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Gandhi Jayanti Celebrated In Mexico

Mexico celebrated Gandhi Jayanti, Mahatma Gandhi's 142nd birth anniversary, on 2nd October, also coinciding with the International Day of Non-Violence, with usual enthusiasm, commitment, and sobriety. In Mexico City, the event was held at the Gandhi Monument in Chapultepec Park, attended by representatives of the City Government, Diplomatic Corps, academic institutes – led by UNAM, media, as well as people from different walks of life, and of course the Indian Embassy, which joined hands with the OraWorldMandala, an NGO, dedicated to promoting the Gandhian value of 'ahimsa' in Mexico, India, and elsewhere. As customary, some favourite songs of Mahatma Gandhi were sung, led by Mrs. Alka Jain, wife of the Ambassador of India, and the well-known Mexican singer Ms. Margarita Martínez Duarte. The musical tribute to Gandhi included a Sitar recital by Hollwing Argaez, and a couple of Mexican songs exalting the virtues of peace. The gathering was addressed by Mr. Felix Hernández, representing the 1968 students' movement in Mexico, and Ambassador Dinesh K Jain who thanked the organizers and all the participants while also exhorting them to imbibe Mahatma Gandhi's teachings of non-violence and truth, among others. He also thanked Mayor Marcelo Ebrard and his Government of Distrito Federal for some very significant improvements at the monument since the last occasion. Similar functions were held at other venues too in Mexico, such as in Monterrey. Earlier on October 1, the Mexico chapter of Yoga in Daily Life Association, a world-wide NGO, celebrated Gandhi Jayanti in Casa de la Cultural in the Coyoacan municipality of Mexico City, with *bhajans* or devotional songs and a mediation session for global peace. India's Ambassador was represented at the event by Mr. N. Balasubramanian, Director of the Gurudev Tagore Indian Cultural Centre.

Glorious Dust

On the Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, 2nd October, we reproduce Pakistan Times' moving editorial, datelined January 31, 1948

Mahatma Gandhi is dead.

The world has been deprived of the sight and sound of his frail body and aged voice - the body and voice that had in the last few months almost lost, for a large section of mankind, their personal and ephemeral character and become timeless symbols of compassionate love and fearless rectitude.

As the man who first ploughed the arid wastes of Indian politics in the pre-nationalist period, the man who husbanded the seeds and saplings only recently come to fruit and flower, of the freedom of the Indian peoples, Gandhi's name had passed into history long before the present and the greatest chapter in his life commenced. It was he who lighted the path, for Muslims and Hindus alike, during our earlier travels towards the goal of national liberation. In later days our ways parted for reasons unnecessary to recount, but the nature of our national objectives remained identical - the attainment of full and unfettered freedom for the peoples of the Indian sub-continent. During this period, Gandhiji's politics were not our politics. We have differed often and sometimes violently with what he said and did. We have occasionally spoken in bitterness and written in anger. And now the wheel had come full circle and our paths converged again. For in these last momentous days Gandhi, the politician, gave place to an infinitely greater Gandhi, the man. He saw, as few of us can fail to see, that spread out under the political contours of India and Pakistan is one vast immensity of unhappiness and fear and suffering, and he strove as few of us have had the courage to strive to press back the dimensions of this suffering into circumspection and confine. He saw, as few of us can fail to see, that the present bloodshed and savagery are the beginnings of an unholy assault, not only on our freedom newly-won but also on our culture and civilization inherited from our remote ancestors. He fought, as few of us have had the courage to fight against this frenzied onslaught.

And now he is gone.

There have been great heroes in history who have lived and fought and died to preserve their own people from dangers that threatened and from enemies lying in wait. It would be hard to name any who has fallen fighting his own people to preserve the honour of a people not his own.

No greater sacrifice could be rendered by a member of one people to another and no greater tribute could be paid to the supremacy of fundamental human values as opposed to passing factional squabbles.

And there could be no rebuttal more convincing to the popular prejudice that brands large sections of humanity as completely good or evil, as wholly moral or immoral. There is little hope for the world however, if it has no other use for the noblest of deaths except to make serve as proof of so obvious a thesis.

The greatest living Indian has fallen to the bullet of an unknown assassin. The most effective rational voice in the vast Indian Dominion has been brutally silenced. The best loved and most venerated political leader and moral evangelist of a near sub-continent, the idol of millions, has been publicly murdered. In India and Pakistan today every heart and every conscience is answerable for this most fearful of tragedies. The poor idiot or maniac who committed the crime was certainly not the only man responsible. Who had fed his mind with such hate for the weary old man seeking to purge men's hearts of it and fill them with love? What nefarious potion made him flex his muscles to do violence on the apostle of non-violence? The answer is obvious. Every man who has thought and felt and acted as Gandhi's assassin did, was his accomplice. Every violent word, deed and thought went into the composition of the mind that conceived and arm that executed the terrible deed.

The people of India, and indirectly the people of Pakistan, for he was trying to befriend both, have added to their other losses, the most grievous loss of all - the loss of Gandhi. Let us hope that this most precious sacrifice to the demons of hate will placate them at last and the death of one will yet save the life of millions for whom this life was given. Once Hindus and Muslims mingled their blood to fight for freedom under Gandhi's banner during the Khilafat days; let us hope they will now mingle their tears over his glorious dust to retain their peaceful freedom under the independent flags of India and Pakistan.

Mexico Feels For South Asia Floods

The Government of Mexico in a statement issued on October 15 regretted the severe flooding in South and Southeast Asia, "On behalf of the Mexican government, the Foreign Ministry extends its sympathy to the governments and people of Cambodia, the Philippines, India, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam for the many who have lost their lives or been affected by the recent flooding there, as well as for the material damage caused. The Mexican government also expresses its sympathy to the families of the victims and all of those affected."

Ancient Indian Art Exhibition

President Felipe Calderon inaugurated on October 19 an exhibition of ancient Indian art at the National Museum of Cultures in Centro Histórico. The exhibition consists of only 115 exhibits of ancient Indian art, divided into five sections: gods, demigods, demons, humans, and animals, obtained on loan from the Los Angeles County Museum, but is remarkably representative of the highly developed skills and beauty of Indian arts and artefacts in the olden days, and is a not-to-be-missed opportunity. President Calderon said in his inaugural address that the exhibition would expose Mexicans to the "endless richness of India's culture". Among others present was Sr. Alonso Lujambio, Minister for Public Education.

Cervantino, and More Indian Art & Exhibition

Percussionists from India enthralled audiences at Cervantino 2011. A 6-member Laya Nada-Amrit percussion ensemble represented India, sponsored by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). During its 14-day stay in Mexico, the troupe gave a total of 13 performances spread over Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato, State of Mexico, and the capital city. The ensemble

comprised 9 traditional Indian percussion instruments: Mridangam, Khanjira, Pakhawaj, Tabla, Chande, Idakka, Ghatam, and Morching, used more commonly in the South Indian Carnatic classical music. The musical lead was provided by bansuri, the Indian flute. The performances provided a glimpse of a facet of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage not presented before in Mexico.

Invited by **ITAM** (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México) to participate in a symposium on 'Culture as an Instrument of Peace' as part of its fifth anniversary 'ITAM Music', Mr.N.Balasubramanian, Director, Gurudev Tagore India Cultural Centre (GTICC), made a power-point presentation to outline India's historical background, focusing on its social and cultural aspects, and India's stabilizing role in the present-day world. An exhibition of 40 photographs, especially put together for Mexico by two leading Indian photographers, Amit Mehra and Sandeep Shankar, bringing out facets of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage, the vibrancy of her people and the lifestyle of her young and dynamic workforce, was much appreciated by the students and other viewers, as also a Kathak performance by Ms.Garima Bhargava, teacher of this classical Indian dance form at GTICC.

India participated at the **Cuajimalpa campus of Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana** (UAM), in its second 'Semana Cultural', from October 3-7, celebrating wider cultural diversity. Mr.Balasubramanian spoke on the cultural and social aspects of India, followed by a Kathak performance by Garima.

The GTICC presented, on October 8, perhaps for the first time in Mexico City, a **puppetry show** titled 'Marionetas de Rajasthan', in traditional Indian style, called '**Kathputli**', in the Embassy auditorium, to an overflowing and most appreciative audience including many children. The show was presented by Mr.Diego Ugalde De Haene, a Mexican artist, and his wonderful team. The storyline was based on the popular love theme of Prince Salim, before his ascension to the throne as Mughal Emperor Jehangir, and a courtesan, Anarkali, and the presentation was fired by Diego's imagination, skill, and the magic of his fingers, moving the numerous characters, made of wood, intricately carved with expertise acquired in India, and presented in a jovial mix of Spanish, English, and Hindi. Diego learned the techniques and nuances of Kathputli from traditional Kathputli artists in Delhi and Rajasthan. His Banyan Puppet Theatre now seeks to promote the Kathputali tradition in Mexico.

Diwali Celebrated

The Indian Women's Association of Mexico (IWAM) celebrated the popular Indian festival of lights, at the Embassy, on October 9. The festival actually fell on October 26, commemorating the return of the legendary god-king Rama to his kingdom of Ayodhya, after defeating the demon-king Ravana, thus celebrating the victory of good over evil. IWAM organized a bright and colourful function, where women and men danced 'Garba', a traditional Gujarati folk dance, combined with a communal dinner, fireworks, and other plays.

