

# India Review

■ Vol. 5 Issue 6

■ [www.indianembassy.org](http://www.indianembassy.org)



President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil administering the oath of office to Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at a swearing-in ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, on May 22. (INSET) India's Ambassador to the U.S. Ms. Meera Shankar presenting her credentials to U.S. President Barack Obama at the Oval Office on May 20.

## Dr. Manmohan Singh takes charge as Prime Minister for a second term

■ Tata Group, SBI and Infosys among 17 Indian firms in the world's top 50 most reputed cos' list.

■ Leading telecom operator Bharti Airtel's mobile phone subscriber base crosses the 100-million mark.

■ India's second-largest lender ICICI Bank enters into a pact with Visa to issue debit cards in the U.S.

# Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh returns to historic second term

## *Seventy-nine strong Council of Ministers sworn in*

It was a full house and a standing ovation on May 22, as Dr. Manmohan Singh took the oath of office for a second consecutive term as Prime Minister of India. Dr. Singh, the first Prime Minister after Jawaharlal Nehru to get a second opportunity after a full term, was sworn in by President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil exactly five years to the date after the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government assumed office in 2004. Prime Minister Singh was sworn in along with 19 Cabinet ministers.

The oath-taking ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan was attended among others by Vice President Mohd. Hamid Ansari, UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi, and Leader of the Opposition Mr. L.K. Advani, among a host of other dignitaries from public life.

On May 28, in the second phase of ministry formation, President Patil administered the oath of office to 59 ministers. The full Council of Ministers now has 79 ministers, including the Prime Minister.

Mr. S.M. Krishna is India's new



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh soon after taking the oath of office at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on May 22.

Minister for External Affairs while former External Affairs Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee is the new Finance Minister.

Former UN Under Secretary-General Dr. Shashi Tharoor, and Smt. Preneet

Kaur are the new Ministers of State for External Affairs.

The government formation came about at the end of what has been described as the world's biggest democratic exercise, spanning a period of one month (April 16-May 16), when more than 400 million Indians cast their votes to elect a new Parliament.

### **Governance Priorities**

Addressing the media, after the swearing-in ceremony, the Prime Minister outlined his priorities. "Our first priority is to restore the economy, especially keeping the global recession in mind," the Prime Minister said.

"Industrial production is down. Certain sectors need revival, though the Indian economy is not so badly affected. Corrective measures have to be taken. Growth will be our main focus. And when I mean growth, I mean inclusive growth that will carry everyone along, including the underprivileged in the country," Dr. Singh said. He added that infrastructure would be a key focal point of his Government.

## President Obama congratulates Dr. Manmohan Singh

U.S. President Barack Obama congratulated Dr. Manmohan Singh on May 23, a day after he was sworn in as India's Prime Minister for a second successive term. The two leaders resolved to work together on global challenges, including terrorism.

In their telephonic conversation, President Obama said he looked forward to continuity in the India-U.S. strategic partnership.

Obama also congratulated India on "successfully completing the largest democratic exercise that the world has ever seen", terming it "a testament to the strength of India's democracy", a White House statement said.

"The two leaders recalled their warm meeting in London on April 2 (during the G20



summit) and discussed their mutual desire to strengthen India-U.S. relations and work together to address common global challenges, such as the economic downturn, climate change, and counterterrorism," the statement added. President Obama also invited the Prime Minister to visit Washington, it said.

Dr. Manmohan Singh too reiterated his invitation to First Lady Michelle and President Obama to visit India.

Earlier, on May 16, when the election results confirmed a resounding victory for the Dr. Manmohan Singh-led UPA Government, the U.S. President had congratulated India on its "historic" national elections saying he "looks forward to continuing to work with the Indian government to enhance the warm partnership between our two countries".

"By successfully completing the largest exercise of popular voting in the world, the elections have strengthened India's vibrant democracy and upheld the values of freedom and pluralism that make India an example for us all," a White House spokesman said.



# SM Krishna is new Foreign Minister

**M**r. S. M. Krishna, a widely respected leader, and a former Chief Minister of Karnataka, on May 23 assumed charge as India's new External Affairs Minister.

Born on May 1, 1932, Mr. Krishna graduated from Maharaja's College, Mysore, and went on to obtain a law degree from the Government Law College, Bengaluru. Later, he studied at the Southern Methodist University, Dallas, and also at George Washington University as a Fulbright scholar.

Back in India, he worked as a Professor of International Law at Renukacharya Law College, Bengaluru. He was elected to the Karnataka Legislative Assembly in 1962 and made his debut in Parliament in 1968, becoming a Member of the fourth Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament).

Mr. Krishna was re-elected to the fifth Lok Sabha, but preferred to return to State politics in 1972, when he was elected to the Legislative Council and inducted as Minister for Commerce, Industries and Parliamentary Affairs, a charge he held till 1977.


In 1980, he returned to the Lok Sabha and was made Minister of State for Industry in 1983-84 and Minister of State for Finance in 1984-85. Mr. Krishna became the Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly in 1989, and held the post till 1992,



The President, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, administering the oath of office to Mr. S. M. Krishna at the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, on May 22.

when he was elected as Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka. He was elected to Rajya Sabha in 1996 (Upper House of Parliament), and remained a member till October 1999.

In October 1999, Mr. Krishna was appointed Chief Minister of Karnataka, presiding over the state's transformation into a major global IT center. He served in the position till May 2004. Mr. Krishna served as the Governor of Maharashtra during 2004-08. He was re-elected as a Member of the Rajya Sabha last year.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton rang up Mr. Krishna on May 29 and congratulated him on assuming the office of External Affairs Ministry. 

## Statement by External Affairs Minister

I am deeply honored to assume charge of the high office of the Minister of External Affairs. We are at a moment in history when the world situation is rapidly changing and India, as a responsible power, must engage actively with the world. I am deeply conscious of the opportunities available to us and the difficulties that we face as we continue to pursue our independent foreign policy of peace and development, and strengthen our strategic autonomy.

"In the coming years under the stewardship of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, it will be my endeavor to further advance our interests in the international arena. Our primary objective is to sustain high rates of economic growth in the range of 9 to 10 percent during the coming decades. For that, we require peace and tranquility in our extended neighborhood and a supportive international environment.

"I accord the highest priority to strengthening our political, economic and cultural relations with our neighbors and look forward to visiting them soon.

"To strengthen our policy and developmental options, we will further consolidate our existing strategic partnership with major powers like the United States, Russia, China, Japan and the European Union. Our strong and traditional ties with countries in Africa, West Asia and Latin America will be furthered and our Look East Policy strengthened."

## 2009 General Elections: A Factfile

An overview of the staggered five-phase general elections that started on April 16 and ended on May 13.

- Total voters: 713.77 million
- Polling stations: 834,000
- Poll observers: 2,046
- Polling staff: 4.69 million
- Parliamentary constituencies: 543
- Assembly elections: Andhra Pradesh (294), Orissa (147) and Sikkim (32)
- Total candidates: 8,070
- Male candidates: 7,514
- Women candidates: 556
- Highest number of candidates: Chennai South (43)
- Lowest number of candidates: Nagaland (3)
- Highest polling station: Auley Phu in Leh, Ladakh (at an altitude of 15,300 feet)
- Electronic Voting Machine and control units: Control units (908,643) and ballot units (11,83,543)
- Villages identified as vulnerable: 86,782

# The New Council of Ministers



President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil (center) and Vice President Mohd. Hamid Ansari (extreme right) with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi (second from right), and members of the Council of Ministers, after the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi, on May 28.

## Dr. Shashi Tharoor

**A** former U.N. Under Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Dr. Shashi Tharoor is an acclaimed author, peacekeeper, and a widely admired thinker on issues of contemporary and global import. Beginning his career at the UN in 1978, he held various key responsibilities, including in peacekeeping after the Cold War, and as a senior advisor to the Secretary-General. Dr. Tharoor left the U.N. in 2007. Since then, he has served as Chairman of the Dubai-based Afras Ventures. He has authored eleven books and numerous newspaper columns in major international journals and has been one of India's best-known global voices.

Born in London in 1956, Dr. Tharoor was educated in India and the U.S. He completed a PhD in 1978 at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. In 1998, Dr. Tharoor was named a "Global Leader of Tomorrow" by the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Dr. Tharoor is the recipient of several awards, including a Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Dr. Tharoor has been appointed an International Adviser to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva for the period 2008-2011. Dr. Tharoor assumed office of Minister of State for External Affairs on May 29.



Dr. Shashi Tharoor being sworn in as Minister of State for External Affairs by President Smt. Pratibha Patil.

## Smt. Preneet Kaur

**B**orn on October 3, 1944 in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, Smt. Preneet Kaur has been a Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) since 1999, having been re-elected three times, including in May 2009. Wife of the former Chief Minister of Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh, Kaur's father was the Late Sardar Gyan Singh Kahlon, ICS. Educated at Chelsea and St. Bedes in Shimla, Smt. Kaur has been actively involved in social work with the Red Cross.

In Parliament, Kaur has been a Member of numerous committees, including that of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, the Standing Committee on Water Resources, the Committee on Empowerment of Women, the Committee on Public Undertakings, and the Consultative Committee for Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, among others.

Smt. Kaur also served as a Member of the Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution from October 1999 to February 2004, and the Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Agriculture from October 1999 to February 2004.

Smt. Kaur assumed office as a new Minister of State for External Affairs on May 29.



Smt. Preneet Kaur being sworn in as Minister of State for External Affairs by President Smt. Pratibha Patil.



# Ambassador Meera Shankar presents her Credentials to President Obama

India's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Ms. Meera Shankar, presented her credentials on May 20 to the President of the United States of America, H.E. Mr. Barack H. Obama, at the Oval Office of the White House.

Conveying greetings from the President and the Prime Minister of India to President Obama and his spouse Michelle Obama, Ambassador Shankar underlined the commitment to democracy and the values of individual liberty, rule of law, and respect for diversity and pluralism, shared by India and the United States. She reiterated the desire of the Government of India to further strengthen the multi-faceted bilateral relations between the two countries, that have recently witnessed a remarkable transformation.

President Obama warmly welcomed the Ambassador to Washington DC and said that the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy were natural partners. He highlighted the broad range of strategic interests and fundamental democratic values shared by the two



Ambassador Ms. Meera Shankar presenting her credentials to U.S. President Mr. Barack Obama at the Oval Office in the White House on May 20.

nations. The President said that the process of strengthening ties between India and United States has been sustained through two administrations of two different parties in each of their countries and while conveying his felicitations on the recent elections in India, expressed the hope that the rela-

tionship will continue to expand as his Administration works with the new Government in India. He referred to Dr. Manmohan Singh as a very wise leader whom he respected.

