in New York

Consul General of India in New York recalled Gandhi's influence on world leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Consulate General of India in New York in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan organized the 143rd birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi at the Union Square Park, near Gandhiji's statue, on October 2. The programme began with offering of floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at the statue by the dignitaries and participants.

Felicitating the gathering on the occasion, Consul General Prabhu Dayal said that on June 15, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly had declared October 2 to be marked each year as International Day of Non-Violence in honor of the great leader of India's Independence movement and proponent of satyagraha and strategy of non-violence. The Consul General recalled Gandhi's influence on world leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in shaping the non-violent movement for freedom and civil rights. He quoted the words of Albert Einstein about Gandhi and also mentioned that



Gandhi Jayanti celebrated with fervour at Union Square Park, New York.

President Barack Obama reiterated his faith in Gandhian principles. He further said that Gandhism was a way of life that could be adopted by people of all stratas of society.

Other speakers, notably H. R. Shah, Dr. Navin Mehta and Kenny Desai of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, D. Trivedi of Bank of Baroda and Dr. Najma Sultana also spoke about

Gandhian principles and emphasized the need of spreading the message of non-violence, peaceful coexistence and harmonious living.

The event concluded with a recital of Gandhiji's favorite *bhajans*, namely 'Vaishnav Jan To' and 'Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram' by the music academy of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.



'Make optimal use of India's FDI initiatives'

Speaking at a reception-cum-dinner hosted by the Consulate General of India in New York, Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed urged the members of the Indian-American community to make optimal use of the recently announced Foreign Direct Investment policy initiatives by the Government of India. Dharmendra Yadav, India's youngest Member of Parliament, who had addressed the United Nations in Hindi earlier, was also present on the occasion.

Complementing the Indian Foreign



From left, Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed, Member of Parliament Dharmendra Yadav and Consul General Prabhu Dayal speaking at the reception.

Service officers for their acumen and foresightedness in chalking out India's foreign policy, Minister

Ahamed said that India's foreign policy was dictated by the country's national interest.



'Uphold the honor and dignity of India'

Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur applauded the Indian-American community for its role in strengthening the relationship between India and the U.S.

Commending the Indian-American community for its role in improving the relations between India and the U.S., Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur urged the Indian diaspora to uphold the honor and dignity of India.

Speaking at a reception-cum-dinner hosted in her honor by the Consulate General of India in New York on October 18, Minister Kaur said that although the global economic slowdown had affected the Indian economy she was hopeful of its resurgence soon.

Other dignitaries who graced the occasion included former Minister of Civil Aviation and Urban Development Anand Kumar, Member of Parliament



Consul General Prabhu Dayal (left) and Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur addressing the audience at the reception.

Dereck O'Brien and Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri.

Admiring her valuable contribution in the Ministry of External Affairs, Consul General Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, highlighted the welfare meas-

ures initiated by her in the Ministry. He also welcomed Anand Kumar and Dereck O'Brien who thanked Ambassador Dayal for providing an opportunity to meet the Indian diaspora. The two leaders talked about the vibrancy of Indian democracy and its economic resilience.

'India Day' celebration by Pace University



1. Consul General of India delivering his welcome remarks.
2. Provost of the University Dr. Uday Sukhatme addressing the audience
3. Consul General with senior officials of Pace University
4. Guests in attendance.

The Consul General of India in New York hosted a reception on October 19 at New India House in recognition of the Pace University, New York, celebrating that day as 'India Day'.

Consul General Prabhu Dayal said that the celebration of 'India Day' by Pace University was indicative of the close relationship between India and the United States. He commended the Indian academic community in the

U.S. for promoting closer understanding between the two countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Provost of the University Dr. Uday Sukhatme, thanked the Consul General for hosting the evening reception as a part of the university's 'India Day' celebrations.

CGI New York hosts CIIS alumni gathering

The Consul General of India in New York hosted a reception for the New York Chapter of the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) alumni gathering at New India House on October 26.

Welcoming the gathering, Consul General Prabhu Dayal, citing examples of ancient philosophy, underlined the values of integral education and its relevance in contemporary living.

