



# A U S T R A L I A - I N D I A F O C U S

MARCH - APRIL 2004 – ISSUE 29



## Australian Legal Services Mission to India

A senior Australian legal mission led by Solicitor-General Dr David Bennett AO QC, and Sir Laurence Street, AC KCMG QC, Chairman of the Australian Government's International Legal Services Advisory Council (ILSAC), travelled to India in March for talks with eminent members of the Indian legal community. The mission had a busy schedule, covering a wide range of legal issues as they travelled to New Delhi on March 15 and 16, through to Mumbai over March 17 and 18, and finally on to Bangalore on 18 and 19 March. While in Delhi, the mission had the opportunity to meet with Mr Arun Jaitley, Minister for Law and Justice, Commerce and Industry; Mr Soli Sorabjee, Indian Attorney-General, Mr Anil Bajjal, Union Home Secretary; Mr Ramji Lal Meena, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs.

The primary focus for the delegation was participation in the Australia-India Legal

Dialogues 2004. There were two separate Dialogues – the first in New Delhi and the second in Mumbai - in order to give the Australian mission as much exposure as possible to the Indian legal community. The Australian and Indian participants met and discussed matters of mutual interest in areas such as legal cooperation, commercial law, professional regulation, legal education and training, arbitration, as well as developments in international law and legal services.

Dr Bennett QC said, "the discussions in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore will strengthen the good relations and friendship between these two legal professions which share so many common interests". Overall, Dr Bennett believed the talks were further evidence of the growing legal, judicial and institutional links between Australia and India, and provided a timely opportunity to highlight the capabilities of the Australian legal services sector.

The Australian Legal mission to India received extensive coverage in the Indian press, both in Hindi- and English-language newspapers. The response to the mission from the Indian legal community was very positive. This was seen in both the calibre of the Indians who met with the mission (from both the government and private sectors) and in a proposal from the Indian side for a return visit to Australia by an Indian legal services delegation. In addition, the Bar Association of India has proposed a permanent working group be established in India to ensure ongoing collaboration with Australia in the areas of law and legal services.

The Australian mission drew its members from across Australia's legal sector, including the Attorney-General's Department, leading commercial law firms, university law schools and the Australian Government's International Legal Services Advisory Council (ILSAC). The Delhi Legal Dialogue was organised by the Australian Government, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association, and the Indian Council of Arbitration. The Legal Dialogue in Mumbai was organised by the Australian Government in collaboration with the Bombay Bar Association. Both the Delhi and Mumbai Dialogues were supported by the Australia-India Council.



From L to R: High Commissioner Penny Wensley AO, Mr Soli Sorabjee, Attorney General for India, Hon Mr Justice R C Lahoti, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Mr Onkar S Kanwar, Senior Vice President, FICCI and Dr David Bennett AO QC, Solicitor-General and leader of the Australia legal services mission to India at the New Delhi Australia-India Legal Dialogue.

## **Australian corporates positive about doing business in India**

Mr S Subramani, Associate Editor of the Hindu Business Line told an audience of corporate decision makers in Sydney to note that as Indians go to the polls in 2004, political parties on both sides are promising liberalisation. "Even the Chief Minister of West Bengal - a Communist state - is touring the world seeking foreign investment" he quipped. Participants at the lunch organised by the Australia India Business Council, with the support of Clayton Utz, included representatives from the legal, investment banking, hospitality, education, resources, IT, insurance and agricultural sectors.

Whilst the Indian market remains challenging, corporate leaders readily agreed that marked improvement in the business sentiment of foreign investors has occurred over the past couple of years. Consul General of India Mr M Ganapathi reminded guests that the majority of disputes involving foreign investors are decided in favour of the foreign investor.

A similar argument was presented by Adit Jain, Managing Director of IMA India, at the quarterly Asia Strategic Forecast briefings in Sydney and Melbourne. Adit briefed over 100 managers of multinational corporations on developments in the Indian manufacturing sector.

"Fifteen of the world's leading automobile manufacturers are now sourcing components from India. Hero Honda is the largest manufacturer of motorbikes in the world. Walmart is sourcing over 1 billion dollars worth of goods from India each year and Unilever, Clariant, Renault, BASF, Ciba, and Bayer are among the other manufacturing companies expected to increase their sourcing from India."

Adit presented case studies showing the success of both Indian and foreign multinationals. "Hyundai Motor India (HMI), established in 1998, is now India's second largest car maker with revenues exceeding US 1billion. The company's Chennai plant is the largest outside Korea. With research indicating India to be the lowest cost producer of small cars, the parent company plans to stop small car production in Korea, and transfer machinery, technology and R&D capabilities to HMI".