The President described the India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement as a landmark achievement for both the countries. He expressed the desire to further deepen and strengthen the relationship between the two countries and looked forward to building on a close strategic partnership that will help address the challenges of the 21st century.

President Obama quoted Mahatma Gandhi's words "You must be the change you want to see in the world", and expressed confidence that the United States and India can deliver this change.

The President stated that he was looking forward to visiting India at an early date. According to him, the changing dynamics of the global economy and the evolving weights of developing economies also needed to be reflected in the World Bank's governance structure.

## Profile

Ms. Meera Shankar was born on October 9, 1950. Joining the Indian Foreign Service in 1973, Ambassador Shankar has held several important assignments during her career. She served as Director in the Prime Minister's Office from 1985 to 1991, and was posted to Washington DC, serving as Minister (Commerce) from 1991 to 1995. Thereafter, she headed the Indian Council of Cultural Relations in New Delhi overseeing India's cultural diplomacy. Subsequently, in the Ministry of External Affairs, she headed two important divisions dealing with the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and relations with Nepal and Bhutan.

As Additional Secretary in 2002, she held the responsibility for the United Nations and International Security. Her last assignment



was as Ambassador of India to Germany from December 1, 2005 to April 6, 2009.

Ms. Meera Shankar arrived in Washington DC on April 26 to take up her new assignment as India's Ambassador to the United States.

She is married and has a daughter.

Children from Francis-Stevens School, Washington, DC., performing at the Embassy Adoption Program event on May 27. Ambassador Ms. Meera Shankar can also be seen enjoying the program.



Deputy Chief of Mission Ambassador Arun K. Singh addressing members of the United Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York at the Embassy on May 7. An hour-long interactive session was held wherein discussions focussed on India-U.S. and India-Israeli relations.



Mohan Veena maestro Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (right) and renowned tabla player Samir Chatterjee performing at George Washington University on May 7. Deputy Chief of Mission Ambassador Arun K. Singh is also seen among the audience on the extreme left.





## Ambassador Shankar urges US industry to strengthen partnership with India

Speaking at a reception organized in her honor by the U.S. India Business Council (USIBC) on May 21, India's new Ambassador to the United States, Mrs. Meera Shankar, urged the U.S. corporate sector to strengthen their partnership with India. She pointed out that the past two decades had cleared all doubts regarding the credibility and continuity of economic reforms in India. "We would like to see American companies at the forefront of technology taking advantage of the opportunity to build partnerships in ways, which bring ben-



Ambassaodr Ms. Meera Shankar addressing the U.S. India Business Council at a Welcome Reception in Washington DC on May 21.

efits to both countries, and also help build India's own capabilities, particularly in the defense sector," she said.

Welcoming Ambassador Shankar, USIBC President Ron Somers said: "If ever there was a time to raise the India-U.S. profile further, this is the moment. Our companies have much at stake to make certain that our trajectory is pointed upward and our countries united against petty backsliding and protectionism."

The 300-strong audience included representatives from the U.S. government, industry and think-tanks.

### CONSULATE EVENTS

#### CGI New York hosts Mohiniyattam performance

The Consulate General of India, New York, organized a Mohiniyattam performance, featuring Padmashree Bharati Shivaji and her daughter and disciple Vijayalakshmi, in association with the Federation of Kerala Associations of North America (FOKANA) on May 5.



Padmashree Bharati Shivaji and her daughter Vijayalakshmi performing Mohiniyattam at the CGI, New York.

Around 150 people, comprising American and ethnic Indian-American dignitaries from the Tri-State area, attended the event.

The Consul-General of India in New York, Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, welcomed the gathering to the fourth event in the ongoing 'Jewels of India', Concert Series, featuring music and dance performances, showcasing the rich and diverse culture of India. The Consul-General also highlighted the efforts of the Consulate in hosting such 'jewels' of Indian art and culture, and called upon the Indian community in the Tri-State area to wholeheartedly support such music and dance initiatives at the Consulate. Mr. Paul Karugapalil, President, FOKANA, in his remarks, expressed his appreciation for the Consulate's efforts in reaching out to the wider Indian community. The hour-long performance was composed and choreographed by Bharathi Shivaji herself.

#### 'Strings of the East & Strings of the West'

The Consulate General of India, New York, organized a music concert, 'Strings of the East and Strings of the West', in association with Salon De



Artistes at 'Strings of the East and Strings of the West' music concert. (Inset): Former Union Minister Dr. Ashwani Kumar.

Virtuoso and Citibank, on May 13. The event featured a fusion of stringed instruments from the East and the West, and a Kathak dance performance. The Consul-General of India in New York, Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, welcomed the gathering, and highlighted the efforts of the Consulate in hosting a wide range of cultural programs. He expressed his gratitude to Ms. Charlotte White, Founder-President of Salon De Virtuoso, and to Citibank for co-sponsoring the event.

Former Union Minister of State (MoS) for Industry and Commerce, Dr. Ashwani Kumar graced the occasion and presented bouquets to the artistes. Rendering the Western repertoire were Pitnarry Shin on the cello and Kyu-Young Kim on violin. India's Permanent Representative to the U.N., Ambassador Hardip Singh Puri, also greeted the audience on the occasion.

Also gracing the occasion with their distinguished presence were New York State Assemblymen, Adriano Espillat, representing Manhattan, and Michael Benjamin, representing the Bronx area of New York City. The event was followed by a dinner reception.

# Tatas, SBI, Infy among top 50 reputed firms

**T**he Tata Group, State Bank of India (SBI) and Infosys Technologies are among 17 Indian firms that figure among the top 50 in a list of the world's 200 most-reputed companies.

With a pulse score of 80.89 on a scale of 0-100, the US-based Reputation Institute ranked the Tata Group 11th, above global giants such as Google, Microsoft, General Electric, Toyota, Coca-Cola, Intel and Unilever.

Italy-based chocolate producer Ferrero was ranked as the most reputed company in the world.

"However it is the people of India, who love their companies the best," notes the U.S. business magazine *Forbes*. "Of India's 27 corporations ranked by the institute, 24 (89 percent) rank above the average. Seventeen of them landed in the top third of the list."

The Reputation Institute's global



pulse of 600 companies is a measure of corporate reputation, calculated by averaging perceptions of four indicators — trust, esteem, admiration and good feeling — obtained from a representative sample of at least 100 respondents in the companies' home countries.

SBI, India's largest bank, is ranked 29th with a score of 78.11. India's second-largest software exporter

Infosys is ranked 39th, with a pulse score of 77.45.

Larsen & Toubro comes next at 47th position with a pulse score of 76.58, while India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki has been ranked 49th with a pulse score of 76.26.

Other Indian firms in the top 200 are: Hindustan Unilever (69), ITC Ltd (95), Canara Bank (102), Hindustan Petroleum (111), Indian Oil (112), Wipro (116), Mahindra & Mahindra (137), Bharti Airtel (163), Bank of Baroda (174), Bharat Petroleum (175) and Punjab National Bank (177).

Johnson & Johnson, which came first in the U.S. for reputation, ranks third globally.

Kraft Foods ranks eighth, making the U.S. one of only two countries with two businesses in the global top 10. Brazil is the other. Its Petrobras and Sadia came fourth and fifth respectively.

## Airtel crosses 100 mn subscriber mark



**L**eading telecom operator Bharti Airtel on May 15 said its mobile phone subscriber base had crossed the 100-million mark, making it the third-largest single country service provider in the world. "Bharti Airtel has achieved the 100-million subscriber mark," said a beaming Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman of the company. "This milestone reiterates the emergence of India as one of the world's top telecom markets," he told a press conference in New Delhi.

Notably, 60 percent of the company's subscriber base is in rural areas, which was once considered unviable because of a perception that both the demand for telecom, and the revenues thereof, may not justify the investments.

India boasts the second-largest telecom user base in the world after China and is ahead of the U.S. The country now has 429.72 million telecom subscribers, both in the wireless and mobile segments, with a record growth of 59.48 percent last fiscal.

## Bio-processing tech for leather to make India world leader

**E**nvironment-friendly bio-processing of hides and skins using new enzymes in the pre-tanning process, a technology that could make India a world leader, is nearing commercialization. The Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) is the lead institute pioneering the technology. CLRI is currently in discussion with tanneries to test the new process. It is also talking to leather chemical manufacturers for large-scale production of the enzymes.

The breakthrough was a result of the collaborative effort of a dozen research institutes and universities in the country under the New Millennium Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI) of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), CLRI director A. B. Mandal said.



A CSIR laboratory, CLRI is also the nodal agency for leather under NMITLI.

Mandal said that the NMITLI network developed 18 technology leads and shortlisted six combinations of about 40 enzymes. CLRI scientists,

in partnership with tanneries, would now undertake field trials to assess the technical feasibility of these enzymes.

Under the new technology, a cocktail of enzymes alone would be used for the critical pre-tanning process, called beam house operations.

The use of enzymes will have a dual effect. It would not only eliminate the environmental hazards associated with solid and liquid wastes generated during the tanning process, but would also help check chemical contamination of tannery wastes, which can be processed into useful materials.



# Welspun plant inaugurated at Little Rock, Arkansas



From left: Mr. B.K. Goenka, CMD of Welspun; Governor of Arkansas, Mr. Mike Beebe; First Lady of Arkansas Mrs. Ginger Beebe; Mayor of Little Rock, Mr. Mark Stodola; and Consul General of India in Houston, Mr. Sanjiv Arora.

**T**he Honorable Governor of Arkansas, Mr. Mike Beebe, and First Lady Mrs. Ginger Beebe inaugurated a pipe manufacturing plant set up at Little Rock by well-known Indian company Welspun Gujarat Stahl Rohren Ltd on April 28. Present on the occasion were the Honorable Mayor of Little Rock, Mr. Mark Stodola; Consul-General of India in Houston Mr. Sanjiv Arora; and Chairman & MD of Welspun, Mr. B. K. Goenka.

The facility at Little Rock has been set up with an initial investment of \$150 million and has created over 300 jobs in the local area. A world-class spiral-welded pipe making plant, the unit has been set up close to Little Rock Port and caters to the oil and gas sector in North America, South America, and other markets.

The inaugural ceremony of the

plant, which had become operational earlier, was attended by several local dignitaries. Among them were the top management of economic promotion agencies of Arkansas, such as Little Rock Port Authority, Arkansas World Trade Center and Arkansas Economic Development Commission. Business representatives from the U.S., India and other countries, and several overseas Indians were also present.