The highlight of the evening was a lecture by Ameeta Mehra, Chairperson of the Gnostic Centre and International Centre for Integral Studies, New Delhi.



Consul General Prabhu Dayal (left) and Ameeta Mehra, the guest lecturer of the evening, speaking on the occasion.

8 percent GDP growth not impossible to attain: PM

Alluding to the downturn in the Eurozone, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on October 19 said India was in need of an aggregate growth rate of 8 percent per annum and stressed that although it won't be easy, it was also not unattainable.

The Prime Minister said India needed an aggregate growth rate of 8 percent per annum to create new jobs for more than 10 million persons who would enter the labor force each year.

"This is not going to be an easy task, given the international economic environment. However, it is not unattainable if we make determined efforts to increase our investment rate to 37-38 percent, as was the case three years ago," Prime Minister Singh said.

"The continuing uncertainty and weaknesses in the Eurozone economies have hobbled the pace of growth, including in Asian economies.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh

Inevitably, India too has had to deal with the fallout of slowing growth, falling exports and expanding deficits," the Prime Minister said.

He underlined the importance of creating "an environment conducive for increased investment and savings rates", and called for devoting particular attention to investment in infrastructure sectors.

Narayana Murthy receives 2012 Hoover Medal

N.R. Narayana Murthy, co-founder of IT giant Infosys who has used his business success to "give back" to his native India, has been named recipient of the prestigious 2012 Hoover Medal.

Murthy received the honor on October 22 at the Global Humanitarian Technology Conference in Seattle, Washington.

The Hoover Medal was established in 1930 to recognize great, unselfish, non-technical services by engineers to humanity. Previous awardees include former U.S. presidents Herbert Hoover, Dwight D. Eisenhower and James Earl Carter.

Murthy, who is the 70th recipient since the medal's inception, was recognized for establishing a foundation that forges outstanding improvements in healthcare, social rehabilitation, rural uplift and education.

The Infosys Science Foundation was established in 2009 to promote science research in India.

One of the world's most admired business leaders, Murthy co-founded Infosys Limited in 1981.

IBS acquires US hotel booking solutions firm

IBS Software Services, headquartered at Technopark in Thiruvananthapuram announced on October 24 that it had acquired Atlanta-based Hotel Booking Solutions (HBSI) through a multi-million dollar deal.

With this acquisition, over hundred leading players in the hospitality industry, including Starwood, Harrahs, Raffles, Ramada, Fairmont and Kerzner on the supply partner side, as well as Expedia, Orbitz and Travelocity on the distribution side, will join the IBS stable.

The acquisition was made by buying over the entire shareholding of Crosslink Capital, the San Francisco-based leading private equity and venture capital firm. Crosslinks Capital has over \$1.8 billion in assets with investments in around 100 companies.

'Doing business in India easier now'

Doing business in India has become easier with the country implementing 17 regulatory reforms, states a new joint study by International Finance Corp (IFC) and World Bank released on October 23.

However, when it comes to starting a business in India, the report said the country's ranking was 173 out of 185 countries.

According to the report, India has improved the regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs more than any other economy in South Asia since 2005.

Among other things, India has reduced the time required to obtain a building permit by establishing strict time limits for preconstruction approvals.

The report said economies of South



Asia have implemented 65 regulatory reforms to make doing business easier.

The study assesses regulations affecting domestic firms in 185 economies and ranks the economies in 10 areas of business regulation, such as starting a business, trading across borders, and resolving insolvency.

The report finds that India is the first economy in the region to make dealing with construction permits easier for local firms since 2005.

'India a treasure house of knowledge'

Inaugurating the 4th International Conference on Medicinal Plants and Herbal Products (ICMPHP-2012) at Johns Hopkins University Campus, Montgomery, Maryland, on September 6, Ambassador Nirupama Rao said that the popularity of complementary and alternative medicine or traditional medicine was growing worldwide rapidly and that India's ancient systems of medicines were a treasure trove for both preventive and curative healthcare. "The World Health Organization estimates that herbal and traditional medicines are still the mainstay of significant number of people around the world, mainly in the developing countries, for primary health care," she pointed out.