Adit, who advises CEOs and CFOs of over 200 multinationals in India, noted that the strong growth in manufacturing is being driven by both demand and supply considerations – cost and skill. "One hundred of the world's Fortune 500 companies have set up R&D facilities in India".



Improvements in infrastructure are promising, with turnaround time at ports dropping, the second phase of power sector reforms in the pipeline, privatisation of Delhi and Mumbai airports and development of the National Highway Development Project.

Chairman of the Australia India Business Council, Mr Neville Roach AO, urged Australian companies to pursue the the massive and diverse opportunities offered by the booming Indian economy seriously and with a real sense of urgency. "Given that the whole world is now beating a path to India's door, we must be prepared to compete vigorously and demonstrate our long-term commitment, if we are to win a fair share of the phenomenal growth in trade and investment both into and out of India", he said.

## **Australia India Business Exchange Program**

The Australia India Business Council's Business Exchange Program, supported by the Australia India Council, aims to give Australian businesspeople a much better idea of the realities of doing business in India. The Program is directed at employees of companies with established business links with Indian enterprises. Applicants must have the support and encouragement of their employer.

A grant of up to \$10, 000 will assist the recipient to travel and live in India for a period of up to four months. To register your interest in the 2004-2005 Business Exchange Program, we invite you to contact the AIBC secretariat at [info@aibc.org.au](mailto:info@aibc.org.au).

## Australia Woos Bollywood As Its Largest-Ever Film Delegation Visits India

Australia cemented itself as a major player in the global film market with the largest ever Australian film industry presence at FRAMES 2004 - the biggest Asian convention on the entertainment business which was held in Mumbai from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of March.

FRAMES this year included an exclusive session on "Doing Business with Australia" featuring a series of top Australian speakers.

Supported by The Australia India Business Council (AIBC) and its film chapter the Australia India Film Arts Media and Entertainment (FAME) Council, along with ausFILM, Australian Film Commission, and various State film bodies, the delegation comprised of key players from the Australian entertainment industry including Producer John Winter ('Rabbit Proof Fence', 'Doing Time for Patsy Cline') who was also heading the delegation, Steve Cooper, M.D of the multi award-

winning Australian post production company, BEEPS, and Shireen Ardeshir from IDP Education. The delegation was initiated by Sydney based production company films and casting TEMPLE. The conference proved an excellent forum for accelerating the already burgeoning liaisons between the Australian and Indian film industries.

Acknowledging the plethora of economic opportunities that the Australian film industry derives from its Bollywood counterpart, Mr Neville Roach AO, Chairman of the AIBC said, "...we are delighted to have a substantial delegation from Australia attending FRAMES 2004, and hope this results in significantly closer relationships and a large growth in bilateral business opportunities."

Delegation leader John Winter echoes Mr Roach's sentiments, stating that "With a particular focus on Australia this year, the conference also offers ample opportunity for the first of a series of co production projects between the two countries to be realized." Anupam Sharma, M.D. of production company films and casting TEMPLE, and head of the Australia India Film Arts Media and Entertainment (FAME) Council (a chapter of Australia India Business Council), reinforces the growing enthusiasm. "Indo Australian film links are something that started with a couple of films but is now a full fledged industry, with Australian crew working in India on post production collaboration and co-productions, and regular visits of Indian film, TVC, and TV crews in Australia".



Australian Producer and Head of Delegation John Winter with Bronwyn Elliot and Director Vikram Singh

The delegation was enthusiastic in its bid to win over Bollywood and promote Australia, participating in an official "Australian Stall" at the film market; taking studio tours; paying visits to Indian film sets; undertaking location surveys and participating in meetings with leading Indian producers – all measures vital for Australian organisations doing, or even considering doing business with the Indian film industry.

A dynamic lineup of promotional activities canvassing spectacular Australian locations, a world renowned digital production sector, and other industry-specific services, was presented to participants at FRAMES 2004. Steve Cooper of BEEPS congratulates this truly unique Australian spirit in nurturing the vision of their Indian clients, "We (at BEEPS) answer each post-production challenge with a tailored approach, building long-term relationships by going that extra mile...and by endeavouring to always deliver a quality end result beyond our client's expectations".

Indo-Australian film links are now a multimillion-dollar niche trade, providing employment to Australians, acting as a creative outlet for the Indian community in Australia, and also encouraging Indian students to involve themselves in more industry-specific university courses. This thought is echoed by Australian universities who are launching a new campaign promoting film and television studies in Australia at the FRAMES 2004 conference. “The Indian film industry is booming...(and) there is great potential to attract students to Australian film and television courses” said Anne Reynolds, Director of Special Projects at IDP.