Mr. Goenka described the establishment of the plant as a realization of the vision of his father, the late Mr. Gopiram Goenka. He thanked the Arkansas authorities who, under the Governor's leadership, extended him all support in setting up the venture.

Consul-General Arora highlighted the vast scope for expanding business cooperation between India and the U.S. and complimented the Welspun facility as a success story worthy of emulation.

In his keynote address, Governor Beebe commended the Welspun management for setting up this plant at Little Rock and creating jobs for the local area.

The inauguration of the facility also provided the opportunity for an exchange of views and networking among the invitees, many of whom are key players in the energy sector and came to this event shortly before participating in the Offshore Technology Conference in Houston.

## India participates in Offshore Technology Conference



CG Sanjiv Arora at the stall of United Drilling Tools Ltd. To his right is Pramod Gupta, CMD of the company, and to his left is Mohammed Khan, a business associate.

**T**raditionally a major participant at the annual Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston, India put in a sizeable representation at OTC 2009 at the Reliant Center in Houston from May 4-7. OTC is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

An official delegation led by Mr. D.N. Narasimha Raju, Joint Secretary (Exploration), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, participated in the conference. The delegation included Mr. U.N. Bose, Director, Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), and 28 other officials of ONGC. Nine private sector companies from India put up stalls at the OTC.

During their meetings and interactions, the Indian delegation and companies had fruitful discussions on India's vast requirements and capabilities in the energy sector. They also held discussions on collaborations with existing and prospective partners from the U.S. and other countries.

The Consulate coordinated the official delegation's program and also rendered assistance to private companies. Consul-General Sanjiv Arora, along with other Consulate officials, also visited their stalls.

The Consulate also organized a useful interaction between the visiting delegation and CEOs and other senior executives and entrepreneurs in the oil and gas sectors, many of whom are persons of Indian origin.

The event was organized in cooperation with the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH), which was represented by its President Mr. Brij Kathuria and Executive Director Mr. Jagdip Ahluwalia. The participants appreciated a power point presentation made by ONGC and other useful information given by the visiting delegation.

## ICICI Bank ties up with Visa in US

**I**ndia's second-largest lender ICICI Bank has entered into an agreement with Visa to issue debit cards in the United States.

Under the agreement, ICICI Bank's New York branch will issue Visa debit cards to its Global Indian account and other checking account customers, a press release said in Mumbai.

"Visa has an unmatched suite of payment products that allows our customers to pay securely and conveniently for every type of



purchase," ICICI Bank's U.S. branch Head G.V.S. Ramesh said.

The Global Indian account serves the banking needs of Indians moving overseas who require access to local banking facilities in the U.S.

The account provides customers with simultaneous access to a USD checking account at the bank's New York branch for use in the U.S. and a rupee NRE account at ICICI Bank for use in India, the release said.

# Economy to resume high growth path

**A**s the new Government takes charge in New Delhi, India Inc. is upbeat about a revival of the economy. Projections made by several agencies point towards an appreciable economic revival.

According to Dr. Pronab Sen, the country's Chief Statistician, the economy could be back on a high growth trajectory earlier than expected and grow all of 8 percent in the current fiscal that started in April. "I think that many of the estimates on growth that have come so far do not take into account many factors, like the new investments in the pipeline, export orders which are showing signs of revival, and a good harvest, which will further boost the already robust rural demand. The extra output from new oil and gas exploration fields such as the KG basin is also a strong factor. We could achieve an 8 percent growth in the current fiscal," said Dr. Sen.

Dr. Sen's thoughts on the early signs of an economic revival are in line with many leading indicators like Nomura's Composite Leading Index and UBS Lead Economic Indicator.

The ABN AMRO purchasing manager's index for April, released on May 5, showed that India and China were two economies that expanded after months of contraction.

## India Inc bucks slowdown

Two out of every five companies in India Inc. generated better growth in revenues for the year-ended March 2009 compared to 2007-08, bucking the overall slowdown in the economy, and one in six companies accelerated profit growth, according to an Economic Times Intelligence Group (ETIG) study.

The study, which looked at the financial health of 1,050 companies, showed as many as 400 firms reporting higher growth rate of net sales for FY09. The outperformers span diverse sectors such as information technology, auto, sugar, agricultural inputs, cement, FMCG and pharmaceuticals.

Similarly, India Inc's business confi-

dence for the first half of this fiscal has improved 2.4 points to 58.7, says a survey by the Confederation of India Industry (CII). The CII Business Confidence Index (CII-BCI) for April-September 2009-10 improved considerably compared to the previous six months. The index at 58.7 for April-September 2009-10 reflects increasing confidence after two consecutive periods of decline.

India Inc. is also confident that it can weather the slowdown, going by the findings of a recent survey by Ernst & Young, titled 'Opportunities in Adversity: India Inc's Response to the Financial Downturn'. The report was based on the collective views of 121 leading finance professionals interviewed for this exercise.

## MF posts 12 pc growth

Mutual funds snapped asset losing streak in April with the industry's assets under management (AUM) growing by 11.8 percent to \$115.53 billion.

Experts attribute this growth to the fact that institutions that had withdrawn in March had come back in April. A major part of the inflows has come into liquid funds and ultra short-term debt funds.

The sharpest rise in assets was witnessed by Baroda Pioneer AMC, which registered a growth of 66 percent. The assets of HDFC Mutual Fund, the second-largest fund house in India, went up by 10 percent followed by those of ICICI Pru and Birla Sunlife, whose assets surged by 10 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

## Sensex crosses 14000

Not surprisingly, Indian stock markets on May 18 gave a resounding welcome to the electoral victory of the Congress-led UPA as investor frenzy forced suspension of trading for the day after indices hit upper circuit filters twice within seconds.

If the sensitive index (Sensex) of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) rose an unprecedented 2,099.21 points, or

17.24 percent, the broader 50-share S&P CNX Nifty of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) did even better, gaining 636.4 points, or 17.33 percent.

In fact, this was the first time that trading was suspended for the day at both the bourses as their key indices hit the upper circuit — an in-built mechanism to curb excessive volatility. At the opening bell, the Sensex stood at 13,479.39 points, with a gain of 1,305.97 points, or 10.72 percent over the previous close. It then immediately shot up further, with the gain amounting to 14.7 percent over the previous close, hitting the upper circuit filter of 13,963.3 points. Trading at that point was suspended by two hours till 11.55 am. But when trading resumed, it took all of a second for the investor frenzy to once again lift the index to the next level of circuit filter, triggering an automatic suspension of trading for the day. This was the first trading day following the announcement of election results on May 16.

Over the past month, the Sensex has gained 29.48 percent, or 3,249.54 points, of which more than 2,000 points were added on May 18.

The S&P CNX Nifty also surged 14.48 percent on opening, and hit the upper circuit at 4,203.3 points, leading to a halt in trading.

## NRI remittance up

In an indication that the diaspora continues to repose faith in India amid turbulent times, net inflows from non-resident Indians witnessed an over 20-fold rise to \$4 billion in fiscal 2009, as they sharply expanded their exposure to various NRI deposit schemes.

Inflows in March itself crossed \$1 billion, the highest since October 2003, testifying to the fact that Indians abroad increasingly sought financial security on Indian shores.

Latest figures by the RBI show that net inflows through various NRI deposits surged from \$179 million in FY08 to \$3,999 million in FY09.



## Dow Jones plans to double investments in India

**D**ow Jones and Co. Inc., a unit of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. and provider of global business news and information services, plans to double



its investments in India over each of the next two years, making it one of its largest operating centers outside the U.S. "This is good time for investments," Mitya New, managing director, Dow Jones India, said. The company plans to focus mainly on improving content, starting with the output of journalists for the newswire, as well as licensing content as part of its content aggregation business Factiva. It will

also build its commercial team, which would sell, market and support products and services in India.

Dow Jones is the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, with

which the *Hindustan Times*-owned *Mint* has a content sharing agreement.

Dow Jones India has been scaling up its business in recent months, starting with the Enterprise Media Group, which includes Dow Jones Newswires, Factiva, Client Solutions, Dow Jones Indexes and Financial Information Services. According to New, the market for such services in India would continue to grow.

## Lincoln Electric invests \$ 20 mn on India unit

**U**S-based welding equipment manufacturing company Lincoln Electric inaugurated its manufacturing unit for the Indian market at Chennai on May 11. The NASDAQ-listed company has invested \$20 million on the plant, located at Maramalainagar near Chennai.

The company, which has been selling premium segment welding equipment imported from its plant at Cleveland, will manufacture mid-segment welding consumables at this plant for local sale.

Consumables are raw materials like electrodes, wires and fluxes, which are 'consumed' during the welding process.

"We have grown at a CAGR of 46 percent in the Indian market from 2003 to 2008, and the share of Asia in our global business has risen from 5 percent to 22 percent from 1998 to 2008," said Lincoln Electric Asia Pacific president Thomas A. Flohn. "We felt our volumes had enough scale in India to set up our own unit here."



He cited the growth of the infrastructure sector and the planned spend on infrastructure as potential demand for the company's consumables. The unit near Chennai is spread over an area of 14.215 acres, with a built-up area of 17,200 sqm in the first phase. "Presently, we have a capacity to manufacture 12-13,000 metric tons (MT) per year; but the building can hold a capacity of 80,000 MT," said Lincoln Electric South Asia MD Ganesh Gurushankar. "We have employed 50 trained diploma holders at the unit."

Flohn also mentioned that the company was open to acquiring medium and small players in the sector as its target was to grow as fast as possible, not necessarily through the organic route.

## Mayfield to invest in five Indian firms

**M**ayfield Fund, a Silicon Valley-based venture capital fund focussing on the United States, China and India with \$2.8 billion assets under management, is looking at parking its investments in about five Indian companies this year.

"China offers opportunity for early stage venture capital investing like in the U.S., whereas in India it is venture growth. There is an enormous number of small and medium enterprises — about 20,000 — in the country that have achieved some scale and size but are capital-starved. We are looking at tapping into this potential. We have about five companies on our radar and will invest in them from our \$110 million India-dedicated fund this year," Nikhil Khattau, managing director of Mayfield, said. Khattau said that the fund was looking at three main themes — infrastructure and ancillaries, consumer and globally-competent Indian companies in the IT, ITeS and manufacturing space — to invest in India. "About 65 percent of India's gross domestic product is consumer-oriented and that will reflect in the deals that we make here."

## Indian IP laws most consumer friendly

**I**ndia has been ranked as the country with the world's most consumer-friendly intellectual property (IP) laws since its copyright regulations allow citizens great freedom to access and utilize information for educational and development purposes. This emerged in a study of 16 countries, including economically advanced ones, undertaken by the Malaysia-based Consumers International, which calls itself the "world's only global consumer advocacy body".