"India's Rise A Good Thing For Latin America"

India's rise in Latin America and the Caribbean is a good thing for the region's development, wrote Tim Padgett of Time magazine in his blog "Global Spin". Padgett, a former bureau chief of Time in Mexico City, writes, "As U.S. engagement in Latin America wanes, China's keeps growing...But while that has helped fuel a Latin American boom, it's no secret that what Beijing wants most is commodities—almost all its imports from the region are raw materials like oil, copper and soybeans, and its investments almost always involve those products or the infrastructure to ship them—and what it seems to want least is to buy from or invest in Latin America's more important manufacturing sectors. That's less the case with New Delhi...[I]ts companies—which, not coincidentally, are largely of the private sector...appear as interested in building enterprises in the region as they are in merely extracting minerals...India's bilateral trade with Latin America [\$23 billion]...represents a ten-fold increase from 2000 and involves not just commodities but manufactured goods like regional jets from Brazil's Embraer S.A. More important, India's investment in Latin America is

similarly more diversified. The country's NSL Group, for example, is planning a \$650 million wind-turbine venture in Chile. Mumbai-based Tata Motors, in partnership with Fiat, has undertaken an \$80 million project in Argentina to build pickup trucks. Indian information technology, pharmaceutical and agro-chemical companies are making similar commitments in Mexico, Peru and numerous other Latin economies. In August, Indian Commerce Secretary Rahul Khullar visited Colombia and Panama in large part to signal to Latin Americans that "India is serious about doing business with them" in sectors that create better-paying jobs and help the region bolster its inexcusably weak presence on the world's high-tech stage. Moreover, whereas Chinese companies often seek to impose Chinese managers and labour on their projects in developing regions like Africa and Latin America, Indian firms seem more sensitive to the need to hire locally. They also don't seem as determined to buy up agricultural land as voraciously in Latin America as China has begun to do in recent years. India's different approach, say experts, stems to a large degree from the fact that it is politically, economically, and even culturally more akin to Latin America than communist China is. Like almost every Latin American country, India is a capitalist democracy (the world's largest) where business is less inextricably linked to centralized government decision-making. "There is high complementarity between India and Latin America," says Mauricio Mesquita Moreira, a principal economist at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., and the author of an important study "India: Latin America's Next Big Thing?" "That can make it easier to navigate through the frictions," Moreira notes. Padgett further observes, "Increasing frictions with China are a big reason for the region's increasing interest in dealing with India. That's particularly true of countries like Brazil, the region's largest economy and a fellow BRIC (Brazil-Russia-India-China) emerging power. In recent years Brasília has grown frustrated (as have many other countries, like the U.S.) with China's policy of keeping its currency, the Yuan, undervalued—a stratagem that has allowed Beijing to pour its manufactured goods into Brazil and Latin America and handicap the region's own value-added sectors...Washington, of course, is also happy to see India challenge China in Latin America."

BRICS Nations To Surpass Mexico

Mexico currently ranks with Brazil and Russia in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita but it is projected to fall well behind those nations and other BRICS members in the coming years, according to a study published by the Mexican Institute for Competitiveness, or IMCO. Its Assistant Director General, Manuel Molano, said that while the BRICS bloc of emerging market economies currently accounts for 18% of global GDP, Mexico's share of the total has remained stagnant at roughly 1.6% since the 1970s. Mexico's economy has grown by an average of just 2% over the past 10 years, well below the performance of China (12%), India (9%), Russia (7%) and Brazil and South Africa (4% each), Molano said October 27 during the presentation of the private think tank's International Competitiveness Index, or ICI. Mexico currently "resembles the wealthiest BRICS" because of its GDP per capita of \$8,930, which is less than that of Russia (\$9,910) and Brazil (\$9,390) but greater than that of South Africa (\$6,090), China (\$4,260) and India (\$1,340), the IMCO expert said. But IMCO's forecasts show that China and South Africa will quickly surpass Mexico by 2018, when both countries will have attained a GDP per capita of roughly \$25,000. India also is projected to move past Mexico in that indicator by approximately 2042. The ICI, which ranks the competitiveness of 46 nations, puts Mexico at no.32 slot, unchanged from the previous 4 years and down from its highest-ever ranking of 30 in 2005. The country compared favourably to the BRICS countries in terms of high-technology exports as a percentage of total exports. But the study also showed that Mexico is falling behind the BRICS countries in the average years of schooling of its population, while the number of patents per 1 million Mexican inhabitants was close to zero.

All sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realise that God witnesses even our thoughts we shall be free.
- Mahatma Gandhi

"Peaceful Approach Toward India In Everybody's Interest"

India's External

Affairs Minister Mr.S.M.Krishna has asked Pakistan to hand over the most wanted terrorist Dawood Ibrahim to India. "I think we expect Pakistan to get at Dawood Ibrahim who has been wanted in our country for various crimes that he has committed and then you know, we would like to try him here and I hope that Pakistan will certainly go after him and now that he has come out in public in Pakistan, I think it is necessary that Pakistan should act quickly and hand him over to India," Krishna said. Dawood Ibrahim figures in the list of 50 most wanted fugitives hiding in Pakistan.

In a significant though indirect reference to Pakistan's policy of using terror as an instrument of state policy, India's National Security Adviser (NSA) Mr.Shivshankar Menon has said that non-state actors are performing state functions, in an effective blurring of the lines between state and non-state actors. The remark assumes significance in the light of US recently accusing Pakistan's ISI of using the Haqqani network as its "veritable arm." "I say this from the experience of my job, 60% of what I look at and deal with is not states dealing with states. We see it immediately in our own neighbourhood," he said while addressing a seminar on international relations.

Regarding Pakistan's concern on a post-withdrawal Afghanistan in alliance with India, US President Barack Obama has argued that a peaceful approach toward India "would be in everybody's interests and would help Pakistan actually develop. He also warned Pakistan that Washington will not accept a long-term relationship in which Pakistanis are 'not mindful' of US interests. "There is no doubt that there is some connection that the Pakistani military and intelligence services have with certain individuals that we find troubling," Obama said at a news conference at the White House, adding that Pakistanis were hedging their bets on the future of Afghanistan by "having interactions with some of the unsavoury characters" who may regain power after the US troops pullout. Last month, Chairman of the US Joint Chief of Staff Mike Mullen publicly accused the Haqqani network of being a "veritable arm" of the Pakistani intelligence service.

Clinton Proposes India-China-US Ties

Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton has proposed a "strong, constructive" relationship between India, China and the US to solve "pressing issues" of the 21st century. Outlining a new US thinking, Clinton said, "We know this will not always be easy. There are important matters on which we all disagree, one with the other. But we do have significant areas of common interest. Ultimately, if we want to address, manage or solve some of the most pressing issues of the 21st century, India, China and the US will have to coordinate our efforts." Clinton wrote, outlining US priorities after the end of Iraq and Afghanistan wars, in an Op-Ed in Foreign Policy magazine that "the future of politics will be decided in Asia, not Afghanistan or Iraq, and the United States will be right at the centre of the action." She said the US was setting its sights on "enhancing coordination and engagement among the three giants of the Asia-Pacific: China, India, and the United States." She also said that India's leadership will "help to shape" positively the future not only of South and Central Asia, but also of the Asia Pacific. "Among key emerging powers with which we will work closely are India and Indonesia, two of the most dynamic and significant democratic powers of Asia," she wrote, describing them as "key drivers of the global economy" whose "importance is likely to grow in the years ahead". Noting that President Obama told the Indian Parliament last year that the relationship between India and America will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century, rooted in common values and interests, she said that "the United States is making a strategic bet on India's future - that India's greater role on the world stage will enhance peace and security, that opening India's markets to the world will pave the way to greater regional and global prosperity". It was also betting "that Indian advances in science & technology will improve lives and advance human knowledge everywhere, and that India's vibrant, pluralistic democracy will produce measurable results and improvements for its citizens and inspire others to follow a similar path of openness and tolerance...So the

Obama administration has expanded our bilateral partnership; actively supported India's Look East efforts, including through a new trilateral dialogue with India and Japan; and outlined a new vision for a more economically integrated and politically stable South and Central Asia, with India as a linchpin." Clinton said that "Pakistan has to be part of the solution, or they will continue to be part of the problem" in Afghanistan.

India To Train & Equip Afghan Army

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, on a two-day official visit to India, and India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh finalised and issued a bilateral strategic partnership document between the two nations, first such for Afghanistan with any country. A total of three bilateral agreements were also signed. "Our cooperation with Afghanistan is an open book", said PM Singh at a joint press conference. India will stand by Afghanistan as the country prepares for its future after the withdrawal of international forces, he added. In that light, of crucial significance - among a host of other things - in the Strategic Partnership document signed between the two neighbours is India agreeing to train, equip and build capacity for Afghan security forces, including the Army. So far, only individual officers from the Afghan military were taking courses at premier defence institutions in India. This would further bolster the ties between the two nations, in the trouble-torn region. India so far has been actively involved and is a major player in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan. Karzai said that through the document of strategic agreement the two sides had "put in words" an already-existing active partnership. The Strategic Partnership between the sides is based upon the principles of sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of States, non-interference in their internal affairs, mutual respect and mutual benefit, and "not directed against any other State or group of States." Appreciating India as the "steadfast friend" of Afghanistan, Karzai said New Delhi does not see his country as one of "terrorism and violence" but as a country trying to live in peace with its neighbours. His visit came amidst tensions with Pakistan after former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani was assassinated nearly two weeks earlier. An Afghan government commission probing Rabbani's killing has alleged that Pakistan's spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), had prior knowledge of the assassination plot - believed to be carried out by the Taliban. Rabbani was at the forefront of trying to broker peace with the insurgent group. PM, who had visited Kabul last May, asserted that his "brutal assassination should serve as an occasion for all of us to strengthen our resolve to jointly confront the menace of terrorism that threatens to undermine the security and stability of our region".

India Objects To Chinese Troops In Kashmir

Concerned over the presence of Chinese military personnel in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK), the part of the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir under the illegal occupation of Pakistan, India on October 12 said it had conveyed its objections to Beijing in this regard. Regarding the presence of some combat engineers among the 3,000 odd Chinese in POK, Defence Minister A.K. Antony told reporters after opening the four-day navy commanders' conference here that India was aware of the presence, and "we have conveyed our concern to China in this regard", adding that "over the last many years, we are consistently developing our own military capabilities so that we can meet any challenge to protect our territory and our sovereignty." To a question on China's objections to India exploring oil in parts of the South China Sea off Vietnam that Beijing claims to be its own territory, Antony said, "There is no question of India going there (South China Sea) in large scale. We will go there for exercises and other things. We will go there uninterrupted for passage of ships and trade. There is no question of any naval presence...that is not our intention. Our main concern is to protect our core area." However, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna, ahead of the talks with Vietnam, told reporters that all bilateral issues will be on the table for discussion between the two sides.