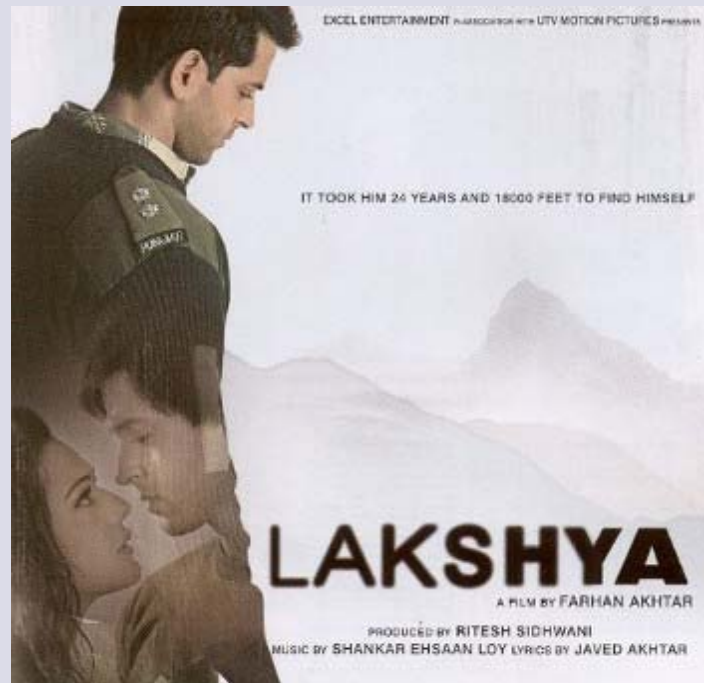
Collaborative efforts and support from the NSW FTO, Melbourne Film Office, and South Australian Film Corporation among others, have resulted in multiple film-trade opportunities—co-productions are aplenty and key Australian crew including directors, cinematographers, stunt directors, editors, and designers, have carved a place for themselves in the Indian film industry. Trisha Rothkrans, CEO AUSFILM, supporting the delegation, congratulates FRAMES 2004 for further “providing excellent networking opportunities for the Australian and Indian film communities to form collaborative relationships”.

With all the passion, potential, and talent of the industry which it intends to partner, the largest ever Australian Film Delegation successfully wooed ‘Bollywood’, further strengthening Australia’s leading position in the film industry. The Indo-Australian film trade holds strong growth potential.

In April this year Farhan Akhtar director of Lakshya (a much anticipated Indian film to be released this year - starring megastars Amitabh Bachan, Hrithik Roshan and Preity Zinta), and his sound engineer Nakul Kamte did the complete sound post of their film “Lakshya” at one of Australia’s leading sound studios in Melbourne, “Soundfirm”.



From L to R: Frank Biffone, George Vasiliadis, John Winter, Anupam Sharma, Steve Cooper, Tai Nguyen, Shireen Adreshir



## **The South Asia Lecture**

The South Asia Lecture is a key feature of the South Asian section of the biennial Asian Studies Association conferences. The lecture has been funded by the Australia-India Council in association with the South Asian Studies Association of Australia. At each conference an outstanding scholar from India is invited to deliver a lecture drawing on their current research. The presentations have been at the cutting edge in their particular fields. The lectures are then subsequently published in *South Asia*, the major, internationally recognised scholarly journal of South Asian studies published by the South Asian Studies Association. Past lecturers have included Romilla Thapar, Ravinder Kumar, Ashin Das Gupta, Lakshmi Subramanyam, Mushirul Hasan, and is a list of India's most prominent and significant scholars.

This year's South Asia Lecture will be delivered at the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial ASAA Conference to be held in Canberra from 29 June to 2 July 2004. The Lecturer will be Professor Narayani Gupta, Department of History and Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Professor Gupta will bring to her presentation an expertise in urban history and in heritage matters, particularly concerning Delhi, and in the formulation and study of history texts and curriculum.

Professor Gupta's address will be on A '*notified*' future for Delhi's past. She proposes to talk about Delhi, a city of 14 million people, which has as many historic buildings as many of the older cities of Europe, and as many cars as a modern American city. She will consider the question: To whom does the future belong? The choice lies with the citizens of Delhi, which, if expressed cogently, sometimes gets reflected in government decisions. Ideally, it is possible to maintain the 800-year architectural heritage of the city and also allow its denizens to buy all the cars they crave for. But there is a fundamental ideological choice to be made – the cars are part of a mindset which dreams of high-rise buildings and shopping malls, the heritage buildings of another which believes that some space and money should be reserved for vestiges from the past.