Consumers International said its first IP Watch List focussed on copyright, which has "the most immediate impact on consumers' access to knowledge and thereby on their educational, cultural and developmental opportunities".

In the listing, which saw India come out on top, the other countries with good ratings were United States, South Korea, Indonesia and China.



## Honeywell expects faster growth at India operations

**H**oneywell International Inc. expects business at its India unit to rise at double the pace of its growth in developed markets, chairman and chief executive David Cote has said.

The U.S. aerospace and technology firm's non-U.S. operations contributed 50 percent of its revenue of \$37 billion in 2008, Cote told reporters on May 7.

"India has played a major role. We would not have been able to do that if we had not established the kind of capability we have here," Cote said.

He was in Bangalore to inaugurate Honeywell's largest research centre globally.

The firm has expanded its India workforce, which includes software professionals and aerospace researchers, to 11,000 from around



500 some six years ago. Honeywell, which operates in four business segments — aerospace, automation and control solutions, transportation systems and speciality materials — expects revenue from India to be \$600 million in 2009. Cote did not

disclose last year's numbers.

"Right now, the company has only a few segments in India. Aerospace and defense is a big segment they are focussing on," said Dhiraj Mathur, India head of aerospace practice, at audit firm and consultancy PricewaterhouseCoopers Pvt. Ltd. "They are very bullish on India."

Honeywell has bid to supply new engines to power 125 Jaguar fighter planes of the Indian Air Force.

Rolls Royce Plc., whose engines power the existing fleet, is the other contender.

## SEBI issues simplified norms for corporate debt securities

**M**arkets regulator SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India) issued simplified rules governing corporate debt paper on May 11, thereby making it possible to raise funds faster on domestic capital markets.

The notification comes more than three years after the R. H. Patil Committee laid out a roadmap to make debt issues as attractive as equity for companies.

Companies that have already floated one debt or equity issue can now cut through several layers of formalities, when issuing another tranche. The tortuous vetting process that accompa-



nied each issue made companies reluctant to use this route. Instead, they preferred private placement, often arranged by bankers.

SEBI said that the simplified listing agreement for debt securities require minimal incremental disclosures because a large body of information is already in the public domain, and material developments are disclosed under equity listing agreements on a continuous basis.

The Patil Committee set up by SEBI had recommended in its report that the Government take steps to create a single unified exchange-traded market for corporate bonds.

## Indian is ICAC Cotton Researcher of the Year

**D**r. Keshav R. Kranthi of India has been selected as the first 'Cotton Researcher of the Year', an award instituted for the first time by the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC).

An entomologist by training, Dr. Kranthi is presently Acting Director of the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur, India.

Part of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, CICR is the leading institute on cotton research in India.

At the institute since 1992, 46-year-old Dr. Kranthi has handled 17 externally funded projects as a principal investigator. He has also been principal investigator on CFC/ICAC projects in China, India, Pakistan and Britain.

A recipient of several national awards, Dr. Kranthi has developed an extensive database on bollworm resistance to insecticides and Bt-toxins.

He has also evolved newer mechanisms of resistance, developed stochastic models, and insect resistance management strategies (IRM) that have benefited small farmers. His innovations have helped cut back use of insecticide in India.

Dr. Kranthi has developed several diagnostic kits to detect insecticide resistant insects and sub-standard insecticides. He has also developed easy-to-use field kits to detect Bt-crops.

The kits have been commercialized and have directly contributed to a reduction in spurious Bt-cotton seed in India.

More information about his work is available on the ICAC website.

Starting this year, ICAC had decided to honor a cotton researcher annually by awarding an honorarium of \$1,000 and a shield.

Applications were invited from February 1 to March 31, 2009. Twelve candidates from eight countries in three disciplines of breeding/production (6), plant protection (5) and biotechnology (1) applied for, or were nominated, for the award. The selection committee comprised five judges from four countries.

The ICAC Secretariat plans to raise the profile of the award and make it one of the most prestigious awards in the world community of cotton production researchers.



## IOC to tie up with US lab for biofuel

The government-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is tying up with US-based National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) for a pilot project to produce second generation biofuel.

This biofuel — essentially bio-ethanol — would be produced from cellulosic biomass or degradable agricultural waste or wood.

Experts say biomass resources are abundantly available and bio-ethanol from cellulosic biomass appears to have near-term economic potential.

“Cellulosic ethanol offers enormous promise and we can have tons of it per year without competing for oil,” Planning Commission member Kirit Parikh said.

NREL has also signed a memorandum of understanding with its Indian



counterpart — the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy — for production, utilization, distribution and marketing of biofuels.

Under the agreement, the countries would cooperate in the areas of emerging technologies for second-generation biofuels and advanced technologies for first generation biofuels, among others.

“Across the world, private oil companies are looking at India and identifying probable partners for a venture in next generation fuel. In fact, U.S. universities and Indian companies are also collaborating,” said an official from a bioprocesses and engineering firm.

India is also a pioneer in the adop-

tion of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). In 2008, companies in the European Union used 81.7 million tons (mt) of carbon credit generated through the CDM and almost a third of these credits (25) mt came from India. Indian companies have been using the CDM effectively to help reduce more emissions. For 2008, the 25 million credits from Indian CDM projects had an estimated value of around \$523.87 million provided by the EU at the ruling EU carbon prices.

The EU saw its Emission Trading System achieve an overall carbon dioxide emissions reduction of 3 percent in 2008 compared with 2007. This was a result of installations reducing their own emissions, buying emissions within the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and buying emissions through the CDM.

## Thrust on India-US collaboration in biotech

A business-cum-government delegation of over 100, representing 26 companies including some state biotech parks participated in the Bio International Convention-2009 held in Atlanta from May 18-21, 2009. The Confederation of Indian Industry and the Association of Biotechnology-Led Enterprises joined hands to ensure this impressive participation at the event, which was supported by India's Department of Biotechnology.

The delegation included officials from the Departments of Pharmaceuticals (including Director of Pharmaceutical Education & Research), Commerce, and Science & Technology.

The delegation visited leading institutions including the Center for Disease Control, Emory University's Vaccine Research Centre, Parker H. Petit Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience, and Georgia Tech to learn about opportunities for collaboration. They also interacted with a group from the Institute of Nano Biotechnology at the Alabama State University.

The Indian pavilion attracted a large number of visitors who were impressed

by the strides made by the biotech industry in India. Despite the economic downturn, the annual BioPharma Summit organized by the USA-India Chamber of Commerce in Boston on May 14 in the run-up to Bio-2009 saw commendable participation from the U.S. pharma industry. A report on “New Opportunities for US-India BioPharma and Healthcare Collaboration” prepared for the event was released by McKinsey & Company. The report provided the basis for fruitful panel discussions led by senior executives from the Indian and US pharma sectors on the theme of the Summit: “Delivering Affordable Innovation through Cross-Border Partnerships”.

Participating companies included leading U.S. and Indian pharma majors like Pfizer, Eli Lilly, Merck & Co., AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Jubilant Organosys, and Suven Life Sciences as well as some top educational institutions. The speakers highlighted that this sector in India had been successful in facing up to the downturn and had continued to grow and offer great opportunities for collaboration.

## Indians are 'greenest': Survey

Indians are the greenest in the world, according to the recently-released world's Green Index (Greendex), making them the most environmental-friendly people on Earth. The second annual survey conducted by the National Geographic Society and international polling firm GlobeScan on environmentally-sustainable behavior shows that Indian consumers have overtaken Brazilians to take the top spot with a Greendex score of 59.5. The Chinese retained the third spot with 55.2. Indians performed above-average on all four sub-indices, including first-place rankings for food and goods. They are the most frequent consumers of self-grown food, with 35 percent eating what they grow several times a week or daily.

They are also the least frequent consumers of beef, which requires greater energy to grow. Indian consumers also topped the goods sub-index score. Their top status is due in part to having lower-than-average rates of ownership of large appliances and electronics.



## Preet Bharara appointed US attorney

President Barack Obama has nominated Preet Bharara, an Indian-American lawyer, as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York. Bharara, 40, has advised the New York Democrat Senator Charles Schumer on legal matters, according to a White House announcement on May 15. "This group of men and women have distinguished themselves as fair, tenacious and respected attorneys throughout their careers in both public and private service," President Obama said of Bharara and five other key appointees named the same day.

"They will serve their country with distinction as U.S. attorneys and it is my honor to nominate them for these esteemed positions."

Born in Punjab, India, Bharara immigrated to the U.S. with his parents in 1970 and became an American citizen 10 years later. Raised in Monmouth County, New Jersey, he graduated from Harvard University in 1990 and from Columbia Law School in 1993.



Bharara was named 2007 South Asian Lawyer of the Year by the North American South Asian Bar Association.

Before joining Schumer's office, Bharara was an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of New York in Manhattan, working in the general crimes, narcotics and organized crime/terrorism units from 2000 to 2005.

"I believe Preet Bharara will be one of the most outstanding U.S. attorneys that the Southern District, or any other, has ever had," Schumer said in a statement. "He is smart, hardworking, focussed, and unafraid to proceed wherever the facts of a case may lead," said the Senator.

Bharara started his legal career at the law firm Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP, where he worked from 1993 to 1996. The top lawyer left the firm to join Washington-based Swidler Berlin Shereff Friedman LLP, now known as Dechert LLP. —IANS

## Energy-saving mechanism for PCs

Personal computers may soon save large amounts of energy by "sleep talking". Doctoral researcher Yuvraj Agarwal of the University of California San Diego (UCSD), in collaboration with a team of computer scientists, has created a plug-and-play hardware prototype for personal computers (PCs) that induces a new energy-saving state known as "sleep talking".

Normally PCs can be in awake mode or in a low-power sleep mode, where they save substantial power but are essentially inactive and unresponsive to network traffic. The new sleep talking state provides much of the energy savings of sleep mode and some of the network and internet connected convenience of awake mode.

"Large numbers of people keep their PCs in awake mode even though the PCs are relatively idle for long blocks of time because they want to stay con-



Yuvraj Agarwal

nected to an internal network or the internet or both," said Agarwal, who did his engineering degree from Pune University in June 2001.

"I realized that most of the tasks that people keep their computers on for — like ensuring remote access and availability for virus scans and backup, maintaining presence on instant messaging (IM) networks — can be achieved at much lower power-use levels than regular awake mode," said Agarwal. The team built a small hardware and software plug-in system that allows a PC to remain in sleep mode while continuing to maintain network presence and run well-defined application functions.