India, Vietnam Sign Oil Exploration Agreement

India and Vietnam on October 12 signed an accord to promote oil exploration in Vietnamese waters, in the South China Sea. The accord between the foreign arm of India's state-owned Oil and

Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and PetroVietnam was signed in New Delhi after talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and visiting Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang. It covers new investments and the exploration and supply of oil and gas. Vietnam's fast-growing economy and its natural resources, including oil and gas, are an attraction for India - seeking energy sources to fuel its economic boom. Vietnam has in recent years attracted sizable investments from Indian companies, a trend that the two countries want to encourage. Singh said India was committed to greater investment between the two countries. "Several Indian companies are working in Vietnam, and we similarly welcome Vietnamese investments in India." Singh said the two "maritime neighbours" faced the common security challenges of terrorism, piracy and natural disasters and agreed to work closely to tackle the threats posed by them. Sang said the two countries had set a two-way trade target of \$15 b by 2015 - from \$2.7 b last year. In a Joint Statement, the two leaders agreed to strongly enhance the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries. They also welcomed the further strengthening of cooperation in the fields of defence and security, while affirming their desire and determination to work together for peace and stability in the region and the world. They stressed the importance of maintaining peace, stability and of ensuring the safety and security of navigation in the high seas, and agreed that disputes in the East Sea/South China Sea should be resolved by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force by the parties concerned, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. They strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and resolved to increase cooperation in the common efforts of the international community in preventing this scourge in a comprehensive manner.

Separately, but the same day, ONGC's foreign arm also sealed the deal to take a 25% stake in Kazakhstan's Satpayev acreage in the Caspian Sea, with an option of raising its stake by a further 10% in case of a commercial discovery, making it a stakeholder in the concession and marking India's first firm foothold in the hydrocarbon-rich Central Asia.

Views Articulated On Arab Issues, Cuba

India abstained in voting on a UN Security Council resolution threatening sanctions against Syria, which was blocked by Russia and China using their veto power. India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Hardeep Puri, announcing the abstention, said the resolution before the Security Council "does not accommodate our concerns about threat of sanctions...It does not condemn the violence perpetrated by the Syrian opposition. Nor does it place any responsibility on the opposition to abjure violence and engage with the Syrian authorities for redressal of their grievances through a peaceful political process," explaining India's decision to keep away from supporting it. Prepared by the European members of the UN Security Council and supported by the US, the resolution stipulated that Syrian President Assad's regime should face the possibility of tough sanctions if it fails to stop its crackdown on opposition within 30 days of the adoption of the resolution. The resolution was rejected by a 9-2 vote, with four abstentions, including India. "India remains concerned at the unfolding events in Syria that have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and security force personnel. We deplore all violence irrespective of who its perpetrators are," Puri said, adding India recognized the responsibility of all states to respect the fundamental rights of their people, address their legitimate aspirations and respond to their grievances through administrative, political, economic and other measures. "At the same time, states also have the obligation to protect their citizens from armed groups and militants. While the right of the people to protest peacefully is to be respected, states cannot but take appropriate action when militant groups, heavily armed, resort to violence against state authority and infrastructure." Pointing to the complexity of ground realities in Syria, Puri said India believed engaging Syria in a collaborative and constructive dialogue and partnership was the only pragmatic and productive way forward. India has, in both bilateral engagements and through the IBSA initiative, urged the Syrian government to exercise restraint, abjure violence and pay heed

to the aspirations of their people, he added. Asking the international community to give time and space for the Syrian government to implement the far-reaching reform measures announced by them, Puri said, "For this, it is also necessary that the opposition forces in Syria give up the path of armed insurrection and engage constructively with the authorities." India firmly believed that the actions of the international community should facilitate an engagement of the Syrian government and the opposition in a Syrian-led inclusive political process and not complicate the situation by threats of sanctions and regime change, he added.

Later in the month, addressing the UN Security Council on October 24 in the open debate on the Situation in the Middle East including the Palestinian Question, India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr.E.Ahamed observed that the issue of Palestine has clearly taken a decisive turn in the history of the Middle East conflict after President Mahmoud Abbas recently filed an application with the Secretary General for Palestine's full membership to the UN. He recalled Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh in the UNGA last month that India has been steadfast in its support for the Palestinian people's struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognized borders side by side and at peace with Israel, as per the relevant UN resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap, and that we look forward to welcoming Palestine as an equal UN member. "India recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1975 and its Office in New Delhi was accorded full diplomatic recognition in 1980. India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988. We have maintained diplomatic relations with Palestine for over two decades now. It is also pertinent to note that Palestine has been recognized by more than two-thirds of the UN membership. Obviously, the State of Palestine fulfills all criteria mentioned in Article 4 of the UN Charter for membership. We, therefore, support Palestine's application and hope that the process will be concluded expeditiously. As the world's largest democracy and arguably its most diverse country, India recognizes the democratic aspirations of all peoples, including in the Middle East. The call of the international community for democracy and respect of fundamental rights will sound hollow if the present impasse continues and Palestinians are denied their aspirations. It is also our firm conviction that lasting peace and security in the region can be achieved only through peaceful dialogue and not through use of force. The biggest stumbling block to direct negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians remains continuing settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories. We call upon Israel to stop settlement activities. This will facilitate resumption of negotiations in which all Final Status issues should be addressed. We cannot, however, make Palestine's membership to the UN conditional upon a peace agreement for that will be legally untenable, even while we support resumption of direct talks to resolve the outstanding issues. India on its part has continued its development support to the Palestinian Authority, including to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). During the last two years, India has also contributed US\$10 million annually as untied budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. We are offering 100 slots to the Palestinian Authority for capacity building and human resource development under our technical and economic cooperation programme. While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the most serious one in the region, we need to be mindful that resolution of this conflict by itself may not result in achievement of a comprehensive and durable peace in the region. Other issues relating to Arab lands that remain under occupation are equally important. Progress in the Lebanese and Syrian tracks of the Middle East Peace Process is, therefore, necessary for comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. Developments in the Middle East since February this year underline the need for reinvigorating the search for this comprehensive peace, while the countries in the region undertake inclusive political processes and implement reforms to meet the legitimate aspirations of their people. It is important that the grievances of the people are addressed through dialogue and negotiations rather than resorting to arms. It is the responsibility of all countries to create

conditions that enable their people to freely determine their pathways to development. This is the essence of democracy and fundamental human freedoms. No action should be taken from outside that exacerbates problems and gives space for the rise of extremism. The international community should stand ready to assist the countries in these efforts while respecting sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries."

India has also called for the ending of the US embargo against Cuba. Mr.E.Ahamed noted at the UN General Assembly that all along the UN has repeatedly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extra-territorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures that hurt the progress and prosperity of people the world over, and called upon all States to respect their obligations under the UN Charter and international law, as well as repeal and invalidate laws and measures that have 'extra-territorial effects' on other States. It is unfortunate that in spite of this, the US embargo on Cuba continues to remain in full force. This is a violation of the world opinion, and an act that severely undermines multilateralism and the credibility of the UN itself. The nearly half a century old US embargo on Cuba has brought immense suffering for its people. It has severely undermined the progress and development of the country. The embargo, which perhaps, has no parallel in history, is a transgression of the right of a sovereign state to development and to enjoy freedom of trade, economy and navigation. There is huge potential for strengthening economic and commercial ties between Cuba and the United States. The steps taken by the US Administration in January 2011 to reduce restrictions on travel and remittances to Cuba are positive developments. However, much more needs to be done. India joins other nations in calling for an immediate end to the US embargo against Cuba. India supports the resolution moved by Cuba.

India To Support Eurozone, Calls For Reform

India has said it is willing to play a "supporting" role in any multilateral effort to help Eurozone tide over its debt crisis after European leaders sealed a deal crucial to world economy to fix the lingering problem. Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia welcomed as positive the "important" deal clinched by European leaders at their summit on October 26 shoring up the 17-nation Eurozone's bailout fund, pledging new funds for Greece and pushing banks to share the pain to combat the sovereign-debt crisis. "We are willing to do our bit whatever supporting role which the international institutions would need to support the Eurozone...We would support multilateral efforts." Ahluwalia is India's designated 'sherpa'—the personal representative of a Head of State or Government—for the G-20 process. However, India has also said resources of the multilateral lender (IMF) have already been trebled and the countries under stress should look up to their central banks for funding. India's Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee also wanted the World Bank to chip in with more lending, along with IMF to respond to global financial problems. IMF's resources have gone up to \$750 b from \$250 b during the last three years.

Mukherjee has also voiced concern over soaring oil and commodity prices resulting in high inflation, and called for an end to volatility in commodity prices. "The best way to cool soaring prices is to boost output with better technology, more competition among more producers and better information," he said at the meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and central bank governors on commodities and energy. He said the volatility emanates from the developed countries as prices quoted by them act as benchmark. This becomes a concern for emerging markets, like India, which are the major commodity importer. "The G20 needs to urgently develop a consensus on dealing with this threat to strong and sustainable growth," he said. India imports about 80% cent of its crude oil requirements and is grappling with a near double digit inflation.

Elsewhere, noting that the world economy is in trouble, India has called for urgent reform of global economic and financial architecture in pursuit of sustained economic growth to bring the global economy firmly back on track. "The roadmap of our global economic and financial reform agenda is clear and unambiguous," Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha (Council of

States in India's Parliament), K.Rahman Khan said during a UN General Assembly panel discussion. "Let us pursue it...The world economy is in trouble...The shoots of recovery which were visible after the economic and financial crisis of 2008 have yet to blossom." Khan said with the traditional engines of the global economy such as the USA, Europe and Japan faced with continued economic slowdown, "We should not allow the global economic slowdown to become a trigger for building walls around ourselves through protectionism or erecting barriers to movement of people, services and capital...Our foremost priority, however, must be to pursue sustained economic growth to bring the global economy firmly back on track..The development agenda must be brought firmly back to the centre stage of the United Nations' priorities." Calling for deploying effective ways and means to promote coordination of macro-economic policies of major economies, Khan said: "India fully recognizes that the global economic and financial architecture, so overwhelmingly loaded against the developing world needs urgent reform."

Apropos of reform of the international financial system, the Government of India has **approved a proposal to increase India's contribution to IMF to make it the eighth largest shareholder in the multilateral lending agency.** Information & Broadcasting Minister Ambika Soni said: "India's quota share at the IMF will increase from 2.44% to 2.75%". Significantly, while India's gain in terms of quota share is the seventh largest in the 14th round of quota review, in absolute terms it will mean an increase from SDR (special drawing rights) 5,821.5 m to 13,114.4 m. It would result in a major realignment of quota shares among members and thereby reflect the global realities better. In keeping with the demand of emerging nations, including India, for a greater say in the IMF following their increased economic clout after the global meltdown in 2008, the 4 BRIC nations will now figure among the 10 largest quota shareholders in the IMF.