In addition, Professor Gupta will join other overseas delegates, Professor Judith Brown, Beit Professor of Commonwealth History in the University of Oxford, and Dr Rachel Dwyer, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, with Kalpana Ram from Macquarie University as discussant along with other participants from Australia in a roundtable discussion on *The past in the present: where is it taking India?* The roundtable will address the issue of the ways in which the past has become directly relevant to the present and to immediate national issues in India. It will look at India's history wars, to the meanings given to the past, and at history in contemporary society and in contemporary politics. For further information contact SASA President : jim.masselos@arts.usyd.edu.au

## **Western Sydney Businesses Consider Growing Business Opportunities In India**

Asia Business Connection, with the support of the Australia India Business Council, held a seminar in Parramatta on 30 March to promote business between Australia and India.

Asia Business Connection exists to provide the resources and the two-way communication necessary to encourage and enhance business relationships between Western Sydney organisations and potential markets, investment opportunities and investors in the Asian region.

A panel of speakers provided insights into doing business in India. In his introduction the Consul-General of India, Mr Ganapathi, highlighted recent positive developments in the burgeoning trade relationship between Australia and India. Mr Pranab Dasgupta, Vice President of Elecon Engineering Australia spoke of the business environment in India, and the importance of planning well and showing persistence in order to succeed in the Indian market. Elecon is one of India's global companies. Over the last 4 decades, Elecon has grown to supply highly sophisticated bulk material handling equipment to companies in core sectors such as fertilizer, cement, coal/power generation, chemical and steel plants.

Over 30 participants attended the seminar, including companies currently doing business in India and companies considering expanding their operations in India.

Executive Director of the Australia India Business Council, Mr Glen Robinson said "It is clear that India is opening up as a sound commercial target for medium-sized Australian companies from a wide range of sectors. Very successful and profitable export and joint-venture opportunities exist and many more are expected to develop over time."

### **Western Australia sign MoU with India to expand sports cooperation**

Sporting links between Australia and India are set to expand with the April 15 signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the State of Western Australia and the Sports Authority of India (SAI). The MoU embraces an extensive range of possible sports collaboration and cooperation. This includes training and attachment of coaches, exchange programs and visits by sports leaders and sports personnel, and cooperation in the development of sports sciences. The MoU by the Western Australia Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr Robert Charles Kucera APM MLA, was signed during an official visit to the sub-continent, and Mr J.P. Singh, Director General, Sports Authority of India.



Mr Kucera said, "Australia and India share a passion for sports. Sports contribute greatly to our sense of identity and national pride... I look forward to strengthening sports exchanges between our two countries, particularly in the lead up to the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Australia and 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi. There can be real benefits from further sporting cooperation, in raising participation levels and competition standards between our two countries and in the wider region." The Western Australian Government has a strong international sports development program and Mr Kucera's visit will build on the close partnership already established between WA and the Sports Authority of India. Western Australia has worked closely with the SAI in producing a framework for an Indian National Action Plan for Sports - the development of which was undertaken with financial support from the Australia-India Council. The first collaborative activity following the signing of the MoU will take place in July, with a series of workshops in India focusing on sports science, coaching, sports infrastructure planning and the development of sports clubs.

(L to R) Western Australian Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mr Robert Charles Kucera APM MLA and Mr J.P. Singh, Director General, Sports Authority of India at the signing of the MoU between the Australian State of Western Australia and the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on 15 April 2004.

### **AIIESEC Australia - India Young Leaders Program**

International youth organisation AIIESEC has launched a program to provide Australia and India's most promising young graduates and professionals with an international internship in top Australian and Indian organisations. Called the Australia India Young Leaders Program (AIYLP), the initiative will see Indian graduates from a range of disciplines placed in Australian organisations for between six and 18 months. For every exchange placement in Australia, a similar position will be available in India for an Australian graduate. "The AIYLP offers Australian companies direct access to some of the best talent from prestigious universities and postgraduate institutions in India", says AIIESEC director David Gottlieb. AIIESEC in India's supporters include major business houses such as the Tata, Godrej and Birla groups as well as Air India, Infosys Technologies and Hindustan Lever. In Australia, AIIESEC works with many government departments and agencies such as the Dept of Employment and Workplace Relations, Dept of Education Science and Training and Centrelink as well as companies such as AMP, Unisys, Kraft Foods Australia and DHL Worldwide Express. PricewaterhouseCoopers and McKinsey & Co work with AIIESEC in both countries.