"Reducing energy consumed by wall-powered devices, especially computing equipment, offers a huge opportunity to save money and reduce greenhouse gases," added Agarwal.

—IANS

## Work on molecule-sized nano-vehicles

Imagine creating vehicles as tiny as a molecule, billions of which could fit into a millimeter and be powered by sugar. Researchers, supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF),



Dr. Ayusman Sen

at the universities of Penn State and Rice are working on such a project. Dr. Ayusman Sen, who heads Penn State's department of chemistry, and his colleague Thomas E. Mallouk, director of the Centre for Nanoscale Science, have investigated technologies that could help develop these remarkable machines. They have found that their uses might include drug delivery to specific tissues, accomplishing surgeries and communicating with the outside world from inside the human body. These findings are slated for publication in the May 9 issue of *Scientific American*.

Dr. Sen did his M.Sc. from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, in 1973, and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1978.

—IANS



## Mythili Sankaran named USIBC coast operations director

**T**he US-India Business Council (USIBC) has named Mythili Sankaran, former CEO of telecom/web start-up, Koollage, as director of its coast operations to advance India-U.S. commercial ties in western U.S.A. The office, based in California, is also dedicated to developing a more robust “two-way street” that enables U.S. companies to succeed in India, and vice versa, the trade lobby announced on May 4.

Coming from the business world of Silicon Valley, Sankaran brings to USIBC a wealth of experience in IT and venture capital, the USIBC said. Sankaran was also an executive at the American India Foundation.

“Western U.S. has tremendous links to India and is presently under-represented by a business advocacy association of the calibre of USIBC. We are delighted to have Mythili head up our operations in California,” said USIBC President Ron Somers.

“USIBC could not have made a



finer choice for the position of Director, West Coast, than Mythili Sankaran,” said Arun Kumar, partner, KPMG, who also serves as a member of the USIBC board of directors.

The USIBC, which seeks to deepen trade and strengthen commercial ties between the two countries, is hosted under the aegis of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world’s largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector and region. —(IANS)

## Four Indian Americans among finalists for White House Fellows

**T**he White House has picked four Indian Americans among the 30 finalists for the White House Fellows Program, considered America’s most prestigious program for leadership and public service. They include Sudip Bose, Anish Mahajan, Raj Shah and Manish Sethi. While Sudip Bose is an attending emergency physician at Advocate Christ Medical Center, Chicago, Anish Mahajan is a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Poughkeepsie in New York.

Manish Sethi is a surgical resident at the Harvard Combined Orthopedics Program at Brookline in Massachusetts



Sudip Bose

and Raj Shah is an MBA studying at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business in Georgia.

“This year’s finalists represent some of our nation’s most promising leaders,” said First Lady Michelle Obama. “Most importantly, each one of the White House Fellows finalists has found a way to positively impact the lives of those around them.”

The finalists represent a diverse cross-section of professions, including business, medicine, law, non-profit sector, media, state government, finance, and education, the White House said. —IANS

## Indian American helps design vaginal ring to prevent HIV transmission

**A**n Indian American endocrinologist has helped develop a vaginal ring that would prevent conception and transmission of HIV infection, by releasing multiple types of non-hormonal agents and microbicides. Worldwide, there are about five million new infections and three million deaths every year caused by HIV/AIDS alone.



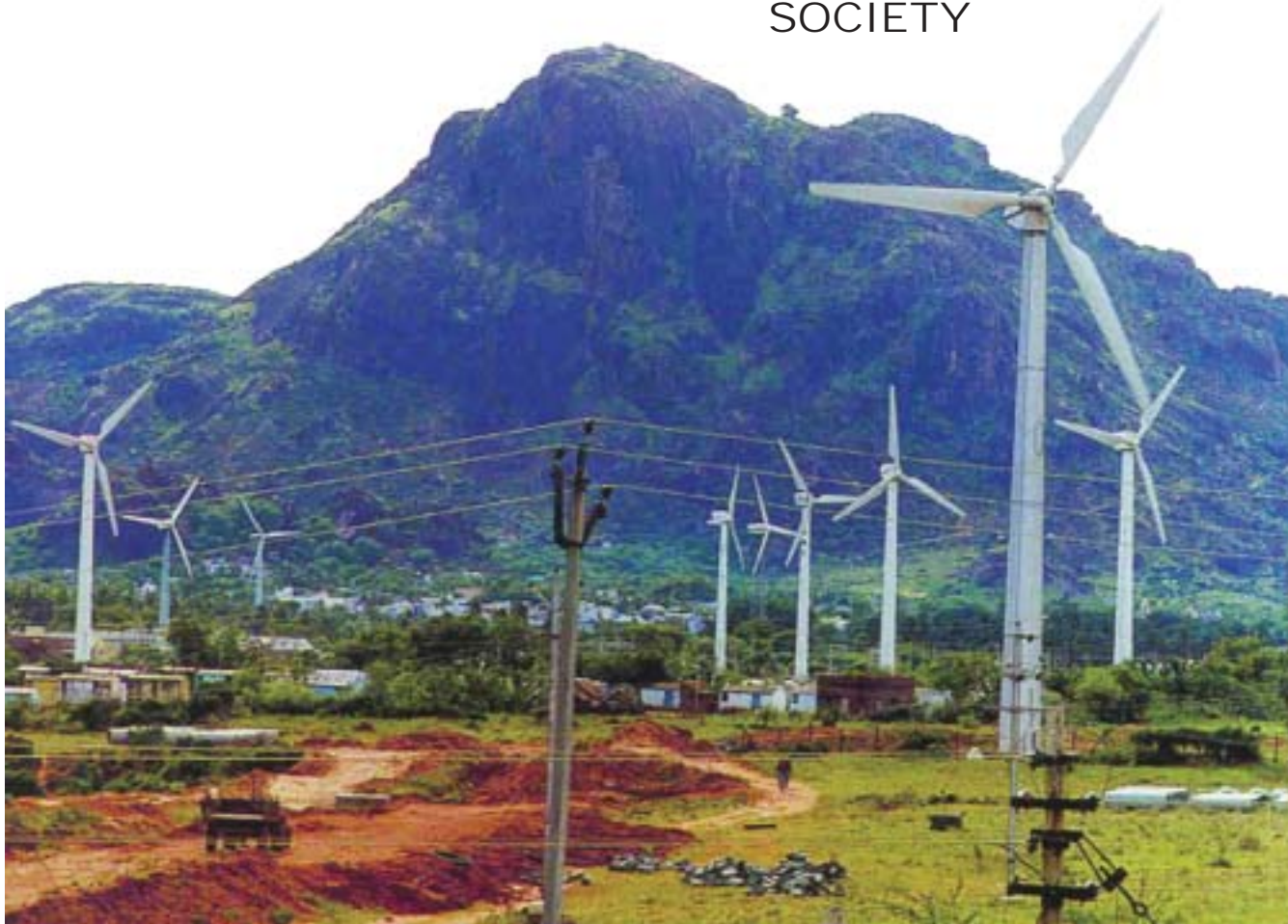
If proven successful in future clinical trials, the vaginal ring could empower women to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

The ring may also someday represent a novel method to prevent STDs for those with aversion to currently available methods, with hormonally derived active agents, or with allergies to latex condoms.

“This device is a new approach to birth control, because it avoids the long-term use of hormonal methods that have been associated with increased risk of certain cancers,” said Brij Saxena, study co-author and professor of reproductive biology and endocrinology at Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC). “At the same time, this is the first device to simultaneously offer the possibility to prevent unintended pregnancy and HIV transmission,” added Saxena, who did his B.Sc, M.Sc and Ph.D from Lucknow University (India).

“No one has ever conquered a viral epidemic with treatment, so prevention is the most effective option. Ideally, an HIV vaccine is the most desirable method, but that is not foreseeable in the near future,” explained Jeffrey Laurence, study co-author and physician at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/WCMC. “The next best thing would be something that would prevent infection and put the power in the susceptible female partner’s control.”

The vaginally inserted ring is incorporated with multiple anti-viral drugs that prevent HIV infection and are time-released over a period up to 28 days, said a WCMC release. “The compounds in the device are natural materials that are already approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in humans,” explained Saxena. —IANS



## CLEAN TECHNOLOGY: The next big thing

**C**lean technology (cleantech) is being seen as the next big transformational wave — ‘the Next Big Thing’ — that has the potential to revolutionize the world, just as Information Technology has brought about dramatic changes over the last 20 years, impacting virtually all industries and services sectors.

The cleantech sector, though at a nascent stage today, is poised for a major boost globally, thanks to some ambitious projects of the new U.S. Administration. The Obama Administration is all set to embrace this newest technology. President Obama’s ‘new energy for America plan’ aims at investing more than \$150 billion over the next ten years. The new project will fund private and public sector initiatives across the globe, thereby generating millions of ‘green jobs’.

Interestingly, the global financial meltdown — which has dragged lead-

ing developed economies into recession — has not impacted the cleantech sector, which is expected to continue to flourish at a rapid pace.

India with its strengths in the IT sector, reaping a golden harvest over the last two decades, is poised to make similar strides in the cleantech business as well.

According Vinod Khosla, an Indian-American venture capitalist and co-founder of the Sun Microsystems: “India has the potential to become an innovation hub for clean technology if there is sufficient focus on it. India can replicate its software success in clean technology. There is no doubt about it. Cleantech industry can be even bigger than IT.”

Khosla is also the chairman of the advisory board of Cleantech India, the local chapter of the Cleantech Group, a pioneer of the clean technology investment category and a provider of global

market research and other services for the cleantech ecosystem. He believes that rapid economic development and a nascent manufacturing sector, combined with environmental and technological factors, have positioned the country to become a hub of clean technology innovation. “India could emerge as a global leader, both as a consumer and exporter of clean technology products and services,” he said.

Indian companies raised \$277 million in cleantech venture investments (through 14 disclosed rounds) during 2008, which was down from the previous year’s figure of \$290 million. In 2007, cleantech venture investments in the country had doubled over the 2006 figures.

Globally, cleantech venture investments touched a record \$8.4 billion in 2008, up 38 percent from \$6.1 billion in 2007, despite the credit crisis and broadening recession, according to



Cleantech Group, which is global network of investors and representing over \$3 trillion in assets. The figure for 2008 is representative of investments in North America, Europe, China and India, and indicated the seventh consecutive year of growth in cleantech venture investing.

“As expected, clean technology venture investment slowed down in the fourth quarter of 2008, but it is important not to miss the forest for the trees,” says Nicholas Parker, executive chairman, Cleantech Group. “In 2008, there was a quantum leap in talent, resources and institutional appetite for clean technologies that represent the biggest opportunities for job and wealth creation.”