Common Interests, Approach Drive IBSA Countries

Prime Minister

Dr.Manmohan Singh, who is the only leader to have attended all five IBSA (India, Brazil, and S.Africa) Summits, has said the grouping had defied sceptics and shown how the three could pool their resources and genius to help each other and others. Addressing the Fifth IBSA Summit, at Pretoria, S.Africa, on October 18, he observed that IBSA derives its strength and global influence from the fact that it consists of three major developing democracies located in three continents, and who share the principles of pluralism, democracy, tolerance and multiculturalism, with similar views on many global issues such as the primacy of the development agenda, a just and equitable international order, a multi-polar world, a rule based international trading system, climate change and reform of the United Nations. Their cooperation is underpinned by three pillars - political consultation and coordination, multi-sectoral trilateral cooperation, and execution of development projects in third countries through the Trust Fund. Against the backdrop of countries indicating their desire to join the grouping, Dr.Singh also provided a detailed elucidation on why IBSA must remain restricted to the three countries. Describing IBSA as "unique", its initiatives as "novel", and the present Summit "special", PM said it drew its strength and global influence from their common political model of being major developing democracies geographically located over three continents. The IBSA framework is unique because it goes beyond just government-to-government interaction, and touches the lives of our people by facilitating dialogue among civil society and other important sections of society. The IBSA Forum has also helped them in strengthening their own bilateral relations with each other, and with their cooperation growing in all areas. The year 2011 has special salience on account of the fact that they are all Members of the UN Security Council, where they have demonstrated their cohesion and coordination on various issues under discussion, particularly in the context of developments in W.Asia and North Africa. The visit of an IBSA delegation to Damascus in August this year and their interaction with the Syrian leadership demonstrated the political role which IBSA can usefully play. They should build upon this experience. They also stand united in their efforts to address the deficit in global governance. The UN Security Council must be enlarged in order to reflect present day reality and to make it

representative and effective in responding to global challenges. Collaborating and speaking in almost one voice at over half a dozen global fora, he said the history of cooperation was reflected at the UN Security Council, where all three are concurrently non-permanent members, and have acted in concert in dealing with complex regional and international political and security issues, including recently in West Asia. "This suggests that IBSA can play a role in promoting the cause of international peace and security." Dr.Singh wanted IBSA to build on this cooperation and cited the visit of an IBSA delegation to Damascus in August this year and its interaction with the Syrian leadership, which demonstrated the political role IBSA can usefully play. He suggested the three leaders should meet on the sidelines of the next G20 Summit to ensure that the priorities of the developing economies are adequately reflected. On the sovereign debt crisis in Europe and recessionary trends in the traditional engines of the global economy, the USA, Europe and Japan, are sending negative signals to world financial and capital markets which are showing signs of distress. Developing countries cannot remain untouched by the negative impacts of these developments. Their ability to address their developmental challenges has been adversely affected. He hoped that effective and early steps would be taken by Europe and other advanced economies to calm the capital and financial markets and prevent the global economy from slipping into a double dip recession. The G20, of which all three are members, has played an important role in pursuing the agenda of reform of international monetary and financial institutions. They should coordinate their positions in the run up to the G20 Summit in Cannes to ensure that the priorities of the developing economies are adequately reflected. Likewise their cooperation on environment and climate change issues is important. The BASIC (Brazil, S.Africa, India and China) Group has proved to be an effective forum for projecting the viewpoint of the developing world. They should maintain the momentum of coordination and consultation in the run up to Durban. Besides remaining active on the global stage, IBSA should consider new projects in agriculture and agro-processing, environment and energy, including new energy resources. The IBSA Trust Fund projects could also focus on education and skill development, which is a key requirement of almost all developing countries, he suggested. Despite the global economic slowdown, their three economies have registered a steady growth rate. Their intra-IBSA trade is almost touching the 20-b dollar mark, having surpassed the target of \$15 b set for 2012 three years prior to the deadline. PM reiterated India's commitment and willingness to work closely with its IBSA partners in their collective endeavour to further deepen their cooperation. He extended invitation to the others for the next IBSA Summit in India in 2013. Earlier, in a statement prior to his departure for Pretoria, PM noted that the IBSA Dialogue Forum had matured considerably over the years, with greater cooperation across a wider canvas. In Pretoria, he also held bilateral meetings with President Jacob Zuma of S.Africa, and President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil.

At the Summit, in a bid to enhance trade ties, India, Brazil and S.Africa decided to hold an annual meeting of trade ministers with New Delhi being the venue for the first such dialogue. The IBSA leaders felt that the trends indicate that the target of \$25 b for their intra-trade by 2015 will be achieved early. Also on cards is a tripartite free trade agreement involving countries in Latin America, Africa and India. The decks are now clear for making progress on a trilateral FTA involving India, the S.African Customs Union (SACU) and MERCOSUR. They also underscored the urgent need to reform the UN, reiterating the need to add more members to the high table with increased participation of the emerging economies, in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

Indian Support To Thailand, Nepal, Maldives

India has provided \$200,000 worth of aid to Thailand to help with flood relief. The government and people of India expressed their solidarity with the government and people of Thailand in this difficult period of severe floods across central Thailand. India's External Affairs S.M.Krishna had earlier conveyed deep condolences to his Thai counterpart on the loss of life and damage to property in Thailand.

India has also extended a \$250 m credit line for infrastructure projects in Nepal, such as highways, airports, bridges, irrigation, roads, railways and hydropower projects. The agreement to this effect was signed during visit by Nepalese Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai. He described India as a significant economic partner and said his trip was aimed at promoting co-operation in the energy sector and business and investment. Nepal produces less than half the electricity it needs and relies on India for the rest.

In a separate development, India has deployed another naval Dornier aircraft in the Indian Ocean island nation in its effort to bolster Maldives' anti-piracy patrols and maritime surveillance. "The Dornier will operate from Male and other places for at least three weeks," the media quoted an official. Ever since Indian Defence Minister A.K. Antony visited Maldives in August 2009, Indian warships and Dornier aircraft have been regularly assisting the 1,190-island archipelago in maritime patrolling. India is also assisting Maldives in setting up a network of ground radars in all its 26 atolls and link them with the Indian military surveillance systems, the report said.

Rajasthan Honeymoon For Bhutan's Monarch

Bhutan's King, Jigme

Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, tied the knot with Jetsun Pema on October 13. Indian leaders sent their greetings and best wishes to the King on the occasion of his wedding, and India rolled out the red carpet for the Bhutanese royal couple on their honeymoon. The 31-year-old monarch and his newly wedded bride arrived in India on October 23, to stay on till November 1. The Bhutanese royals took a trip across Rajasthan on a special train arranged by the Indian government. The young monarch shares a deep bond with India, as he, and Pema too, studied at schools in India. Following his meetings with the political leadership including the PM, key ministers and senior officials on October 24, the royal delegation left for Rajasthan the next day via the special train, designed on the lines of the famous Palace on Wheels. The royal entourage touched key tourist spots and areas of interest in the desert state. That the royal couple visited India within 10 days of their marriage speaks volumes of the warmth in the bilateral ties, official sources explained. This gesture by India to host the Royal couple shows the close relationship between the two sides. It would further cement ties which has been a model of bilateral cooperation in S.Asia.

G20 Backs India On Black Money Hunt

India has got the backing

of the G20 on the issue of sharing tax information, as the G20's draft communiqué for the first time took note of New Delhi's concerns. The communiqué issued by G20 finance ministers and central bank governors resolved to address issues relating to the importance of comprehensive tax information exchange, and, in particular, encourage authorities to continue their work in the global forum to assess and better define the means to improve it. "For the first time, there is an acceptance that the G20 will put its weight behind obtaining information. This is a big victory for India," Department of Economic Affairs Secretary R Gopalan said. In his bilateral meetings with finance ministers of Australia and France, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said this was an important takeaway India expected from the Cannes summit. In his intervention on Financial Regulation at a G20 session, Mukherjee said tax evasion and illicit flows have posed serious challenges to the efforts of the countries to raise revenue for development and to the growth of the world economy. He reiterated that automatic exchange of information was one of the most effective ways to improve voluntary tax compliance, and there was a need to make it obligatory. In the last two years, more than 700 Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs) and Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEAs) have been signed as instruments for exchange of information. For these instruments to become effective, it is vital that a consensus is built at the global level for applying these standards on past information, including banking information, so that earlier tax evasion can be properly investigated. This is essential if the spirit of the statement that "the era of bank secrecy is over" is to be respected and promoted, he said. India also committed a donation of euro 320,000 to the Global Forum on

Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes to enable it to carry out this work effectively and efficiently.

US Senate Greet Indian Diaspora On Diwali

Recognizing the religious and historical significance of Diwali, the US Senate has greeted Indian diaspora across the world. A resolution adopted by the Senate said 'in observance of Diwali, the festival of lights, (Senate) expresses its deepest respect for Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, as well as fellow countrymen and diaspora throughout the world on this significant occasion.' The resolution noted that 'Diwali, a festival of great significance to Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, is celebrated annually by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains throughout India, the United States, and the world, lighting small oil lamps, placed around the home, and praying for health, knowledge, peace, wealth, and prosperity in the new year. 'The lights symbolise the light of knowledge within the individual that overwhelms the darkness of ignorance, empowering each celebrant to do good deeds and show compassion to others.' Also noted was that Diwali is an opportunity to celebrate India's great history, culture, and people and the enduring bonds and shared democratic values that have allowed the US and India to work together to reach common goals.

Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life.

- Mahatma Gandhi

India To Maintain High Growth Trajectory

"In the medium to long-term, India remains firmly on a high GDP growth path of 8.5-9%. We, however, need to be alert and respond to emerging challenges and concern, in a timely manner as we make efforts to achieve our potential as a young and fast-growing nation," Finance Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee has said. While Sovereign debt problems in Eurozone and slow recovery in the US are taking a toll on the emerging economies, the Indian economy may still clock over 8% growth, Mukherjee said, adding that he is expecting the economy would grow by 8-8.2% in the current fiscal. However, to achieve that goal, the GDP has to pace up in the last two quarters of 2011-12 fiscal. The sluggishness was evident in industrial production, which has come under pressure from high interest rates as the third largest economy in Asia is battling near double digit inflation. However, services and agriculture sectors are managing the growth trajectory.