Exchange participants come from a range of academic experience and disciplines including Business/Commerce (MBA or CA certified graduates are available), Information Technology, Engineering (Electrical/electronic, computer, mechanical or civil) and Graphic Design. The program eliminates the usual headaches of international human resourcing, as AIIESEC matches the needs of each company to their database of hundreds of available graduates. AIIESEC assesses and selects up to three suitable candidates for the company to interview. "The program is cost-effective and hassle-free as we take care of visas, airport pick-ups, initial city orientation, accommodation and other logistical issues such as bank accounts and tax file numbers." says Gottlieb.

"Before I became involved in AIIESEC I never would have expected to find such a high-tech company in a developing country like India", says Karl Stiller, who completed an AIIESEC exchange with Indian company Masibus Process Instruments. The organisers hope the exchange program will broaden the understanding of Australian and Indian youth and change outdated perceptions and stereotypes. Gottlieb believes the AIYLP is a unique opportunity for companies and young professionals to gain an insight into the cultural, economic and political realities of Australia and India today. "In addition to growing their business interests in India, companies are making a huge contribution to the development of the next generation of Australian and Indian leaders who will have an increased understanding and appreciation of our respective cultures."

## 2004 K R Narayanan Lecture: Dr Vijay Kelkar “India on the Growth Turnpike”

The K R Narayanan Oration has had a distinguished list of invited guests over the years, and the 2004 speaker, Dr Vijay Kelkar, was no exception. While currently a Minister of State in India as Advisor to the Minister of Finance, Dr Kelkar has held numerous prominent positions of fiscal responsibility for the Indian government in the areas of Economic Policy, Commerce and Petroleum, among others. He has also worked at the international level, as a Director in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Dr Kelkar chose as his topic for the Oration “*India on the Growth Turnpike*” which outlined the reasons, as he saw it, for the current and future economic success of India.

During his oration, Dr Vijay Kelkar argued that two decades of economic reforms in India by successive governments have steered the country to a potential ‘golden age of growth’. He believed that India was well-positioned to absorb global economic shocks and maintain continued economic growth, as it had paid the ‘fixed costs’ of democracy in terms of institutional infrastructure, traditions and conventions. Dr Kelkar argued that democracy creates a sound foundation for stable policies in economic affairs, for proper fiscal regulation, and for managing political risks (such as internal social conflict).

Dr Kelkar also argued that growing bi-partisan support for economic reform will further secure a future of economic growth in India. In addition, strong IT and telecom sectors coupled with English language ability (the ‘lingua franca’ of globalisation), had positioned India well to participate in the global marketplace. Dr Kelkar argued that ‘networks’ were important. That is, as transport networks (rail, roads etc.) are essential to economic growth, so are IT and telecommunications networks. As India is currently in the process of developing both physical and virtual infrastructure, increasing economic integration and growth would follow for the Indian economy. The Oration was held on Tuesday 27 April at University House, Australian National University (ANU). Numerous distinguished guests from the academic and diplomatic community attended the Lecture. The K R Narayanan Oration is sponsored by the AIC and the National Institute of Economics and Business, and was organised by the Australia South Asia Research Centre (ASARC) at the Australian National University.



Dr Vijay Kelkar with Mr Andrew Mohl, CEO of AMP, at an AIBC luncheon sponsored by AMP. AMP has a life insurance joint venture and infrastructure investments in India.

### Australia India Business Council AMP Boardroom Lunch

In Sydney Dr Vijay Kelkar, Advisor to the Minister of Finance in the rank of Minister for State, was a guest speaker at a lunch organised by the Australia India Business Council. Sponsored by AMP and with the support of UNSW, the lunch provided participants an opportunity to hear Dr Kelkar’s views on ‘the silent revolution’ in the financial services industry.

Some features of this revolution include the development of an independent regulatory framework, low transaction costs and good depth in Indian exchanges (both in terms of volume and value – the average number of daily trades on the Indian National Stock Exchange currently exceeds that of the NY Stock Exchange). Dr Kelkar also commented on revisions to the Securitisation Act.

## Australia India Business Council works with State Governments to promote business links with India

Over 40 participants registered for *Opening the Door to Trade Opportunities in India*, a business breakfast seminar held in Brisbane on 6 April. A joint initiative of the Australia India Business Council (AIBC) and Queensland State Government, the Breakfast provided an opportunity for participants to hear about Queensland's export success in India, and identify potential export opportunities.