The top cleantech sectors in 2008 were solar, bio-fuels, transportation and wind. Solar power accounted for almost 40 percent of total cleantech investment in dollars, followed by bio-fuels (11 percent).

New cleantech investors in India include Kleiner Perkins and Garage Technologies Ventures, besides corporate investors such as Applied Materials. Much of the interest in the Indian cleantech sector is focussed on addressing energy shortage challenges. Energy generation and infrastructure attracted the majority of investment dollars in India in 2008, with solar and wind deals being the most popular.

Other sectors that got funding included electronic waste recycling, energy efficiency and water management.

Mohanjit Jolly, executive director, Draper Fisher Jurveston India, a leading cleantech venture investor, points out that most of the funds investing in India are early stage technology investors. “They are in a learning phase,” he remarks. “Going forward, you will actually start to see the positive results of this learning phase.”

Jaswinder Kaur, managing director, Cleantech Group, India, notes that there are definite trends indicating that cleantech is one of the bright spots on the investment landscape. “Stimulus packages and tax plans globally are focussed on clean technologies, energy

efficiency, and green jobs,” she remarks.

Besides meeting its own domestic demand, industry experts feel that India would be able to service the global clean tech industry. Many expect Indian firms to benefit significantly from the Obama administration's new energy plans.

Renewable energy generation — both solar and wind power — dominates the cleantech sector in India. Many of the leading players such as Tata BP Solar are leveraging their expertise to cater to the international market.

K. Subramanya, CEO, Tata BP Solar, sees tremendous potential for growth for solar energy in India. “In 25 years, solar power will be the main source of energy in India,” he says.

By 2032, India's renewable energy capacity is expected to touch 80 gigawatt (GW), representing a tenth of the country's total electricity generation capacity.

Importantly, the U.S. Government's move to embrace alternative sources of

energy will significantly expand the U.S. market for renewable energy sources, including solar PV (photo-voltaic) cells, points out Subramanya. This will help Indian exporters, such as Tata BP Solar, to enhance their international market share.

Many Indian firms have entered into joint research and development with international partners, focussing on new renewable technologies. Thus, the Acme Group, a leader in the field of energy environment and telecommunications infrastructure solutions in India, entered into an exclusive licensing agreement in March 2009 with eSolar — a California-based producer of modular, scalable solar thermal power plants. It will build up to 1,000 MW of solar thermal power plants over the next 10 years.

Another Indian company making a bold foray into the solar energy sector is Moser Baer PhotoVoltaic (MBPV) that plans to enter the U.S. market and expand its presence in Europe this year. Rajiv Arya, CEO, MBPV, notes that by next year the company will earn global revenues of \$1 billion and will have a capacity of 1GW.

Another area of opportunity for clean technologies is in methane capture projects. Rapid growth in the livestock, agro and food processing industries, has resulted in the generation of large quantities of waste, leading to significant methane emissions. In India, one of the major efforts to reduce methane emissions is through the utilization of these wastes for biogas production for thermal and power generation applications. A major initiative by the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), ‘Methane to Markets’, focuses on methane recovery and its use as a clean energy source.

Cleantech is rapidly emerging as a sunrise sector and investors are eagerly monitoring developments in new technologies. The sector is expected not only to clean up the environment, but hopefully boost the bottom-line of scores of companies — especially from India — that are entering the fray. ■



**India can replicate its software success in clean technology. The cleantech industry can be even bigger than Information Technology**



## Chandrayaan orbit raised to 200 km

**T**he Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has raised the orbit of its first unmanned lunar spacecraft Chandrayaan-1 to 200 km from the lunar surface, for further studies on orbit perturbations and gravitational field variations of the Moon. "With the successful completion of all the mission objectives from 100 km above the moon since November 2008, we have raised the height of the spacecraft to 200 km on May 19 to enable imaging lunar surface with a wider swath," ISRO said in Bangalore on May 20.

India's first lunar mission was launched on October 22 last year from the Sriharikota spaceport, about 90 km north-east of Chennai, on board the 316-tonne polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV), and inserted into lunar orbit on November 8. During the last seven months, all the 11 scientific payloads onboard the 519 kg Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft were operationalized. The quality of data received has been



"excellent", ISRO said. "The scientific community from India and other participating international agencies are analysing the data and several interesting results have been obtained," the statement added.

The spacecraft operations are being carried out from the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru and the Indian deep space network at Byalalu, about 40 km from India's tech hub. "The scientific data from Chandrayaan-1 is being archived and disseminated from the Indian space science data centre, which is also located at Byalalu," the statement continued.

The scientific objectives of the spacecraft are remote sensing of the Moon in visible, near infra-red, low energy X-ray and high-energy X-ray regions.

During the two-year expedition, some of the payloads prepared a three-dimensional atlas of both the near and far sides of the moon.

## India to build Medium Combat Aircraft

**W**ith

India's home-built Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) — the Tejas — successfully-making the cut during trials, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has now signed up for an indigenous Medium Combat Aircraft (MCA). The IAF and a team of aircraft designers are soon expected to formally set up a joint committee to frame the specifications for India's own MCA, which will be built largely in Bangalore.

The MCA's design team will centre on the agencies that have built the LCA: the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA); the National Aeronautics Laboratory (NAL); Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL); and a host of Defence Research and Development Organisation laboratories that will develop futuristic sensors and systems for the MCA.

The director, ADA, Dr. P.S. Subramaniam, said: "The joint committee is likely to be formed soon. This committee will finalize what will go into the MCA, as well as the budget and the development schedule."

According to Dr. Subramaniam, the program will aim to develop the MCA and build five to six prototypes at a cost of \$1.07 billion. A similar amount went into the LCA program.

## IIT-K procures hi-tech camera to study 'cracks'

**I**ndian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) has procured an ultra high-speed camera that will help it build more secure cars.

Designed to capture 200 million frames per second, the camera is expected to help the institute make a breakthrough in its research on the development of cracks in objects of daily use, including vehicles.

"Crack propagation is a complex issue, which requires an extremely detailed study," said the Head of Department of Mechanical Engineering at IIT-K, Prof. Nalinaksh S. Vyas.

The camera is expected to help scientists understand how cracks develop and how they spread. "We can definitely get in-depth knowledge about the nature of each crack," Prof. Vyas said.

## India's contribution to R&D rising: Study

**I**ndia's contribution to scientific research and innovation has been constantly rising since 2000, according to a study. The number of articles published in global science journals by Indians has increased from around 17,000 in 2001 to more than 27,000 in 2007, the study carried out by media house Thomson Reuters said. The figure stood at 12,500 in 1985, which went up to 17,000 in 2001. It further rose to 20,000 in 2003, the study pointed out.

The number of articles published by Indians clearly indicates the importance of domestic research institutes in research and development (R&D), it added.

The study doesn't include the number of journals sent by Indians working overseas as they got published with foreign addresses.



India was ranked 14th, ahead of many European countries such as Switzerland, Russia, Sweden and Belgium, in terms of its contributions to the field of engineering.

The majority of the Indian articles are in the field of physical sciences, the Thomson Reuters study said.

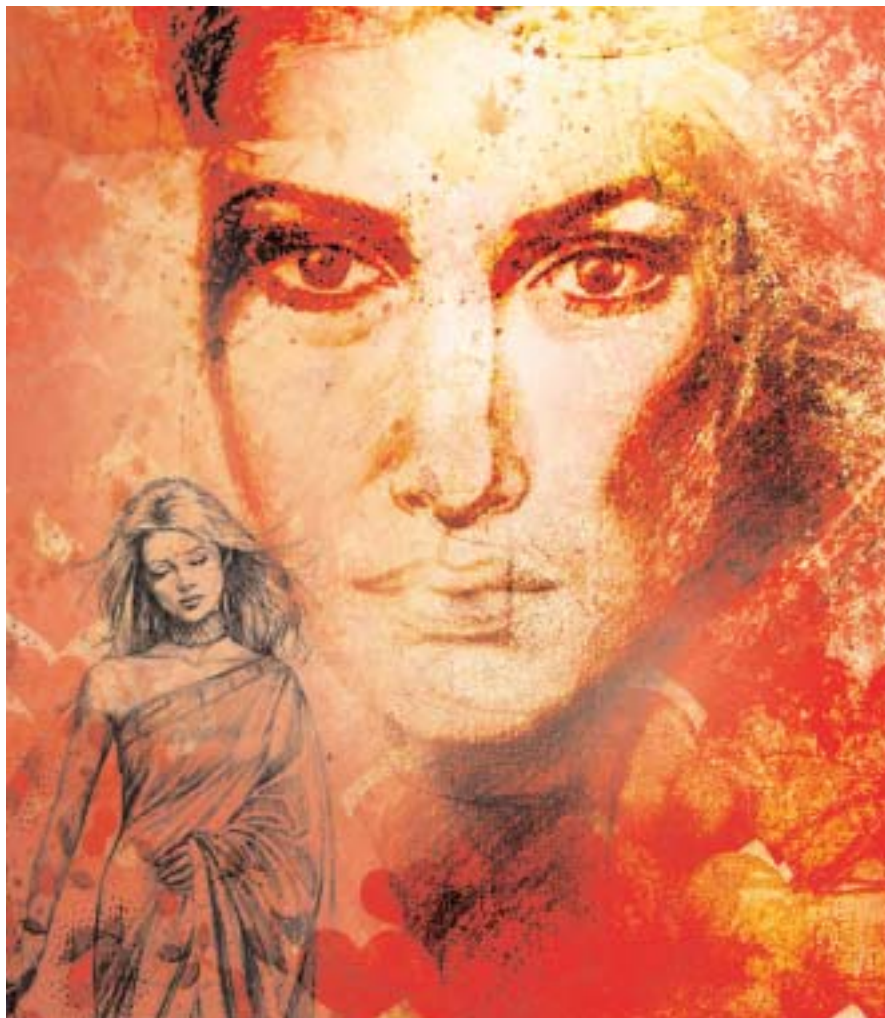
"Indians are known for their scientific potential and have finally positioned themselves strongly in this field," it pointed out.

# First Love

By Rashid Karim (1925-)

(Translated by Partha Banerjee)

19



**I**t was August the seventh, nineteen forty-one. I was a tenth grade student. Had spent the whole day at home, doing nothing. Was it a holiday? Can't remember now. But it wasn't unusual that the school was in session, yet I was home, or maybe, watching a movie at the local theater — in fact, it was quite regular. Quite a few times I'd miss school for ten or fifteen days in a row, and then get a VIP treatment

from my classmates when I'd finally return. My family members for a number of generations had been good students; some were exceptional. Therefore, I didn't know how they'd accepted my total apathy and indiscretion. I could only guess. The school was more than three miles away; my mother knew about some hazards of the daily commute, and imagined some more. She'd made up a theory about it: her son was passing

exams with good grades, so why push him to travel to school everyday, endangering his life?