India is also expected to outperform China by 2013, overtaking the fellow Asian powerhouse in terms of GDP growth in 2013, according to a new report from Ernst and Young. India is forecast to achieve 9.5% growth, compared with China's expected 9%. Both countries remain among the top performers in the group of 25 so-called Rapid Growth Markets (RGMs), which also includes Brazil and Russia. The report, which is based on the Oxford Economics Growth Model and offers insight on macroeconomic trends across these fast-growing markets, attributes China and India's relative resilience in the face of global economic turmoil to their large domestic markets and low oil and commodity prices.

In another development, as an expression of its increasing confidence in India's economy, **Citigroup has upgraded the country's rating to 'neutral' from 'underweight'** citing better return on equities and sharp fall in valuation premiums due to recent underperformance. The bank said the upgrade was mainly on the back of India's status as a major commodity importer as prices fall, lower valuations, a short-term peak in interest rates and high return on equity. "India is the only Asian market where the dividend/bond yield ratio is below its 10-year average," Citi said in a note to its clients, adding it preferred banking, technology and infrastructure stocks.

Besides, the Global Competitiveness Report 2011-12 released by the World Economic Forum has on its part observed that India possesses a number of remarkable strengths in the more advanced and complex drivers of competitiveness. This "reversed" pattern of development is characteristic of India. The country boasts a vast domestic market that allows for

economies of scale and attracts investors. It can rely on a well-developed and sophisticated financial market that can channel financial resources to good use, and it boasts reasonably sophisticated and innovative businesses.

India's exports, too, are **set to reach a record high of \$280 b**. As demand slows down in the US and the crisis-ridden Eurozone, Indian exporters are searching new markets of Latin America and Africa for ensuring US\$280 b exports this fiscal, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Mr. Jyotiraditya Scindia has said. "We should be able to close 2011-12 at about USD 280 billion," he said, adding that the game plan involves profiling new products in "certain geographies" where shipments would be incentivised. During the first quarter of 2011-12, country's exports to Africa and Latin America have grown around 120% and 74% respectively. India's merchandise exports aggregated \$246 b in 2010-11, with the US and the European Union accounting for one-third of the consignments. While despatches in the first half of the year have shown a remarkable growth of 52% at \$160 b, difficult times are seen ahead with the worsening Eurozone crisis and sluggish trend in the American economy. Scindia said that while the international scenario is worrisome and the slowdown may stay "protracted" unlike the slowdown in 2008-09, there are opportunities as well.

HSBC India has said that **India's trade will grow by a whopping 156% to \$976.7 b by 2025**, and India will be among the top five international powerhouses which will drive the world trade growth until 2025. HSBC Trade Connections report said the country's trade with the UAE and China is expected to grow by 190% and 165% respectively, making the UAE India's largest trading partner by 2025. Further, it said that India's trade pattern is shifting from the traditional markets - the US and Europe - to the regions like the Middle-East, China, and Latin America. This shift would "open several new options and opportunities for Indian exporters and importers."

India's economic growth is also set to receive a further boost following the Government of India **approval of the National Manufacturing Policy, which aims to create 100 million jobs by 2022** and develop mega industrial zones with world-class infrastructure and flexible labour and environment regulations. It also aims to increase the share of manufacturing in the economy to 25% from the current around 16%. The government would help establish 'national manufacturing investment zones' with world-class infrastructure and investment friendly regulations to boost manufacturing activities. Commerce and Industry Minister Mr. Anand Sharma said that with 'over 220 million people estimated to join the work force in the next decade, the manufacturing sector will have to create gainful employment for at least half this number'. The policy envisages specific interventions broadly in the areas of industrial infrastructure development, improvement of the business environment through rationalisation and simplification of business regulations, development of appropriate technologies especially green technologies for sustainable development and skill development of the younger population. Reacting, Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Rajiv Kumar welcomed the policy and said the new policy would provide the much needed fillip to the manufacturing sector in the country. 'India has taken a historic step today that would revolutionise manufacturing sector in the country,' said Chandrajit Banerjee, DG of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Affirming its belief in the booming Indian economy, **Switzerland has described India as one of its "most important partners"** in Asia, and said that its exports to the country have grown by 19% this year despite difficult world economic climate. "India has become integrated in the world market and has been growing strongly, with its GDP increasing at the mean annual rate of 5.8%. It is now one of the world's ten largest national economies," the Swiss government said in a statement. The statement came after President Pratibha Patil and her Swiss counterpart Micheline Calmi-Rey addressed the Indo-Swiss Business Forum here in the Swiss capital. A similar faith in the India story is again behind India becoming the most preferred new destination for global retailers betting on emerging

markets to offset worsening economic conditions in the developed world; this despite India not yet having opened its retail industry to foreign investors yet. India topped the list in a survey of 323 international retailers about the markets they entered for the first time last year, done by property agents CB Richard Ellis. "If many retailers are already entering the Indian market, then I don't think there is so much of an entry barrier," said Neville Moss, director-head of EMEA Retail Research at CB Richard Ellis.

Major Strides, Plans For Infrastructure

Rapid advances in infrastructure and physical connectivity in India will also act as a growth multiplier. Finance Minister Mukherjee has said the infrastructure sector is critical for enhancing productivity and sustaining the growth momentum. "The 12th Five-Year Plan (2012-2017) has an ambitious target of infrastructure investment estimated at \$1 trillion."

The IT city of **Bangalore's much-awaited "Namma Metro" has commenced commercial operations**. In the first phase, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) will run the services on a 7-km stretch metro rail, the service connecting the city centre to the eastern suburbs, and running on elevated tracks. The metro would ease traffic congestion in the city which has become India's IT hub. Built at a cost of \$1.22 b, at least 20,000 people are expected to use the services each day.

On October 14, the Indian Railways **opened India's longest railway tunnel piercing through the Pir Panjal range in Jammu & Kashmir**. Part of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link project of Northern Railways, the 10.96 km long Pir Panjal Railway Tunnel is Asia's 2nd longest and will greatly reduce travel time and distances in the mountainous state.

Ascendant India Plumps For Clean Energy

Rising environmental consciousness in India has meant that development of clean and renewable sources of energy has emerged as a major growth area. India's Moser Baer Clean Energy Limited (MBCEL), a leading player in the solar segment, **commissioned Asia's largest solar farm in Banaskantha district of Gujarat**. The 30MW solar farm has been set up using 236,000 thin film modules with an investment of about \$95 m, under phase 1 of Gujarat Solar Power policy 2009 and is the first major project commissioned under the Gujarat Solar Mission. As top Moser Baer executives observed, "As solar power is clean, abundantly available and reduces carbon emission, the company is incessantly working towards commissioning of 300 MW of solar projects in the next 12 months in India, Germany, Italy and UK. We shall have 100 MW operational capacity by the end of October 2011 and plan to install more than 5 GW by 2020. The farm has been designed to encompass ponds, village roads, etc. in it and yet generate electricity on such a large scale. Moser Baer is the only solar company in the world to be awarded a 5-star rating for quality by Germany's TÜV Rheinland for two years in a row. This solar farm will generate about 52 million kWh which should provide electricity for 50,000 homes everyday. Additionally it will save about 50,000 tonnes of carbon emission annually, making this farm a beacon for other developers to follow."

Nuclear power is another major focus area, and gaining access to atomic minerals has therefore emerged as a key priority. The Uranium Corporation of India Ltd (UCIL) and Nuclear Power Corp of India Ltd (NPCIL) are **jointly bidding for uranium reserves overseas**. UCIL has expertise in hard rock mining while NPCIL operates atomic power stations. The state-enterprises are exploring initial bids for mines in Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia and South Africa. India's nuclear plants produce about 3% of the total power generated in the country, which India aims to raise to 25% by 2050. "UCIL and NPCIL will jointly bid for assets. We are keen on securing uranium assets abroad, even as we develop new mines within the country...We would like to bring back the ore to the country...As a mining company, we can contribute our expertise in hard-rock mining. We have some of the best mining experts and technologists working for us," UCIL MD Diwakar Acharya said.

In a reinforcement of **nuclear safety in India, all the atomic power plants have "passed" the stress tests** ordered by the Prime Minister in the aftermath of Japan's Fukushima accident. "Indian reactors have passed the stress tests ordered after Fukushima," Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Srikumar Banerjee said. The stress tests, which are a combination of simulated quake events on the design of a nuclear plant, were ordered to address issues of safety of the country's atomic plants in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear accident in March. Seeking to allay apprehensions on the Kudankulam nuclear power project in Tamil Nadu, he said the Indo-Russian joint venture was the safest unit of its type built anywhere in the world.

E-Commerce, Cloud Computing, And Other IT Growth Plans **India will be among the top 10 e-commerce hubs** in the world by 2015, eBay India Head (Partnerships and Pop Culture), Deepa Thomas said. The report said that rural India as well as smaller urban agglomerations of the tier-II and tier-III category are fast catching up with the metros in e-commerce. Besides, women are increasingly getting active in shopping online by prominently buying lifestyle and electronic items. Online trading in rural India has jumped up to 9% of total sales through eBay, as compared to 5% posted last year. The Indian e-commerce industry, excluding the online travel market, is estimated at \$1.29 b and is expected to grow to \$1.76 b this year.

Cloud computing, or computing delivered over a network - like water or electricity, **is also catching on like wildfire in India**. Infosys, India's second largest software services firm has tied up with Microsoft to provide cloud-based offerings to clients worldwide. The two will collaborate on solution area development, technical proof of concepts, and sales and marketing initiatives to address the needs of global enterprises as they adopt the cloud across industries such as financial services, manufacturing, retail and healthcare. To begin with they will work together in the US, UK, Australia, France, Germany, Middle East and India. According to an estimate, the global market for cloud technology will go from about \$40 b at present to \$241 b by 2020. Infosys gets about 2% of its total revenue from its cloud business and has identified this as a major growth driver.

Besides, **India intends to provide all public services electronically on mobile devices**, to make one person IT literate in every household, and increase the size of India's IT industry to \$300 b by 2020 from the current \$89 b. The government plans to promote innovation and R&D in cutting edge technologies, and development of applications and solutions in areas like localization, location based services, mobile value added services, cloud computing, social media and utility models. It aims to increase software exports from the present \$59 b to \$200 b by 2020, including by diversifying exports to other countries apart from US and Europe to mitigate the impact of recession. India's IT policy also aims to multiply India's skilled IT professional base fourfold to 10 m by 2020, and envisages making extensive use of mobile phones and the recently launched world's cheapest tablet Aakash, at \$35, as a platform for delivering public services to all Indians, as well as making use of social media to reach out to the masses.