Ambassador Rao underlined the efforts taken by India to promote the use of medicinal plants and the Indian system of medicine during her speech. She said that there had been a steady upsurge in global trade in medicinal plants and products, including gums and resin, essential oil, vegetable saps, plants and extracts thereof. "India's share in global export is also growing and was about \$790 million in 2010," she said.

Commending the organizers of the three-day conference for their efforts in promoting greater awareness and international collaboration in different aspects of the medicinal and herbal plants, Ambassador Rao said that India and the United States has immense potential for strengthening collaboration in areas of healthcare, bio-technology and medical research. "And it is in accordance with our development objectives of providing efficient and affordable delivery of health care services," she said.

Organized by the George Washington University School of Medicine and Public Health, Washington DC, the three-day conference starting from September 6, attracted more than 200 participant



From left, Ambassador Nirupama Rao delivering the keynote address; Dr. Krishna Banaudha, Organizing Secretary of 4th ICMPHP, speaking on the occasion.

Ambassador Rao said that there had been a steady upsurge in global trade in medicinal plants and products, including gums and resin, essential oil, vegetable saps, plants and extracts thereof

Following is an excerpt from Ambassador Nirupama Rao's speech on the occasion:

"Medicinal plants and products derived from them have been used through ages across different countries. And the therapeutic use of herbal medicines has been gaining considerable momentum in the world during the past decade. The World Health Organization estimates that herbal and traditional medicines are still the mainstay of significant number of people around the world, mainly in the developing countries, for primary health care.

India possesses an unmatched heritage represented by its ancient systems of medicine which are a treasure house of knowledge for both preventive and curative healthcare. Complementary and alternative medicine or traditional medicine is rapidly growing worldwide. In India also, there is resurgence of interest in the Indian Systems of Medicine. India has unique distinction of possessing large varieties of medicinal plants, knowledge associated with them and a significant network of infrastructure required for their promotion and propagation. India has 15 agro-climatic zones and medicinal plants are distributed across all regions, diverse habitats and landscapes.

India has one of the oldest and most diverse cultural traditions, associated with the use of medicinal plants."

experts from around the world.

"The aim of the Conference is to provide a vibrant platform for eminent researchers, academicians, physicians, traditional medical practitioners, manufacturers & exporters of herbal products, representative of the corporate sector, marketing consultants and NGOs from all over the world," Dr. Krishna Banaudha, Director Genoma Ayurveda, the Organizing Secretary of 4th ICMPHP-2012, said.

Welcoming India's decision to make clinical trials mandatory for all the existing and new Ayurvedic medicinal products in the country, Dr. Banaudha said the conference would help establish a link with the scientific and research institutions for taking this science of Ayurveda, medicinal plants and herbal product developments to the next level of growth and scientific enquiry.

Transforming the landscape of rural Rajasthan

Through his innovative rainwater harvesting project 'Aakash Ganga', Indian-American Dr. BP Agrawal is pioneering social change, and transforming the landscape in rural Rajasthan. So far, Aakash Ganga has provided safe water to six villages, home to 10,000 villagers in Rajasthan's most drought prone areas. With the help of grants from the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, and philanthropic contributions from the Indian diaspora, Aakash Ganga is set to provide water to 50,000 people by 2013.

Explaining the project Dr. Agrawal said, "Aakash Ganga is a rainwater harvesting scheme which channels rooftop rainwater through gutters and drainpipes to two-tier, underground reservoirs, where it is then available for the year round use of the village."

Aakash Ganga aims to be systemically sustainable. So once established, the project supports itself: economically, culturally, socially, institutionally, operationally, ecologically and technologically. To ensure scalability, Aakash Ganga adapted the model of the utility industry and simplified it to 'rooftop rentals'. It rents rooftops from homeowners to acquire rainwater harvesting rights, a process similar to the utility industry's acquisition of passage rights for a fee.