Anyway, this story is not about my school life. Let me come to the core of the matter.

That day, I lay on my bed in my favorite second-floor room, read a book all through the morning and almost half of the afternoon, of course with a nice little lunch break. Then I thought: heck, that was no good to waste an entire day of my life; I could put it to better use watching a matinee movie instead. The curious reader might want to know what the book was that I was reading. I couldn't remember for sure, but a Sarat Chandra novel would be the best possible candidate. Back in those days, one couldn't separate me from my Sarat Chandra. Still, I decided to put him down and went out —perhaps because it was a book I'd read several times over, and got tired of it.

Back then, to want to watch a movie, and to be able to actually do it, were two different things. Often, to make it happen, I'd have to pick a couple of pockets of my family members.

There was a theater in Central Calcutta called Rupam. It used to be a popular one with students. It was popular not because of any aristocratic lineage, but rather because of a lack of it. The new releases already shown for months at first-rate theaters would much later be found at run-down halls such as Rupam. Therefore, the tickets were cheaper here; students would find it easier to go even with shallow pockets, with a little mandatory indulgence from family members.

I showed up on the street in front of



Rupam fifteen minutes before the show. I guess I was a little unmindful. The things that would be common for show time seemed to be missing. Still, I couldn't quite figure it out. The big movie posters were hanging on the walls as usual. It was perhaps one of those tear-jerker Bangla movies that was running — the *Court Dancer* or *Royal Actress* or something of that sort. It was quite crowded, yet it was not exactly the same, usual movie-going crowd. I went up the stairs to buy my tickets, and then realized that there was no way I could do it: the big iron gate was locked. Someone hung a cardboard sign on it. It said: "The theater is closed today due to the passing away of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore". Or, an announcement along that line.

So, Tagore is dead?

Then I realized that everyone was talking about the great poet. Everyone was sad and glum. People were crossing over the busy street speaking about him. Even the bubbly Oriya pan vendor who probably never heard about Tagore was acting differently, as if he knew a calamity had occurred; he knew it'd gripped the entire population of Calcutta.

I said to myself, 'So, what do I do now? All the other theaters must be closed too.' Of course, there was news for some time that the poet was gravely ill. Some even said that newspapers had already made up their special obituaries in anticipation of the inevitable. It must be true; otherwise how could the papers always manage to put out their special issues immediately after the fact?

I was now deeply saddened at the news; but honestly, it was not particularly for his death. I was sad because I'd missed the movie. Tagore could've died tomorrow; why did he choose to die today when it was so important for me to see the film? At that time, I had not read any Tagore other than a few of his poems such as 'Two Acres of Land', 'Abracadabra', 'The Awakening of the Waterfalls', or 'Shah-Jehan'. My school teachers and family members would rank

those to be his best poems. Even that Oriya pan vendor would say the same only if he could read Bangla. Much later, however, my esteemed professor Abu Syed Ayub had completely transformed my views about the poet. Back in those days though, I had a special preference for 'Two Acres of Land', especially those lines that started with, "Salutations to Thee, my beloved beautiful Motherland". But publicly, I'd always say Shah-Jehan was his best poem — the primary reason was that Emperor Shah-Jehan was a Mussalman.

At that age, however, Sarat Chandra was indeed the one who'd intoxicated me.

I didn't know when I started walking again. I walked toward the Calcutta University building on College Street; everyone walked that way. They said that Tagore's funeral procession was coming that way. By that time, the overarching gloom had touched me too. Like the pan vendor, I now also knew a major disaster had happened. I

stood on the steps of the University building. Thousands of people gathered there. The sidewalks on College Street, Harrison Road, and the streets to North Calcutta all were filled with people and more people. On balconies and windows of buildings on both sides, women stood with flowers and hand-made garlands. Many wept; some cried out loud. I now understood the magnitude of the event. I'd heard Tagore songs many times; words of some of those songs now came back to me and haunted me. I got a lump in my throat.

The procession with the poet's body was coming late. Everyone eagerly waited to see the poet one last time; to most of them, it was probably the first time too. I couldn't imagine how they'd be able to see him in the midst of this huge sea of people.

Somebody shouted from the top of the stairs, "It's coming, it's coming!" Somebody else said, "It's only the Films Division people on a truck." Another man announced that a group of famous Tagore singers were riding a separate truck, the group being led by Pankaj Mallick, et al. I remembered the song I'd heard many times on the radio, "When my footsteps are no longer found here..."

The procession with the poet's body on a beautifully decorated truck passed by, with thousands of people mourning, wailing, and paying their last respects to the great man. Where did they hold the funeral — at which crematorium? I never remembered those small details. All crematoriums would really be the same anyway, I thought.

For the next few days, weeks and months, it was Tagore and Tagore only all over, as if the sun or the moon was missing from the Calcutta sky. There was no other conversation in the city — on trams and buses, in the papers, in living rooms, at the share market, even at the tobacco shops, everyone talked about Tagore — his poetry, songs, art, politics, and all.

It was also the time when the World War raged on. It was dark in the evening: lights would be cut off. We were scared. Everyone was mentally



***For the next few days, weeks and months, it was Tagore and Tagore only all over... There was no other conversation in the city — on trams and buses, in the papers, in living rooms, at the share market, even at the tobacco shops, everyone talked about Tagore...***



prepared for an inevitable bombing on the city. Sandbags lined up on the streets, lights were turned off, and posters said 'walls have ears too', 'own your own electricity', etc. However, we didn't see any major bombing of the city. We had bombs dropped on Calcutta only once or twice — it didn't do much damage. People would make fun of Japanese bombs: unlike today, Japanese products back in those days didn't carry much reputation.

My Abba had retired. He'd noticed that I was quite sad and depressed for some time. He'd of course never read any Tagore either. He didn't even know much Bangla; he'd only speak a little. In fact, in our family, my parents were both Urdu-speaking. My brothers and I were the first to learn Bangla.

We sat down to have dinner. He knew my blues had something to do with the death of the poet.

Abba was eating with us. He said, "Was Tagore a great poet?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Greater than Iqbal?"

I'd never read any Iqbal.

Still, I confirmed, "Yes."

Abba then asked, "Have you read any Iqbal?"

I had to confess. With great hesitation, I said, "No."

"Then how do you know Tagore was greater than Iqbal?"

What could I say? I kept mum.

I'd given up Urdu and picked up some Bangla. Therefore, my father and I would mostly speak in English.

But my story is not really about Tagore either. Even though it's based on him... or rather, his death... it's actually a trivial incident... perhaps quite insignificant. The real story is somewhere else.

The big memorial meeting for Tagore was held at the Town Hall... was it at Town Hall? The president of the meeting was the famous historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar... or was it him? These were historical facts, and one must not misstate them. But in terms of my story, even those glaring errors would not make much of a difference.

The meeting location was incredibly

crowded. Moreover, the heat and humidity were unbearable. There was not an inch of space where I could sit or stand. Hundreds of people were denied access and went back to stand on the street outside. There was perhaps a wooden partition outside the auditorium. I barely stood next to it. There was a swing door nearby; police officers had camped there. Nobody would be allowed to get past the door to enter the hall. I'd never seen so many celebrities in my life. Somebody said Kazi Nazrul Islam and Fazlul Haq were also there. But in that enormous crowd, I couldn't make them out. A group of girls were working as volunteers. Even in that suffocating condition, I was absorbing it all.

A young woman volunteer showed up. She wore a black, sleeveless silk blouse. There was an aura of aristocracy around her, her manners, even the way she walked and talked. And how did she look? "Stunningly beautiful" must be used only for someone like her... no one should use that word more than once in a thousand years.

I no longer remembered Tagore. I stood on this small corner of the wooden partition, like a beggar. I knew I would not be able to enter.

***She looked at me a couple of times. She glanced at me for a moment even in the midst of her very hectic job. Was she curious about me? There were so many other men standing in this little corner; they were all handsome and well-dressed. She didn't look at them. She looked at me... yes, maybe only for a moment...***

The beautiful young woman was very busy. She was greeting someone, moving someone else, and making room to seat others. The special guests spoke with her too.

She looked at me a couple of times. She glanced at me for a moment even in the midst of her very hectic job. Was she curious about me? There were so many other men standing in this little corner; they were all handsome and well-dressed. She didn't look at them. She looked at me... yes, maybe only for a moment. But she still did it alright. Why? Was it possible that she actually cared about me?

The meeting was about to begin. It became even noisier. Now she was coming up toward this wooden partition. Now I could see her clearly. She was sweating. She looked so beautiful even with her sweat! How old was she — eighteen, nineteen? She was a little older than I was perhaps.

The crowd was pushing hard against the partition like crazy to get in. She now came and stood there. No, she wouldn't let anyone slip in. Some people showed their invitation cards. Still, no luck for them... it was too late. There were no more seats available at all. Some guests were angry; some started an argument. But she would not be swayed. The police officers were obediently following her instructions. Slowly but surely, the raucous crowd gave up, and grudgingly dispersed.

I still stood there. For an instant, there was nobody else near the swing door.

She now opened the door.

She now said, "Come on in... come, quick."

Who was she calling — me? I couldn't believe it!

"Quick, now. More people will be here any moment."

I still stood there. Did she finally hold my hand and drag me in? Well, perhaps not.

Then she dissolved into the crowd, never to be seen again.

I couldn't tell who you were, girl. But I shall never forget you 'til my death. You came to me, and called me in. ■■■

## Madame Tussauds New York unveils Amitabh

**A**wax figure of Indian film star Amitabh Bachchan was unveiled at Madame Tussauds New York on May 22 with a 'Bollywood Bash' being held at Times Square.

"We are thrilled to welcome Amitabh Bachchan to his new home in Madame Tussauds," said a statement quoting Janine DiGiacchino, general manager of Madame Tussauds New York.

"Bachchan is a Bollywood film legend and we could think of no better figure to open the new Bollywood Zone, which is an exciting addition to



our Times Square attraction."

Five Bollywood dancers, dressed in colourful lehenga skirts, performed and taught 20 middle school students

traditional Indian dance at the 'Bollywood Bash', the statement said.

Bachchan's figure is dressed in a traditional black sherwani suit with a gold and black scarf draped around his neck. It is the first figure to be part of Madame Tussauds New York's all-new Bollywood Zone. The brightly-colored, fully-interactive area includes the 'Taj Mahal', videos of authentic Indian dancers and a photo area, where visitors can pose as Bollywood stars — all designed to re-create the experience of being on a Bollywood film set with Bachchan.