Meanwhile, India has climbed 10 spots to reach the 34th ranking on the global IT industry competitive index owing to its strong human capital and R&D base, a study has said. Compiled jointly by Business Software Alliance (BSA) and the Economist Intelligence Unit, the IT industry competitiveness index benchmarks 66 countries on a series of indicators covering the critical foundation areas for IT innovation. It includes overall business environment; IT infrastructure, human capital, R&D, legal environment and public support for industry development. "India's competitive momentum is hugely encouraging, since unlocking the next phase of industry growth will require a continued focus on creating a favourable business and legal environment, and improved IT infrastructure," said Keshav Dhakad who heads the BSA India Committee. China stood at the 39th rank. "India's 10 place rise in the global rankings for IT competitiveness is reflective of the continuous focus on increasing R&D and human resource capabilities in India along with creating a dynamic

and barrier free environment for the IT industry," said Som Mittal, president of NASSCOM, the apex forum of the IT industry. "India is gradually diversifying its services focus to innovation in new product development and related capabilities reflecting its gradual emergence as a leader in not just IT exports but soon also in IT products." he added.

India's \$-35 Android tablet Lands in America

by Chikodi Chima, Venturebeat, October 26, 2011

The Indian government thinks the \$35 Aakash Android tablet has the power to change the world. After testing one out, we'd tend to agree.

An Aakash tablet was brought to the VentureBeat office on Tuesday by Vivek Wadhwa, a Washington Post columnist and visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley and Duke. Wadhwa, who is researching the Indian education system, was given the tablet by Kapil Sabil, the Indian minister of human resources and development, who has been the driving force behind the tablet project. The device (whose name means "Sky" in Hindi) was produced entirely in India—a point of pride for the Indian government.

The 7-inch Android-based device will be distributed at a government subsidized price of \$35, making it the world's cheapest Android device. The general retail price will be \$60, which is still remarkably cheap for such a powerful device. A contract between the Indian government and Canadian development partner DataWind should put between 10 and 12 million devices in the hands of students across India by the end of 2012, according to Computer World.

We tested the Aakash, surfing the web, using apps, typing text documents, plugging in peripherals and playing Bollywood videos. Here's our exclusive first look at what a \$35 tablet can really do.

Hands on with the Aakash

Jugaad is an Indian word which means "to make-do." The Aakash tablet is a *Jugaad* in a very high tech way. The components inside the Aakash tablet are cheap, and easily sourced. For example, the Aakash tablet has a headphone jack and an audio-in jack, but no external speakers - an obvious cost-savings measure. However, with the addition of a cheap set of headphones, and an equally cheap microphone, the owner can make calls on Skype, and has the potential to communicate with people around the world.

The screen is pressure sensitive (also called resistive touch) and responds somewhat slowly to gestures. It is definitely not as dazzling as the high-end tablets familiar to Western audiences, such as the capacitive touchscreen iPad, or even the HP Touchpad.

The Aakash is running Android 2.2, Froyo, with the UniSurfer browser installed. Made by DataWind, UniSurfer is supposed to make webpages process faster, probably to compensate for the slower processor and connection speeds. However, while browsing the Internet and testing out apps, we couldn't help but notice that the reaction time seemed very slow. Scrolling, for example, is a swipe-and-wait affair. However, the speed is going to be quite sufficient for someone who has never in his or her life had a smartphone or computer. It's all relative after all. Compared with the iPhone 4s, the iPhone 3G is a "slow" smartphone, only because speedier alternatives are available. Even in a context where the market is full of smart devices, like in the U.S., speed helps us make decisions incrementally faster, but rarely are these issues of genuine consequence.

The Aakash has both GPRS and Wi-Fi capabilities. Its battery power is limited to 180 minutes of use on a full charge, but it comes with an AC adapter. What is important is not that the tablet can run off of the battery for long periods of time, but that it will still be able to work and surf the net when the power goes out.

Weighing in at less than double a handheld smart phone (350 grams), the device itself feels a bit like a toy. A goofy plastic cover protects the screen, slowing down the touch response considerably. It might remind you of the conference call controller in a corporate boardroom. Though its design is minimalistic, absent are any Apple-like design

flourishes that might evoke the word "magic."

Unlike the XO, the low-cost laptop produced by One Laptop Per Child for the world's poorest children, with help from Frog Design, The Aakash tablet is not going to win any beauty pageants. This is certainly one of its strengths. A big problem with the XO is it was seen as relatively arcane technologically by the time it was actually available.

What makes the Aakash tablet different is that its creators didn't strive for perfection. Instead, the emphasis was on getting the product into the market quickly so it could be adopted, tinkered with, and improved over time. As Wadhwa said, "to get the cost down, you have to make some compromises"

The unmistakable impression we all got from using the Aakash tablet was that it is built for performance. Every design choice that might seem like a negative reveals three, four, five - or more - net benefits.

Why does it have two USB ports? So you can plug in a keyboard, of course, and still have a free slot for an external hard drive, or some other device. What about that screen cover that seems like it's made from laminating material? If the tablet is meant for educational use, it's probably going to have to contend with some pretty rough handling, dirt, dust and moisture. Better that it should withstand damage, than look the extra bit nicer.

Seeing the tablet's potential

The Aakash Tablet is an example of a "leapfrog technology," a concept where the latest innovations jump directly into areas where legacy technologies never penetrated. Tens of millions of people throughout India who never had access to a land line phone now walk around with cell phones in their pocket. Many of those likely to use or own the Aakash Tablet will never have used a desktop computer, and it's possible they never will.

Now imagine the educational potential of the world's lowest-cost tablet being unleashed to hundreds of millions Indians eager to join the world economy. At the heart of the Aakash tablet is an HD video co-processor that will connect viewers to one of the largest educational libraries ever assembled: YouTube. When the Aakash tablet reaches villages across India, an entire generation will have instant access to rich educational content such as the Khan Academy, and anything else their hearts desire.

And with the Aakash tablet in hand, students across India will be free to do what their global counterparts do - or should do - with their computers. There are the educational basics such as creating documents and spreadsheets, and browsing the web for research materials. But as with anything, young people will probably spend a fair amount of time playing games online and chatting with their friends.

India's history with affordable tech

India, which has a population of nearly 1.2 billion and houses 40 percent of the world's poor people, has experience paring down high-end technology and making it affordable and accessible.

A similarly transformative Indian-created product is the Tata Nano car, a revolution in automobile design built to give mobility to millions of low-to-mid-income Indians. When it came out in 2009, the Tata Nano was heralded as the world's cheapest car. But while the Tata Nano is ultimately a destructive force - adding drivers to the congested roads and vehicle exhaust into the air - the Aakash tablet will be used to educate hundreds millions of children.

The Hole in the Wall initiative is another example. It put a computer kiosk in several rural villages throughout India, giving thousands of children and adults their first access to a computer and the Internet. The organizers compared it to the village well, where the community could come together to exchange knowledge and learn from each other. In this case, however, the well was connected to the world's deepest reservoir of knowledge, the Internet.

And next month, the first Aakash tablets will go on sale throughout India, and millions of children will be able to join the tablet revolution that is transforming education, communication and entertainment across the world.

Major Steps For Indian Space Research

India successfully launched its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C18), which placed four satellites in correct orbits, on October 12, at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota, 100 km from Chennai. The main satellite was 865-kg Megha Tropiques, designed and developed by scientists of India and France, which will seek to understand and study the complex science behind the monsoons. Three nanosatellites were also placed into the pre-determined orbits by the four-stage launch vehicle. The SRMSAT, a 10-kg nanosatellite built by the students of Chennai based SRM University, will monitor the green house gases, carbon dioxide, and the water vapour content in the atmosphere; *Jugnu*, the second nanosatellite was built by the students of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, and VesselSat, a satellite weighing 28.7 kg, built by LuxSpace of Luxembourg, was the other passenger in the PSLV, to be used to help locate ships in distress in the high seas. India Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman, Dr K Radhakrishnan said, "The PSLV-C18 has been a grand success. We put all the four satellites precisely into the predetermined orbits," he announced immediately after the launch. Dr Kasturirangan, a former ISRO boss, who first initiated the proposal to have an exclusive satellite to study the monsoon and the tropical climate, said Megha Tropique marked a new era of atmospheric research. "The results will benefit the entire Indian farming operations which is dependent on monsoon. Once we succeed in forecasting the precise characters of the monsoon, the farmers will be able to plan their cropping patterns accordingly." What is unique about the Megha Tropiques is that it will probe the hitherto unexplored aspects of the Monsoon and the tropical climate. "We hope we will be able to make noteworthy changes in the short term and medium range weather forecasts, especially the Monsoon," Dr Shylesh Naik, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said. Prof Roddam Narasimha, who will lead the Indian side in pursuing and analyzing the Megha Tropiques data, promised the people "exciting sciences". The data collected from Megha Tropiques would be shared with scientists of USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Japanese Space Agency. "The whole world has been chasing the monsoon for quite some time but it is getting more subtle and mysterious with every passing day". ISRO will launch its next Geo-Synchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV) with an indigenous cryogenic engine in the second quarter of 2012, and the second moon mission, Chandrayaan-II, would be launched at the end of 2013 or the beginning of 2014, if all scheduled GSLV tests are successful. Two PSLV launches have been planned before the GSLV launch. In December, PSLV-C19 will launch ISRO's first completely indigenous microwave remote sensing satellite (RISAT-1), while PSLV-C20 will launch an environment monitoring SARAL satellite, developed by India and France, in March.

The successful fabrication and launch of the Jugnu showcases how a band of enthusiastic IIT students burning the midnight oil pulled off the rare feat with sheer hard work and sacrifices. The team of 50 students worked around classes, assignments and exams, toiling at their lab, some well past 2 AM. Their complete involvement left them very little time for social life, but members struck up new friendships that grew into an extended family, making Jugnu and its subsystems possible. IITians inherited a different set of problems because the nanosat had to be built on a vastly smaller scale, virtually from scratch but with functions of their larger counterparts. 'We were initially torn between ISRO's 'right way' of doing things, and a more practical approach. Eventually, we decided to go ahead, taking cues from other nanosats built around the world,' said Chintalagiri, a budding physicist, adding, 'It helped that we were able to take greater risks, since we were operating at less than one percent of the cost of a regular satellite. All our individual experiences before the project gave us the foundation necessary to do this.' It wasn't smooth sailing all the way, though. There were plenty of hiccups, which they overcame by applying their skills and out-

of the-box approach. Since a nanosat is a highly integrated system, even small changes in one place can cascade into a number of seemingly unrelated changes all over the satellite.