In 2010, Dr. Agrawal won the Lemelson — Massachusetts Institute of Technology Award for Sustainability,



(Clockwise from top) Dr. BP Agrawal receiving the Energy Globe World Award from UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner; Arogya Ghar personnel at work in rural Rajasthan and a 40,000 litre Aakash Ganga tank at Raila village in Rajasthan.

and the Energy Globe World Award, both given to those who spark and sustain innovation, and the inventive spirit.

Aakash Ganga comes under the umbrella institution, Sustainable Innovations (www.si-usa.org).

Another Sustainable Innovations offspring, Arogya Ghar, created in partnership with Atul Jain, founder and

CEO of TEOCO Corporation, is addressing the need for basic healthcare in rural Rajasthan. Arogya is training a cadre of high school educated women to operate healthcare kiosks, or 'clinics'. Earlier, Aakash Ganga and Arogya Ghar both received the World Bank's \$200,000 Development Marketplace award for innovation. 

'27th ASEI national convention a major success'

With over 300 guests, including scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs and corporate executives attending GET2012 — the 27th national convention of the American Society of Engineers of Indian Origin (ASEI) at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center in Dearborn, Michigan, on October 6, the organizers have termed the convention a major success. "The convention



provided unparalleled opportunity to learn, exchange information and network," the ASEI said. Mayor of the City of Detroit Dave Bing described the convention day as "Green Engineering & Technology Day".

Ravi Saligram, CEO of OfficeMax, delivered the keynote address at the convention that featured over 18 technical speakers from academia and the industry such as Boeing, NASA, Harman International, DTE Energy, Ford Motor Company and others. Besides panel discussions on green technologies, merit scholarships worth \$5,500 were awarded to engineering students from all across the nation.



Windows into diverse India – Bollywood style

Indian audience is increasingly appreciating the movies that go beyond the obvious and showcase different shades of Indian culture

Bollywood is going pan-Indian. From Parsi and Marathi to Gujarati and Bengali, filmmakers are bringing diverse cultures to the Hindi film firmament. And the credit for this versatility goes to changing tastes and mindsets of the viewers.

Sujoy Ghosh's *Kahaani* is a case in point. Made in Hindi, it had a strong Bengali flavor and was also shot in Kolkata, appealing to audiences so much so that it earned almost 10 times more than its total cost.

Lauding the new trend that he believes is a "great time for Indian cinema", Ghosh said: "We make films with themes we are familiar with. For me, it was easy to write about Bengali



(Top) Vidya Balan in a still from *Kahaani*; (Left) Rani Mukherjee plays a Marathi girl in *Aiyaa*

culture, as I am a Bengali. Thanks to the audience, they are allowing us to experiment."

Another small budget film, *Vicky Donor*, wove both Punjabi and Bengali cultures to show an interesting cultural contrast. And it worked.

This \$1-million project, made by director Shoojit Sircar on an unconventional theme of sperm donation, got the thumbs up from the viewers, earning \$8.2 million.

It is a win-win situation for all — the viewer gets fresh stories to watch, directors are able to explore and experiment and producers are laughing all the way to the bank.

Said an excited Sircar: "This is a new trend, which is very fascinating; and the best part is that these films are accepted by the audience. I really appreciate this era. This is a tribute to Indian cinema."

Sanjay Leela Bhansali gave insights into the Gujarati community in *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*, Catholics in *Khamoshi — The Musical*, Anglo Indians in *Black* and Bengalis in *Devdas*. His sister Bela focused on the Parsi community in her debut film *Shirin Farhad Ki Toh Nikal Padi* and it was satisfactory, businesswise.

"Parsi community talk is very *bindaas*. They are very bold and sweet. I just picked up this aspect because I wanted to show them as nice and fun-loving people," Bela, whose film was about a 40-plus Parsi couple, said.

The success of these films is proof of the viewers' open-mindedness. ■

Dharambuddhi and Paapbuddhi

(From *Panchatantra*, a collection of ancient Indian fables)

In a village, there lived two friends. Their names were Dharambuddhi and Paapbuddhi. Paapbuddhi was not satisfied with the wealth he possessed. Contrary to this, Dharambuddhi was not only intelligent, but had also a lot of wealth with him. Paapbuddhi made a plan to earn wealth with the help of Dharambuddhi.