## Salim-Sulaiman for Emmy Awards

**I**ndia's music composer duo Salim-Sulaiman have been nominated for the prestigious television production awards Emmy for their composition in the popular American show 'Wonder Pets'. The composers bagged the nomination in the outstanding original song category in the children's animation section for the song *We like being small* for Nickelodeon's popular American show. They created the complete score for the episode 'Save The Bengal Tiger'.



"We are completely on top of the world. It is a great feeling. It's actually an honor for us," Sulaiman said. The music director duo have created

music for films like 'Chak De! India', 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi' and 'Fashion'.

Sulaiman says that international recognition is important to an artiste. "This kind of recognition is very important as it takes the artiste to the next level, and is very encouraging also," he explained.

The award ceremony will be held in Los Angeles on August 30.

## Filmmaker Prakash Mehra dies



**V**eteran Bollywood filmmaker Prakash Mehra died in Mumbai on May 24 morning after a prolonged illness. He was 69. Mehra died of pneumonia and multiple organ failure at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai

Ambani Hospital. Mehra ventured into filmmaking with the 1968 Shashi Kapoor starrer 'Haseena Maan Jayegi', followed by the 1971 hit 'Mela'. However, it was the Amitabh Bachchan starrer blockbuster hit 'Zanjeer' (1973) that not only catapulted him into the big league, but also gave the Hindi film industry its 'angry young man'.

## Tamil Film wins award at New York Festival

**T**amil Film 'Mudhal Mudhal Mudhal Varai', first selected as an Indian Panorama film of IFFI-2008, has won the award for the Best Drama Feature in the Best Feature film (International) — Genre Awards category at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival held recently.

Directed by Chennai-based Krishnan Seshadri Gomatam, 'Mudhal Mudhal Mudhal Varai' was acclaimed widely at the last International Film Festival of India held in Goa for its distinctive storyline that captures the life of an upper middle class family.

This debut film is based on Krishnan Seshadri Gomatam's own original story and was one among the 20 films that were select-



ed in the Indian Panorama section of the International Film Festival of India.

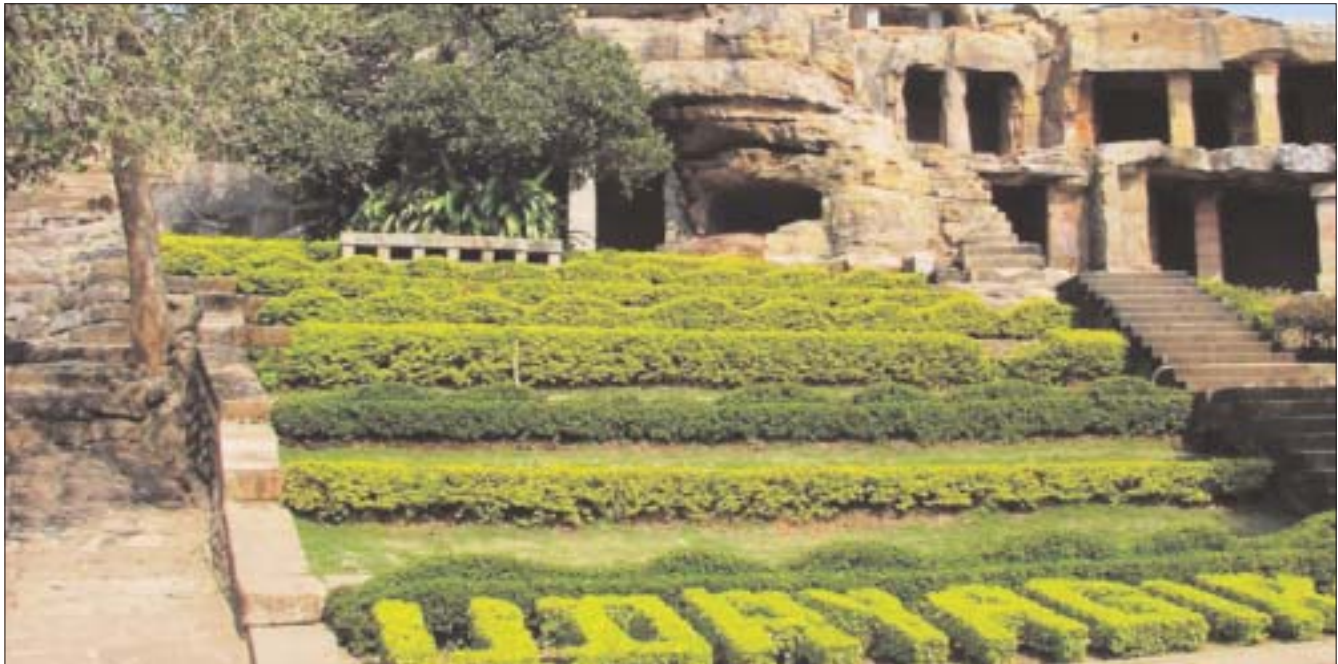
The cast comprises C.P. Satyajit, Anuja Iyer, E.Kumaravel and Charan alongside 100 other first timers. The cinematography is by Fowzia Fathima, editing by B.Lenin, art direction by Thotaa Tharrani, music by Aslam Mustafa and

audiography by A.S. Lakshmi Narayanan.

The film is about the making of the movie itself — a cinematic metaphor for the ancient Hindu belief that life and death is a continuous process. Set in contemporary India, the narrative follows an obsessive film maker, Huggy, desperately trying to make his first feature film.

He has a great sense of humor. The different nuances and incidents he sees in life appear like passages out of a movie script to him. Time is running out for him because his girl-friend Sindhu suffers from a terminal illness. He wants to marry her. But she says she will marry him only after he has completed his first film.

# UDAYAGIRI CAVES **The ascetic retreat**



**T**he rock engravings tell the tale of a noble Jain warrior — King Kharavela. The rooms emit a sense of austerity. Beautiful rock carvings adorn the walls. The light, playing ‘hide and seek’, reveals the beauty of the rock caves spread across the ‘Hills of Sunrise’ or the famed Udayagiri Hills, situated 10 km away from Bhubaneswar. It rises to a height of about 135 feet, silhouetting the coastal plain.

The Udayagiri caves, 18 in all, are coarse sandstone structures and were once home to Jain monks. While many of these ascetic chambers are natural rock shelters, quite a few were carved out and donated by the famous Jain patron, King Kharavela of the Cheti (Chedi) dynasty. Nearly 2000 years old, these Jain dwellings mark an important period in the history of rock-cut architecture, art, and religion in eastern India.

The inscriptions and murals in these caves provide insights into the history of the powerful Cheti dynasty, which ruled Kalinga (present day Orissa) some time around 1st century BC. The names of kings Kharavela and Kudepasiri, and prince Vadukha, find special mention in

the inscriptions. Kudepasiri and Vadukha find mention as the donors of two cells in the lower storey of ‘Cave-9’ or ‘Manchapuri’. However, quite a lot is mentioned about Kharavela on the brow of the rock over Cave-14 or ‘Hathi Gumpha’ (elephant cave). Most of the inscriptions have been defaced but enough is known to establish him as a noble and powerful warrior and a patron of Jainism.

The ‘Rani Gumpha’ or the Queen’s cave is the largest of all and shows off some of the finest sculptures of Udayagiri. Many of the carvings in the cave portray contemporary vignettes and also illustrate Kharavela’s victory over his enemies. Some of the caves like ‘Chota Hathi Gumpha’ are double-storied and contain carvings of elephants, flanking its entrance.

The ‘Bagh Gumpha’ or tiger cave is another beauty. It has been so named because the entrance is fashioned like the mouth of a tiger. Some of the other fascinating caves are ‘Hathi Gumpha’, ‘Ganesh Gumpha’ (with the head of Ganesha carved in the rear wall of the cell), ‘Pavana Gumpha’ (purification cave), and ‘Sarpha Gumpha’ (serpent cave).

The caves house rows of cells which

share a common verandah. Essentially used for meditation, these cells were austere and barely furnished. The low roof of the cells meant that the resident could barely stretch to his full height. The carvings on the walls describe the austere lives of the Jain monks who spent their lives meditating there.

The caves are accessible by a flight of steps and an ancient ramp from the base of the hill. At the top of the Udayagiri is located the ruins of Chaitya Hall, excavated in 1958. A place of worship of the Jain monks, it is believed that this place housed the ‘Kalinga fina’, a Jain cult object, which was recovered by Kharavela from King Nanda of Magadha. A delightful slice of history, the Udayagiri caves are easily accessible from the capital city of Bhubaneswar. Located close to the city, accommodation is easily available. The caves remain open for visitors from 8 am to 6 pm.

## **BEST TIME TO VISIT**

September to March. An excellent time to pay a visit would be during the week-long Kharavela festival, which is held in the month of February, coinciding with the traditional Magha Saptami Mela.



## ■ Remembering Nehru



The President, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, paying tributes at the Samadhi of India's first Prime Minister, Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on his 45th death anniversary, at Shantivan, in Delhi, on May 27. The Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dikshit, is also seen.

### EMBASSY OF INDIA

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

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

E-mail: [indembwash@indiagov.org](mailto:indembwash@indiagov.org)

Website: [www.indianembassy.org](http://www.indianembassy.org)

### CONSULATES

Consulate General of India  
3 East, 64th Street  
New York  
N.Y. 10021

Tel: 212-774-0600

Fax: 212-861-3788

E-mail:

[indiacgny@aol.com](mailto:indiacgny@aol.com)

Website:

[www.indianconsulateny.org](http://www.indianconsulateny.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](mailto:info@cgisf.org)

Website:

[www.cgisf.org](http://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](mailto:cg@indianconsulate.com)

Website:

[chicago.indianconsulate.com](http://chicago.indianconsulate.com)

Consulate General of India  
1990 Post Oak Blvd. # 600  
3 Post Oak Central  
Houston, TX 77056

Tel. 713-626-2148/49

Fax. 713-626-2450

E-mail:

[cgi-hou@swbell.net](mailto:cgi-hou@swbell.net)

Website:

[www.cgihouston.org](http://www.cgihouston.org)

Printed and Published by the Press & Information Office, Embassy of India, 2107 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, D.C., 20008

Content, design and production by IANS. [www.ianspublishing.com](http://www.ianspublishing.com)

### EMBASSY OF INDIA

2107 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

Tel: 202-939-7000

Fax: 202-462-7276

**FIRST CLASS**

**First Class  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Silver Spring, MD  
Permit No.  
3966**