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Greetings from the Embassy of India in Washington, DC. This is the 'India Media Digest' - a bi-weekly compilation of top India-related articles appearing in the media. We hope you will find this useful.

Sincerely,

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Counsellor (Press, Information & Culture)
Embassy of India
Washington, DC

January 22, 2014

[Ambassador Dr. S. Jaishankar's Interview with Reuters Reuters, January 22, 2014](#)

Ambassador Dr. S. Jaishankar discusses the valuable relationship between India and the US in a recent interview with Reuters. A video of the interview is also available [here](#).

[Richemont seeks entry into India's luxury retail market Reuters, January 16](#)

Luxury goods group Richemont, whose stable of brands includes jewelers Cartier and Van Cleef&Arpels, has applied to open shops in India, joining other global retailers who entered the market since New Delhi relaxed investment rules. The entry could be a boost for the country's luxury retail sector, which represents a tiny fraction of global luxury brands' sales but has a fast-rising number of wealthy people.

[Federal Officials Return Looted Antiquities to India The New York Times, January 14](#)

Federal officials recently returned three stolen antiquities worth about \$1.5 million to the Indian Consulate in New York, among them a 350-pound sandstone sculpture snatched from an Indian temple in 2009 that had been among Interpol's Top 10 stolen works of art. The ceremony showcased efforts by the Department of Homeland Security Investigations, which has worked with India to recover dozens of looted cultural artifacts in recent years. "I deeply appreciate the excellent work" of American officials, Consul General Dnyaneshwar M. Mulay said after receiving the items on behalf of his country from James A. Dinkins, executive associate director of Homeland Security Investigations.

[Indian Satellite Launch Marks Big Success for New Rocket Engine Spaceflight Now, January 14](#)

India's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle put a 2.1-ton communications satellite in orbit in January, boosting prospects for the medium-class launcher. Although it carried a costly communications satellite, India's space agency officially considered the launch a test flight for the GSLV and its indigenous hydrogen-fueled third stage. The 161-foot-tall rocket blasted off at 1048 GMT (5:48 a.m. EST) on Jan. 5, darting through a clear afternoon sky over the SatishDhawan Space Center on India's east coast, where it was 4:18 p.m. local time.

[India Is Building The World's Largest Solar Plant For \\$4.4 Billion Agence France-Prese, January 15](#)

Electricity-hungry India is flipping the switch on huge new solar energy projects to fuel its growing economy, using cheap technology to reduce once sky-high generation costs to competitive levels. Since 2010, India has hiked installed solar power capacity from a meager 17.8 megawatts to more than 2,000MW, official figures show, as part of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's aim to make "the sun occupy center-stage" in the country's energy mix. Key to the progress has been a rapid fall in the cost per unit of solar electricity to close to what is known as "grid parity" -- the cost of conventional electricity generated by carbon-gas emitting coal. "The world is watching the ability of Indian entrepreneurs to achieve grid parity for solar energy," India's World Bank country director OnnoRuhl said recently.

[Signs of economic recovery says India finance minister The BRICs Post, January 15](#)

Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Wednesday asserted that India will get back to high growth path in the next three years. "It is true that there has been a slowdown in 2012-13 and in current year. The slowdown reflects the worldwide trend. As global economy recovers and as new measures take effect, I am confident that Indian economy will also get back step by step to the high growth path in three years", he said. The World Bank in a latest round of forecasts on Wednesday said India will grow by 6.2% in 2014-15.

[India woos foreign filmmakers with faster approvals Agence France-Presse, January 15](#)

India has simplified rules for foreign moviemakers wanting to film in the country and is promising speedy approval of projects. The ministry of information and broadcasting said it was "inviting" foreign filmmakers to make their movies in India -- "a country with locations of untold beauty". "We have simplified the procedure for shooting of films by foreigners in India," the ministry of information and broadcasting said on its website.

[India to be declared polio-free 3 years after last case Reuters, January 13](#)

India recently marked three years since its last reported case of polio, paving the way for it to be declared free of the crippling virus and boosting efforts to wipe out the disease globally, the World Health Organization (WHO) said. The country's last case of the wild polio virus was detected on January 13, 2011, in a two-year-old girl in the state of West Bengal. Three years without any new cases means India can be declared polio-free. "We give huge credit to the government . . . It makes us extremely proud and highly responsible for having helped the government to reach this incredible achievement," India's WHO representative, NataMenabde, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

[India's sizzling food business Al-Jazeera, January 15](#)

India's restaurant and food service sector is heating up. Fast-paced growth, world-class processes and high hygiene standards are fast changing what once used to be an unorganized industry that rarely attracted investment. The size of the sector is huge. According to Samir Kuckreja, president of the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), "Overall the food service industry has grown significantly to \$12bn. The food service sector today contributes seven times more than the hotel sector to the country's GDP and is the top third largest contributor after retail and insurance in the service segment."

[India Almost Doubled Its Solar Power In 2013 With Big Plans For More ThinkProgress, January 21](#)

India added just over 1 gigawatt of solar energy to its electrical grid in 2013, a major milestone that nearly doubles the country's cumulative solar energy capacity to 2.18 gigawatts. After a slow start to the year, solar installation picked up rapidly -- a good sign that India will be able to meet its ambitious solar targets going forward. India hopes to install 10 GW of solar by 2017 and 20 GW by 2022.

[India's Farmers Benefit From Better Roads Bloomberg Businessweek, January 16](#)

For three decades, LahuBhiwa, a rice farmer in India, loaded his crop onto an ox cart and sold it to families in his village, earning about 2,000 rupees (\$32) a month. His life changed in 2010, when bulldozers cleared the way for a paved road linking Kainad, where he lives, with the western coastal town of Dahanu. The asphalt road turned a three-hour journey by foot along a dirt path into a 25-minute car ride. Bhiwa, whose monthly income has tripled to 6,000 rupees since the road was built, now sells to the highest bidder and checks benchmark prices on a mobile phone bought with the extra money he's earned. "Our life has completely changed for the better ever since this road was built," he says. In the 10 years since Prime Minister Manmohan Singh took office, the growth rate of India's food output has doubled, boosted by the replacement of dirt paths with 600,000 kilometers (373,000 miles) of paved roads, the addition of 327 million rural phone lines, and a record improvement in literacy.

[India set for record food grain output - minister Reuters, January 15](#)

India is set for a record food grain output in the current crop year to June, Farm Minister SharadPawar said on Wednesday, as last year's monsoon rains helped planting of winter crops. "We will be approaching towards an all-time record food grains production in 2013/14," Pawar told reporters at an event of farm scientists. India, the world's second biggest rice and wheat grower, produced 255.36 million tons of food grains in 2012/13. It had produced a record 259.29 million tons in the previous year.