One day, he said to Dharambuddhi, "Friend, why are you wasting your talent here? If you go to some other town, you may come across many opportunities to earn a lot of money and fame. If you like, I can also accompany you to the new town."

Dharambuddhi agreed to the proposal of Paapbuddhi. Both of them set out on a long journey to settle in a new town. Dharambuddhi became very famous and rich in the new town.

After Dharambuddhi and Paapbuddhi had earned a lot of money, they decided to return to their home town. As they arrived near their home town, Paapbuddhi said to Dharambuddhi, "I suppose it will be better if we don't carry all our wealth with us. Our relatives may ask for their share. Let's take a nominal amount with us and bury the rest in a pit here. When the need arises, we may come here again and take out the money."

So, they dug up a pit and after burying their wealth in it, they went to their respective homes. But, thereafter, in one dark night Paapbuddhi visited the pit all alone and along with his money he stole Dharambuddhi's money also.

After a few days Paapbuddhi went to Dharambuddhi and said, "Friend I need some money. Let us go to the pit to take out some money." Dharambuddhi agreed to it. When they reached the spot they dug up the pit, but there was no wealth in the pit.

"I never did it," said Dharambuddhi in great anger. Both of them began to fight with each



other and at last, the matter was taken to the court.

Paapbuddhi narrated the whole story and said to the judge, "My lord! Dharambuddhi denies that he dug up the wealth in my absence. So, in my opinion the court should hear the tree also who was the sole witness to all that happened to the wealth there."

The court agreed to this and fixed a date when the court would visit the tree to know the tree's version.

In the meantime, Paapbuddhi told his father, "Father, you know, I've stolen the wealth of Dharambuddhi. I want you to help me, or else I'll be caught and punished by the court."

"What am I supposed to do?" asked Paapbuddhi's father, "I don't want to lose the wealth."

"Well," said Paapbuddhi, "there is a Shami tree in the jungle. We had buried the wealth near this tree. The tree is hollow from inside. You just hide in the hollow. When the judges ask you to name the thief you shout from inside the tree. 'It's Dharambuddhi.'" His father agreed to do it.

On the appointed day, the judge, accompanied by Paapbuddhi and

Dharambuddhi and other people, went to the tree. Paapbuddhi then went near the tree and asked in a loud voice, "O, divine tree, tell us the name of the thief."

Immediately, there came a voice from inside the tree, "Dharambuddhi is the thief. He has stolen the wealth."

The judge was wonderstruck to hear the tree speak.

But, meanwhile, Dharambuddhi put a heap of dry leaves and grass around the tree and lighted it. Everyone failed to understand what Dharambuddhi was upto. Soon there was a big fire around the tree trunk. After sometime, Paapbuddhi's father jumped out of the hollow of the tree yelling for help. Half of his body was burnt and his eyes were popping out.

Now everything was crystal clear. The judge understood the whole story. He held Paapbuddhi responsible for the theft. He ordered his men of the court to hang Paapbuddhi to death by the same Shami tree.

The people were happy that Dharambuddhi, after all, got justice. Paapbuddhi was rightly punished for his greed and dishonesty.

'King of Romance' Yash Chopra passes away



He worked with Ashok Kumar to Shah Rukh Khan and Mala Sinha to Anushka Sharma in his over five-decade glorious cinematic journey, and the title of Yash Chopra's new film, *Jab Tak Hai Jaan*, summed up the ace filmmaker's philosophy — making path-breaking movies till he could.

His death on October 21 came weeks before the release of *Jab Tak Hai Jaan*, which he had announced would be his last directorial venture.

Chopra, who turned 80 on September 27, was born in Lahore in 1932 and eventually came to Mumbai after Partition. In an interview some days before he was hospitalized with dengue, Chopra told Shah Rukh Khan: "My mother said do what your heart says. She gave me ₹200 and said my blessings are with you. Go ahead and don't worry."

He also said whatever he achieved, was because of his late brother and filmmaker



B.R. Chopra, whom he assisted at the beginning of his Bollywood career.

He admitted that it was not easy to start Yash Raj Films, his production house, in 1971.