Master of Ceremonies, Hon. Mike Ahern, Queensland Representative for Africa, Middle East and India, shared his experience in leading a Queensland Trade Mission on tourism infrastructure to India in March 2004. Consul-General of India Mr M Ganapathi provided an update on the state of the Indian economy and budget, and briefed participants on India's upcoming elections. Mr Tom Spoll, a former Director at Ansell, spoke on the importance of developing sound business partnerships in India.

Ms Gayle O'Brien, Business Manager with Trade Division of the Queensland Government and Vice-Chairman of the AIBC, gave a detailed presentation on Queensland's Trade Missions to India in March 2004. The Missions included the Queensland government's first mining trade mission to India. "The mining trade mission was one of four trade missions to India in March 2004, in which Queensland companies participated. Other missions included the AIBC supported delegation to FRAMES 2004 in Bombay, a Tourism Infrastructure trade mission and a Higher Education mission, led by former state Minister Hon. Paul Braddy. In total, around 40 Queensland based companies participated in these missions" she said.

"Not only are we finding increased interest in doing business in India among a growing number of Queensland companies, we have also noticed an increase in the exposure of both Queensland and Australia within the Indian business community. There has been increased levels of interest shown by Indian firms wanting to do business with Queensland."

The first Queensland mining trade mission in March co-incided with a decision by Indian-based mining and mineral services giant VISA International that it would establish its Australian operations in Queensland.

Queensland Premier Mr Peter Beattie welcomed the decision last month, revealing that "talks with VISA International followed a meeting I had with Indian Minister for State for Mines Shri Ramesh Bais last year while leading a Queensland Government mission."

The importance of a Government profile in advancing business negotiations in India was acknowledged by Victorian Premier Mr Steve Bracks, who announced in April his government will appoint a Victorian Trade Commissioner to India as part of a \$30 billion plan to boost Victorian exports.



The *Opening Doors to Exports* plan will concentrate on several key markets and industry sectors, which have been identified by both government and industry as primary targets for export growth.

The overseas success of the biotechnology, tourism, food and agriculture, education and information and communication technology sectors will be leveraged with promotional programs centred on emerging markets in North Asia, India and the Middle East.

Victorian Vice-Chairman of the Australia India Business Council, Mr Shabbir Wahid welcomed the Victorian strategy which includes an expanded program of trade missions.

"In particular, the appointment of a Victorian Trade Commissioner for India was very encouraging", he said, adding that the AIBC in Victoria would work closely with the state government to achieve the objectives of this export strategy.

The Australia India Business Council worked closely with the NSW government to organise a Trade Mission to Mumbai and Chennai in December 2002. This successful mission was followed with a second NSW mission to India in December 2003.



## Radio Australia and IGNOU sign MOU to share educational programs

An MOU was signed between Radio Australia and the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in February. The aim of the cooperative agreement between the two organisations is to develop and enhance cooperation between the people of India and Australia, through the distribution of accessible Australian educational radio material to Indian audiences and distribution of Indian material to Australian audiences. "Radio Australia is strongly committed to developing quality educational radio programs for Indian audiences drawing on the excellence of respected Indian and Australian universities. I look forward to an ongoing and productive relationship with IGNOU", said Mr Jean-Gabriel Manguy, the Radio Australia Head following the signing of an MOU.

The signing of the MOU coincided with the announcement by the Vice Chancellor of IGNOU about the proposed establishment of an Indo-Australian Studies Resource and Research Centre (IASRRC). The proposed centre will aim to promote greater awareness of Australia's contemporary developments of relevance to India and offer study courses in these areas. The Australia-India Council, which facilitated the signing of the MOU, believes that the sharing of educational programs between RA and IGNOU will complement its own Australian studies program with select Indian universities in India.

## Incoming High Commissioner For India Says That The Process Of Reform Will Continue

In the light of the current elections in progress in India, the Indian High Commissioner to Australia, H.E. Mr. P. P. Shukla said that irrespective of who comes to power the process of positive reform is entrenched and will not waiver. He was addressing a group of businesspersons at an AIBC business breakfast briefing in Melbourne on Friday April 30. The briefing was sponsored by Ernst and Young.

Mr. Shabbir Wahid, Vice Chairman, Victoria, introduced the speakers and said that the AIBC membership had doubled in the last year reflecting the growing interest amongst Australian companies to explore business opportunities in India. He also said that the emergence of an urban based critical mass was a tribute to democracy and would drive further reform to take advantage of opportunities in global business. "Over the last 10 years there has been the emergence of a genuine competition based private sector" he added. Amongst the top 20 best performing companies a majority have only been in existence for just about a decade, he said. The High Commissioner felt that there was also now a clear sense of both the Indian and Australian governments seeking to work closer. However the visa process could be seen as a deterrent.