India Emerging As Major Global Pharma Base

Long renowned for the strengths of its generics segment, India is all set to emerge as a major pharmaceutical base. British consumer goods major, Reckitt Benckiser, which bought over local start-up Paras Pharmaceuticals for a staggering \$664 m last year, is converting its acquired Baddi plant in Himachal Pradesh into a global hub for manufacturing over-the-counter (OTC) pharmaceutical products. The facility will export Reckitt brands as also well-known domestic Paras brands such as Moov, D'Cold, Krack, Itch Guard and Dermicool. The intent is to leverage India's huge domestic market and low-priced manufacturing to work out a competitive edge, especially with the big US and European markets witnessing anaemic growth. The company is also planning a major foray into Indian Ayurvedic product categories, which would help it reach outlets beyond pharmacies. In another development, Global pharmaceutical major, Sanofi Aventis Group, is setting up its largest vaccine making facility in Hyderabad. "The new plant, our biggest facility in the world, is coming up here," said Christopher A Viehbacher, CEO of Sanofi. The plant, likely to be operational next year, is part of Sanofi's strategy to realise 40% of its sales from emerging markets by 2015. He added that Sanofi would continue to invest in creating latest biotech and vaccine platform through Hyderabad-based Shantha Biotechnics, on which Sanofi had spent \$300 m for increasing capacities in Shantha in three years, and that the WHO had prequalified Shantha's cholera and tetanus vaccines. Sanofi also plans to set up an animal vaccine plant in India in public-private partnership mode, and the details are being worked out. At present, Sanofi employs 5,000 in India and operates three manufacturing plants, besides a formulation development centre. UK-based \$46-b pharmaceutical major, GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) global CEO, Andrew Witty says that GSK has a war chest of \$1-2 b to support its expansion plans in India. To strengthen its India presence, GSK has opened a new consumer healthcare R&D centre in Gurgaon, operating through two companies—GSK Pharmaceuticals Ltd and GSK Consumer Healthcare Ltd. A recent study by Ernst & Young also concluded that the Indian market presents vast opportunities for pharmaceutical companies, with successful companies overcoming challenges in the areas of pricing and access to new products and markets. "By 2015, four of the emerging markets are expected to rank among the top 10 global pharmaceutical markets, with China and India emerging as the largest gainers."

Growing Affluence In India

India has overtaken European countries in the number of affluent households while the US remains the most prosperous country in the world, according to market research firm TNS. According to TNS 'Global Affluent Investor' study, India, China and Brazil have overtaken many European countries in this measure of consumer wealth with 3 m affluent households each in these countries which have over USD 100,000 investible funds. "India and China have already surpassed major European markets like Germany and France. It's interesting to see that the entrepreneurial spirit of people in these markets is already paying off in terms of personal wealth," TNS Director Business and Finance Reg van Steen said. While the US is ranked as the world's most prosperous country, with 31 m affluent households, UAE and India appear in the top five countries where the affluent have more than \$1 m investable assets on average, alongside Singapore and Hong Kong. Meanwhile, **India's wealth has increased to \$4.1 trillion**. The Credit Suisse Research Institute has released its second annual Global Wealth Report, which finds that from January 2010 to June 2011, India's total wealth increased by US\$1.3 tr and is the sixth highest contributor of global wealth growth. In 2011, India's total wealth reached \$4.1 tr, and is projected to more than double to \$8.9 tr in the next 5 years, equivalent to wealth growth in the USA over 30 years between 1916 and 1946. Wealth has been rising strongly in India and the ranks of the middle class and wealthy have been swelling. In 2011 alone, India acquired 34,000 new millionaires, and the number is expected to grow by 150% from 204,000 in 2011 to 510,000 in 2016. Rising

affluence in India has also fuelled demand for luxury goods. India's market for luxury goods grew 20% in the last year to reach \$5.8 b, with certain segments like fine dining, jewellery, luxury electronics, cars recording runaway growth rates of 30-40%, despite signs of the re-emergence of a global slowdown, says a CII-AT Kearney report on Indian Luxury, which forecasts the market to grow to \$14.7 b by 2015.

In a testament to the economic growth and rising affluence of India, its insatiable appetite for consuming products and the creativity, even audacity, of companies willing to find ways to feed that appetite, an Indian company has built the **world's first machine that dispenses out gold, silver, diamond jewellery** and religious jewellery! The Gitanjali Group, the machine's creator, is calling it an ATM, but a vending machine would also be an apt description. These types of machines have been vending gold at certain places around the world for the past few years. But this is the first such machine that also dispenses other precious metals and jewellery. The first ATM was recently placed at a Mumbai shopping centre. As is typical with the company, it was introduced with a ceremony featuring a Bollywood star. The machine dispenses gold and silver bars, coins, pendants with religious motifs and a range of diamond studded jewellery. The convenience of this machine will especially come in handy for those last-minute gifts, the company said. "It has a particular significance in India, where usually such items are purchased as tokens to observe traditions on auspicious days," Sanjeev Agarwal, CEO, Gitanjali Export Corp.Ltd., said in a statement. "But it also offers choices for occasions like Valentine's Day, or to a husband who forgot an anniversary or his wife's birthday." The ATM uses a touch screen interface and provides consumers a mix of up to 36 options in different sizes, price points and designs across the precious metals and jewellery categories. Prices range from about \$20 to \$610. Credit and debit cards are accepted.

India, US To Deepen Academic Collaboration

Ron Somers, president of the US-India Business Council (USIBC), has said that the reason the USIBC is so keen to deepen linkages with India across the education sector is 'because our knowledge partnership with India depends on it.' Speaking at a reception hosted by the USIBC, Somers said, "More and more, as technology shrinks the planet and as the world becomes ever-more competitive, knowledge partners like the US and India will become central to assuring that Americans as well as Indian companies remain globally competitive." The meeting was attended by over 300 educators, government officials and leading businesspeople who were there to participate in the US-India Education Summit. "As India transitions to becoming a world-class manufacturing hub and expands its Information Technology Enabled Service capabilities, India's youthful demographic - more than 600 million Indians under the age of 25 filled with hope for a brighter future - will be the group that makes the difference in making way for a better world...Surely, by twinning our education systems at every level, by sharing best practices, by assuring highest quality, by collaborating deeply - at the K-12 level, in vocational/technical education, and in higher education, together - as partners - the US and India can produce the global workforce of tomorrow," he said, adding that "...in doing so, make this world in our lifetimes a better place, with the US-India partnership shaping the destiny of the 21st century." He said that "in the higher education space, US universities and colleges are waiting in queue to deepen their relations with Indian educational institutions." Later, in an India-US bilateral meet, US Secretary of State, Ms.Hillary Clinton spoke, echoing similar views.

***A helpless mouse is not non-violent because he is always eaten by the pussy.
He would gladly eat the murderess if he could.*** **- Mahatma Gandhi**

7 Billionth Baby Born In Village Near Lucknow

India's most populous state Uttar Pradesh, with a population bigger than that of Brazil, greeted the arrival of the world's seven billionth baby on October 31 morning at 7.20 AM. The symbolic seven billionth

baby is a girl child named Nargis, born to Ajay and Veenita Yadav of Dhanaur village in Mall block falling on the outskirts of Lucknow, the capital of UP. Nargis is a symbol of India's hopes as well as its fears. She was chosen as the symbolic seven billionth baby by child rights non-governmental organization (NGO), Plan India. Executive Director, Plan India, Bhagyashri Dingle said "we chose UP to mark the birth of the 7 billionth baby as the state accounts not only for the highest number of births but also the highest number of 'missing girls'. By celebrating the birth of a girl as the 7-billionth baby we are drawing attention to the serious issue of India's declining sex ratio." Amidst much fanfare the parents of Nargis were handed over the birth certificate by the blocks health officer. The child's father, Ajay Yadav, a farmer, said that they were happy at the birth of their daughter. He said that though he and his wife have only studied till class 10, they would ensure proper education for their daughter. They hope their daughter will, one day, become a doctor. Apart from Nargis, Plan India also identified six other girl children who were born in the area. All the seven girls will be sponsored by seven women ambassadors for a period of seven years, during which they will engage with the families of the children.

India Close To Wiping Out Polio

India has not had a case of polio in 9 months, raising hopes the country is on the verge of defeating the disease. Getting rid of polio would also be a major symbolic milestone of growth; India remains one of only the 4 countries where polio is still endemic, and the 9 months that it has been without a case is the longest since eradication efforts were launched nearly two decades ago. "We are close to our goal, but are not taking any chances," said Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. Polio usually infects children under age 5, through contaminated drinking water, attacking the central nervous system, causing paralysis, muscular atrophy, deformation and, in some cases, death. A country is declared polio free when no cases of the disease are reported for 3 years, according to WHO. "This year is extremely crucial for India to capitalize on the remarkable progress made so far and stop polio virus transmission forever," said Nata Menabde, WHO representative in India, adding, "The present situation is indeed very promising but also extremely challenging." India's success has followed "persistent efforts over the last few years in the highest-risk areas and in reaching the most vulnerable populations, such as newborns, migrants and mobile populations," Azad said, adding that an immunization campaign continues in all high-risk areas and any new case would be declared a public health emergency. Health officials also remain concerned and vigilant about the possibility of the virus entering the country from neighbouring Pakistan, where a spate of cases has been reported.

International Conference On Tagore

India hosted a 3-day international conference on Rabindranath Tagore's vision of the contemporary world to mark his 150th birth anniversary, said the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). The conference, held in New Delhi from October 10-12, cast new light on the writer's outlook to humanity and universal concerns and its relevance to the present world, according to ICCR Chair Karan Singh, who called Tagore a real Renaissance man of India and the country's first world citizen. Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the conference, which included a keynote address delivered by scholar Amiya K. Bagchi entitled "Rabindranath Tagore and the Human Condition." The Indian Revival Group presented "Amader Gurudev", a tribute to Tagore using his dance, drama and films. The conference took up themes like "Beyond Nationalism: Contesting the Boundaries between the Home and the World", "Man and the Universe: The Ecological Oneness", "Writings of Tagore and his Integrated Vision" and "The New Education: Reasoning in Freedom".