To the world, Chopra was known as the 'King of Romance', a well-deserved title after he created memorable love stories in *Daag*, *Kabhi Kabhie*, *Silsila*, *Chandni*, *Dil To Pagal Hai*, and *Veer Zaara*. To keep up with evolving audiences, he adapted new trends in each era and made most glamorous and trendy romances.

But Chopra's oeuvre was not limited to just romance and relationships. In his five decade-long career, he experimented with all genres.

His first film *Dhool Ka Phool* in 1959 was the story of an illegitimate Hindu child being brought up by a Muslim. His next project, *Dharamputra* (1961) was another hard-hitting film on communal conflict, and was one of the first films to depict the Partition and Hindu fundamentalism.

A precedent-setter, Chopra's 1965 critically successful drama *Waqt* pioneered the concept of multi-starters in Bollywood, while *Ittefaq* (1969) was a taut thriller,

'SILSILA' OF CHOPRA'S CREATIVE JOURNEY

Yash Chopra gave Indian cinema some path-breaking movies in his 53-year-long career.

- *Dhool Ka Phool* (1959)
- *Dharamputra* (1961)
- *Waqt* (1965)
- *Aadmi Aur Insaan* (1969)
- *Ittefaq* (1969)
- *Daag: A Poem of Love* (1973)
- *Joshila* (1973)
- *Deewaar* (1975)
- *Kabhi Kabhie — Love Is Life* (1976)
- *Trishul* (1978)
- *Kaala Patthar* (1979)
- *Silsila* (1981)
- *Mashaal* (1984)
- *Faasle* (1985)
- *Vijay* (1988)
- *Chandni* (1989)
- *Lamhe* (1991)
- *Parampara* (1992)
- *Darr* (1993)
- *Dil To Pagal Hai* (1997)
- *Veer-Zaara* (2004)
- *Jab Tak Hai Jaan* (2012)

being the first Hindi film which did not have any songs or an interval.

In his career, he won many awards, including the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2001, six National Awards, 11 Filmfare Awards and was conferred the Padma Bhushan in 2005.

A FISHING EXPEDITION

While away your time fishing, go boating on the traditional vallam, meditate beside the backwaters and when tired, take a cool siesta in the lap of nature... **Moushumi Mohanty** decodes the real Kumarakom — a serene backwater destination in Kerala

Vembanad Lake

A RIDE in a canoe becomes a canoe ride only if it is accompanied by loud renditions of a boat song. Mind you, it cannot be any song. It has to be a boat song or a fisherman song keeping pace with the rhythm of the oars. Here we go:

*Thi thi thara
thi thi thaeiy
thi thaeiy
thaga thai thai tho*

The Canoe (Vallam) Ride

We (hubby, our son and I) set off early from Kodianthara Heritage Home, walking along the canal toward the wharf in one of the larger waterways leading into the Vembanad lake. The canal is, in turn, connected to smaller waterways. Much like in Venice. Only we are in Kumarakom in Kerala's Kottayam district.

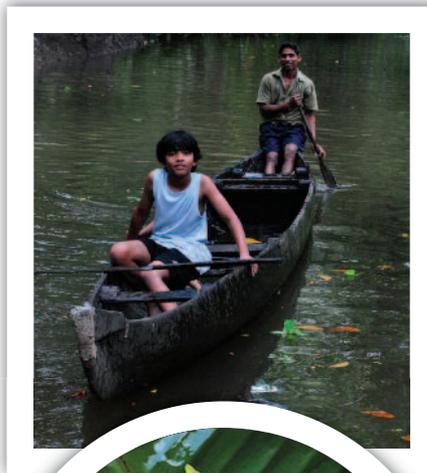
We had asked for an oar-driven, traditional *vallam* (canoe) and had refused all offers of a speedy motorboat. We want a real experience, not a touristy one, we had said.

Once in, we set sail with loud battle cries as we charge toward imaginary battles with BIG GAME. "How big are sharks," asks my son, on his first trip to sea (OK, a lake — but it is a very large lake: 7 kms long and 5 kms across). "Very BIG," I answer, with the conviction of a seasoned fisherwoman.