Earlier, Mr. R.V.S. Rao, Senior Adviser to the Housing Development Finance Corporation presented an overview of the rapidly developing housing sector in India. Mr. Anupam Sharma in his briefing to the audience on the Film, Arts, Media and Entertainment chapter of the AIBC and AIBC participation in FRAMES 2004, said that the entertainment sector in India was set to grow at about 15 percent. Mr. Mohan Monteiro, Senior Manager at Ernst & Young also spoke about the Australia India partnership and the opportunities presented by the projected 8.2 pct growth in India's GDP.

## India Shining - fact or flight of fancy?

The *India Shining* campaign that has figured prominently in the international media recently has been questioned by some Indian journalists and other commentators. In their view, while there is a general consensus that India's urban middle class has done well out of five years of BJP-led economic reform, India's poorer classes and rural masses may not have experienced similar improvements in their living standards.

The Indian economy continues to perform well. But despite reforms, the economy retains a certain fragility. The fiscal deficit and the continuing divide between India's richer and poor classes and states are just two of the urgent challenges facing the next government after elections in April/May. Another is India's under-developed physical infrastructure, which continues to act as a brake on economic expansion.

India is now our ninth-largest export market. Opportunities for Australian exporters and investors will increase if India's economic reform program is reinvigorated after the elections and liberalisation accelerates again. Possible areas of opportunity include infrastructure development - ports, railways, highways and power generation - and services including ICT, biotechnology, environment and health, film, insurance and education. India, however, is likely to remain a challenging market for some time to come. To ease the way, the Australian Government works with the Indian authorities to achieve improved access to the Indian market for Australian exporters and better regulatory and other conditions for Australian investors.

## **UWA Strengthens Australia India Relations**

Improving economic, trade and cultural ties with India are evident with the recent launch, at the Australian High Commission in Delhi, of the first joint publication by scholars from the two countries of a series of essays on India-Australia relations, according to the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia, Professor Alan Robson. "The publication of this book is just one example of the growing link between Australia and India which is developing in areas of policy and research. They have the potential to economically benefit the two countries by expanding trade, security relations and environmental co-operation," he said. One of India's major universities, the Indira Gandhi National Open University which has 500 nodes across India, will commence teaching Australian Studies in 2005. "There is new impetus for developing bilateral ties with India as one of their current foreign policy directions is to look east while one of ours is to look west," book co-editor Associate Professor Dennis Rumley of UWA's School of Social and Cultural Studies said. "The very size of the Indian market makes India more and more important to Australia. India has recently established an association for the study of Australia and it was at its second meeting that this book was launched."

The book, 'India and Australia: Issues and Opportunities', is being translated into Hindi to make it more available to a broader cross section of people in India. Professor Rumley is a member of the Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG), comprising policy-oriented social scientists from around the region which assist in the formation of Indian Ocean Policy and focus on issues of energy security and environmental security, ocean management and governance and questions of regionalism and regional cooperation. The Indian Ocean Research Group launched its inaugural publication, also co-edited by Professor Rumley, at the second IORG meeting in Tehran earlier this year. This book, 'Geopolitical Orientations, Regionalism and Security in the Indian Ocean', seeks to emphasise the geopolitical significance of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). It aims to facilitate increased intra-regional cooperation on a wide range of issues and it initiates an agenda for future social science policy-oriented research. For further information: Associate Professor Dennis Rumley ~ 61 8 6488 7957

## **Nine Indian students selected under the Peace Scholarship program.**

Nine Indian students will be among the first Peace Scholars to study in Australia next semester through a new \$5.7 million scholarship program aimed at building global peace and understanding. The students, who are currently enrolled in five universities and colleges in India, will be undertaking a Study Abroad semester in Australia through the Peace Scholarship Trust, an initiative of IDP Education Australia.

The six female and three male Indian students selected to study in Australia next semester will study at Deakin University, RMIT University, Flinders University, the Australian National University and the University of New England. The Australian universities are contributing to the Peace Scholarship Trust by offering free places to the Indian students. In addition to the Indian students, students from Cambodia, Colombia and Mexico will also be among the first group of Peace Scholars to study in Australia this year through the program. It is anticipated this will be followed in 2005 by students from Fiji, Indonesia, South Africa, Vietnam, Brazil, Thailand and Afghanistan.