The Lobster

We move into the deeper waters of the lake and then curve back to land at

(Top) Travel into the heart of the scenic Vembanad lake with a traditional canoe ride. (Below) Lip-smacking seafood varieties of lobsters and prawns satisfy the gastronomic senses.



How to reach:

KUMARAKOM is approximately a two-hour drive from Cochin International Airport. Buses and taxis are easily available at all times of the day from Kottayam and Kochi. Kottayam serves as the closest railway station, located at a distance of about 15 kms from Kumarakom. Cochin International Airport at Nedumbassery is the closest airport at a distance of 85 kms. Kumarakom is also accessible by boat from Alaphuzza, which is another major tourist destination in Kerala.

What to see:

KUMARAKOM is the right mix of activity and relaxation. Visit the Vembanad Lake, Water Bird Sanctuary, Bay Island Driftwood Museum and Aruvikkuzhi Waterfalls.

a quiet eatery on the banks. We have to order lunch before we move on, says one of the boatmen, who has become our guide by now. As we alight, we notice a lobster in the water along the bank. Though the lobster is moving, it is not swimming away.

The owner of the *kada*, or shop, offers to fry the lobster for us.

We settle nearby and stuff our hooks with mashed tapioca — that's a big hit with fish, we are told. The three of us drop our lines and wait and wait and wait. No sign of a tug. Instead, the clever fish are nudging the tapioca out of the hook and having a feast.

As I watch my umpteenth bait being hogged down there with much relish, the lobster arrives on a plate. My companions refuse my half-hearted offer to share it. How thoughtful! "How can you eat so soon after breakfast," someone remarks. I decide no time is a bad time for lobsters. Give me lobster, anytime, anywhere. And I'll do justice to it.

Moving to Hook-happy Fish

Since the fish here are very smart, we decide to move to Pathira Manal (Midnight Sands), an island in the Vembanad, in search of foolish fish. On the way, all of us lend a hand to the oar to steer the boat faster.

The new venue is a cool spot under a huge nutmeg tree. Here, the fish are slightly bigger, about 6-7 inches long. Another boatman assures us they are dumb with a conviction that betrays foul play. So we begin the waiting game again. These fish are better "nudgers" than the ones we've left behind. We keep refilling our hooks and feeding the fish till all of us get tired and want to go back.

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■ Festival of nine nights



Devotees hold lit earthen oil lamps as they participate in a Maha Aarti, a religious ritual at Umiya Mataji temple in Surat, some 275 kms from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on October 22. Devotees thronged in their thousands on the occasion of 'Atham', the eighth night of Navratri or Festival of Nine Nights. (Photo: AFP)

EMBASSY OF INDIA

2107 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20008

Tel: 202-939-7000; Fax: 202-462-7276

E-mail: indembwash@indiagov.org



Website: www.indianembassy.org

www.facebook.com/Indembassyusa

CONSULATES

Consulate General of India
3 East, 64th Street
New York
N.Y. 10065

Tel: 212-774-0600
Fax: 212-861-3788
E-mail:
cg@indiacgny.org
Website:
www.indiacgny.org

Consulate General of India
540 Arguello Boulevard
San Francisco
CA 94118

Tel: 415-668-0662
Fax: 415-668-2073
E-mail:
info@cgisf.org
Website:
www.cgisf.org

Consulate General of India
455 North Cityfront Plaza Drive
(NBC Tower Building)
Suite #850 Chicago, IL 60611

Tel. 312-595-0405 to 0410
Fax. 312-595-0416
E-mail:
cg@indianconsulate.com
Website:
www.chicago.indianconsulate.com

Consulate General of India
4300 Scotland Street
Houston
Texas 77007

Tel. 713-626-2148/49
Fax. 713-626-2450
E-mail:
cgj-hou@swbell.net
Website:
www.cgihouston.org

Consulate General of India
5549 Glenridge Drive NE,
Atlanta,
GA 30342

Tel: +1-404-963-5902
Fax: +1-678-949-9657
Email:
cg.atlanta@mea.gov.in