<b>Student</b>	<b>Host Australian University</b>
Ms. Darshini K. Babu	Deakin University
Ms. Avantika Sainivasan	Deakin University
Ms. Sharvari Paivaidya	RMIT University
Ms. Saumya Rastogi	RMIT University
Ms. Minu Mathew	RMIT University
Mr. Dharendra Varma	Flinders University
Mr. Athar Adnan	Australian National University
Mr. Leveil Robin Loyola Ignaci	The University of New England
Ms. Poornima Ramachandran	The University of New England



The Peace Scholarship Trust is seeking support from the corporate sector, education institutions and the community. All cash donations to the Peace Scholarship Trust are tax deductible in Australia.

See [www.idp.com/globalpeace](http://www.idp.com/globalpeace) for more details.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST—AUSTRALIA**

- India's consumer market and tapping local networks; Australia India Business Council, Australia India Chamber of Commerce (NSW) and Department of State and Regional Development. 24 May, 2004.  
Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)
- 19 member delegation from the Indo Australian Chamber of Commerce. For details of delegation participants Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)  
Perth - 18 May  
Melbourne - 19-21 May  
Sydney - 24-25 May
- AICC Dinner Wednesday 19 May 2004 Email: [harishrao@aicc.com.au](mailto:harishrao@aicc.com.au)
- AIBC Tourism Seminar Melbourne 31 May 2004 Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)
- AIBC FAME Council FRAMES 2004 Briefing, Sydney May 2004 Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)
- AIBC Vocational Education Seminar 22 June, Perth, Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)
- Business delegation from Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FKCCI) to visit Brisbane in 2004 (dates to be confirmed). This delegation will be led by the Hon RV Deshpande, Minister for Large & Medium Industries, Karnataka Government. Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)
- Queensland India Business Breakfast on India & China, early August, Brisbane, Email [divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com](mailto:divya.raghavan@aseanfocus.com)

## **UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST—INDIA**

- The role of the CEO in perspective: leadership module IV, IMA India, 11 June, New Delhi, Email: [radha@ima-india.com](mailto:radha@ima-india.com)
- Models for Management workshop, Confederation of Indian Industry, 2-4 June, New Delhi, Email: [v.subramanian@ciionline.org](mailto:v.subramanian@ciionline.org)
- Business in a global arena: imperatives and cornerstones of success, IMA India, Email: [radha@ima-india.com](mailto:radha@ima-india.com)  
Bangalore - 30 June  
Chennai - 1 June
- Annual Dialogue with the Department of Company Affairs, IMA India, 24 June, Mumbai, Email: [radha@ima-india.com](mailto:radha@ima-india.com)
- FICCI—ICAI National Conclave on Accounting Standards and Caro 2003 Gateway for Change August 24 New Delhi, Email: [mngirish@ficci.com](mailto:mngirish@ficci.com)
- Annual Business Confidence and Strategy Review, IMA India, Email: [radha@ima-india.com](mailto:radha@ima-india.com)  
Delhi - 14 July  
Mumbai - 21 July  
Bangalore - 29 July
- Legal reforms in infrastructure - taking stock & marching forward, Confederation of Indian Industry and Society of Indian Law Firms; 16 - 17 July 2004, New Delhi, Email: [greeta\\_varugheese@ciionline.org](mailto:greeta_varugheese@ciionline.org)
- CEO Session—Re-energising India Inc, 1 - 2 July, Location to be announced, Email: [greeta\\_varugheese@ciionline.org](mailto:greeta_varugheese@ciionline.org)

## Australia-India Focus

The Australia-India Focus newsletter is produced bi-monthly by the Australia-India Council and the Australia India Business Council.

Australia-India Focus aims to inform our readers on the range of cultural and business activities occurring between Australia and India.

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The Australia-India Council (AIC) was established in 1992 in response to a recommendation by the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, following an inquiry into Australia's relations with India.

The Council initiates or supports a range of activities designed to promote a greater awareness of Australia in India and a greater awareness of India in Australia, including visits and exchanges between the two countries, development of institutional links, and support of studies in each country of the other.

The Council offers support, in the form of funding, for projects likely to contribute to the development of the relationship, within the context of AIC objectives and guidelines.

For more information, visit [www.dfat.gov.au/aic](http://www.dfat.gov.au/aic)

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The AIBC is a national NGO and is recognised by the Australian government as the peak body for promoting business links between Australia and India.

The AIBC first point of contact by government and business representatives from both countries seeking access to industry, business and government leaders of both countries.

The AIBC maintains close relationships with strategic government agencies, the diplomatic corps and industry bodies, and also has an affiliated counterpart in India, the India Australia Joint Business Council.

The AIBC has representatives and members across all states and territories in Australia, and has three different membership categories available.

For more information, visit [www.aibc.org.au](http://www.aibc.org.au)

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