Mysore Palace Among World's Must-See Places

If Madame Tussauds in London attracts the maximum number of tourists from across the globe, the majestic Mysore Palace ranks a close second on the list of the most-visited places on the globe. In another affirmation of its drawing power, the New York Times recently listed it as one of the 31 must-see places for two years in a row. The palace plays host to an average 2.5 m

tourists each year, and it could well be the numero uno soon. Feedback from tourists from various countries suggests that the palace has mesmerized visitors. Many wonder why Buckingham Palace has been considered magnificent for so long when the Mysore Palace can boast of superior construction. The first 9 months of 2011 have seen 2.4 m domestic visitors and 60,000 international visitors touring the palace.

How Yoga won the West

by Ann Louise Bardach, "Meanwhile", International Herald Tribune, October 4, 2011

THE party planning is in full swing throughout India. Never mind that the big day, Jan. 12, 2013, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Vivekananda, is more than 15 months away. Not too long ago, Vivekananda, a household name in his homeland, was famous in the U.S. as well, as the first missionary from the East to the West.

If you're in the West and annoyed that your local gas station is now a yoga studio, you might blame Vivekananda for having introduced "yoga" into the global conversation — though an exercise cult with expensive accessories was hardly what he had in mind.

The Indian monk, born Narendranath Datta to an aristocratic Calcutta family, alighted in Chicago in 1893 in ochre robes and turban, with little money after a daunting two-month trek from Bombay. Notwithstanding the fact that he had spent the previous night sleeping in a boxcar, the young mystic made an electrifying appearance at the opening of the august Parliament of Religions that Sept. 11.

For most of the rest of the month, Vivekananda held the conference's 4,000 attendees spellbound in a series of showstopping improvised talks. He had simplified Vedanta thought to a few teachings that were irresistible to Westerners, foremost being that "all souls are potentially divine." His prescription for life was simple, and perfectly American: "work and worship." By the end of his last Chicago lecture, Vivekananda was a star. And like the enterprising Americans he so admired, he went on the road to pitch his message — dazzling some of the great minds of his time.

Yet precious few of the estimated 16 million supple, yoginis in the United States, who sustain an annual \$6 billion industry, seem to have a clue that they owe their yoga mats to Vivekananda. Enriching this irony was Vivekananda's utter lack of interest in physical exertions beyond marathon sitting meditations and pilgrimages to holy sites.

"You are not your body," he often reminded Americans, who tend to prefer "doing" over "being." More distressing, for some, was his other message: "You are not your mind."

Yoga to the man who most famously delivered its message to America meant just one thing: "realizing God." He abhorred channeling, séances and past-life hunts as diversionary. Worse, the great seer savored a good smoke, and on occasion chowed down on meat.

Lacking a fig leaf of false modesty, he informed one Brooklyn audience, "I have a message to the West as Buddha had a message to the East."

Among those who never doubted the messenger during his lifetime was Leo Tolstoy. The restless Russian was especially keen for writings on Ramakrishna, Vivekananda's own guru. Two years before his death, Tolstoy wrote, "Since 6 in the morning I have been thinking of Vivekananda," and later, "It is doubtful if in this age man has ever risen above this selfless, spiritual meditation."

The philosopher and psychologist William James was fascinated by the 31-year-old Indian and quoted at length from his writings.

"A very nice man! A very nice man!" Vivekananda reported after his first meeting with

James, who called his new friend "an honor to humanity."

Gertrude Stein, then a student of James's at Radcliffe, reportedly attended Vivekananda's 1896 talk at Harvard — which so wowed the college's graybeards that they offered him the chairmanship of Eastern philosophy. He declined, noting his vows as a monk.

A later convert to the mystic's writings was Aldous Huxley, who wrote the foreword to the 1942 English-language edition of "The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna," which he described as "the most profound and subtle utterances about the nature of Ultimate Reality." Along with his friend Christopher Isherwood, Huxley was formally initiated at the Vedanta Center in the Hollywood Hills, where the two sometimes gave the Sunday lecture, often attended by their friends Igor Stravinsky, Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh, Somerset Maugham and Greta Garbo.

In 1945, Henry Miller, famous for his sex-drizzled novels, reported that his most important discovery of recent years was "two volumes on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda." By 1962, Miller concluded that "Swami Vivekananda remains for me one of the great influences in my life."

J. D. Salinger's commitment went deeper and he would leave Vedantic footprints in his work, often via his frontman, Seymour Glass. In his last published work, "Hapworth 16, 1924," Salinger has Seymour hawking the wisdom of Vivekananda calling him "one of the most exciting, original, and best equipped giants of this century I have ever run into; my personal sympathy for him will never be outgrown or exhausted as long as I live, mark my words; I would easily give 10 years of my life, possibly more, if I could have shaken his hand."

The waning of Vivekananda's popularity in America began around the time the baby boomers commandeered the yoga business and the ascetic seams between the New Age and the Old Age inevitably frayed. Vivekananda, who always took the long view, might have been amused. His enthusiasm for America was boundless and, quite fittingly, he died on July 4, 1902. He was just 39 years old, but was exhausted from ceaseless work and untreated diabetes. He had returned to India and was living in the monastery he founded outside Calcutta. He excused himself for the evening and went into his room, meditated awhile, then took two deep breaths — and passed away. Earlier, he had remarked, "I have given enough for fifteen hundred years." He was done.

Universal Praise For Indian Formula 1 Gran Prix

McLaren's Jenson

Button led the praise for the successful running of the inaugural Indian Grand Prix on October 30. The new \$400-m Buddh International Circuit unveiled by India welcomed a crowd of 95,000 on race day, while drivers were united in praise for the track layout and facilities. Button said, "It's one of the circuits which definitely gets a big tick. I'm looking forward to coming back. The Indian people have welcomed us. I've never seen so many people smiling before. The crowd have been wonderful." The inaugural Indian Grand Prix was won by Red Bull's double world champion Sebastian Vettel, with Button and Ferrari's Fernando Alonso completing the podium. Force India team principal Vijay Mallya has championed the event in India since he first brought an F1 car over to the country in the 1980s. Three decades on, this weekend's landmark event marks the fulfilment of a dream. Vettel praised the organisers and track layout, "I'm proud to win the first Indian Grand Prix. It's a great honour to put our name on the race. All the drivers are thrilled with the track." After finishing seventh in India, McLaren's Lewis Hamilton said, "The Indians did a fantastic job this weekend. The track was great and we've been treated like kings and I'm grateful for that." Michael Schumacher, who finished fifth for Mercedes, said, "I have big compliments to make. If you imagine these guys do their jobs for the first time, I'm pretty sure things have been difficult but it worked out perfectly fine." Indian Formula One driver Narain Karthikeyan, the only Indian on the grid and a member of the Spanish Hispania team when

he stepped into the HRT for a one-off appearance, stressed how Formula 1 and the Indian Grand Prix is economically important to his country. "I have raced on all the major F1 tracks across the globe and I rate this track as one of the best in the world." The fans were also treated to a performance by pop sensation Lady Gaga. The 5.14-km Buddh International Circuit is in Greater Noida on the outskirts of New Delhi, and is part of an ambitious 1,000-hectare sports complex that will include a motor driving academy to be set up in collaboration with Mercedes-Benz. The circuit has been designed by renowned German architect Hermann Tilke, and boasts the fastest straight-line of any F1 track in the world. Tickets for the race were all sold out.

Real-Life 'Slumdog Millionaire' In India

India is cheering its own real-life 'Slumdog Millionaire', a low-wage worker from an extremely poor neighbourhood who took the \$1 million prize on India's version of "Who Wants to Be A Millionaire?" Like the protagonist in the 2008 Oscar-winning film, Sushil Kumar was reportedly dazzled and shocked after winning the top prize. Shot in Mumbai, the episode's suspense builds as Kumar answers most of the questions and then saves his lifelines at the end. When he answers the final question correctly, the audience bursts into celebration. "The pulsating excitement on the set and among the crew was unimaginable," host Amitabh Bachchan said. Kumar and his wife, Seema, also in the audience, who were recently married, started crying when Bachchan handed Kumar the big check. A young man from the interiors of Bihar, earning a meagre salary of just \$130 per month, coming from the humblest of backgrounds, reaches the hot seat and cracks the ultimate prize—`50 million! An incredible feat," Bachchan hailed the win as a victory for "the common man."

They said It...

"Every time I come to India I am overwhelmed with the progress and change for the better...Yes, everything appears to be moving in the right direction. India will be giving China and other emerging economies a very tough race in the coming years. This is why we are here. We see great opportunities...in the manufacturing sector. Manufacturing best practice expertise is growing in India and the government appears to be cooperative in supporting this type of development...We are also witnessing interesting technology innovation in several industrial sectors...We have huge plans for India...The growth in the next 20 years will be very strong in India and we see this as a key focus in our own global growth strategy."

- David Frigstad, Chairman, Frost & Sullivan

The quest for truth cannot be prosecuted in a cave. Silence makes no sense where it is necessary to speak.
 - Mahatma Gandhi

TRADE ENQUIRIES FROM INDIA

Company	Interest Areas
KOHLI RUBBER MOULDS (INDIA) 50/21, Street No.1, Anand Parvat Industrial Area, New Delhi-110005 Mob: (91) 9711700464, 8527770464, Fax: (91 11) 43542774 Contact: Mr.A.P.Singh, Marketing Manager Email: ajitpal@kohlirubtech.com, Web: www.kohlirubtech.com	Automotive rubber moulded components
MARUTI INTERNATIONAL 101, Riddhi Siddhi Apartment No. 3, Vrindavan Park, Opposite Vidyani School, Sama, Vadodara-390024 Mob: (91) 9328198950, Contact: Mr.Nilesh N.Mehta Email: Nilesh_mehta54@yahoo.com	Automobile parts, incl. Engine parts, Marine engine parts, Machinery and its parts

<p>RADHA ENERGY CELL 1st Floor Deol Market, Rajesh Nagar, Badi Haibowal, Ludhiana-141001 Tel: (91 161) 6572248, 2302179, Mob: (91) 9888897248, 9815097248, Skype: rahulsoni14 Contact: Mr.Rahul Soni Email: mkt@solarexporterindia.com, Web: www.radhasolar.com</p>	<p>Solar products like Lantern, Charge controller, street light luminary, Cooker and Home lighting systems</p>
<p>GLITTO EXPORTS 130, Mathakovil Main Road, Second Street, K.Pudru, Madurai-625007 Tel: (91 452) 4115228, Fax: 4115228, Mob: (91) 9943986118 Skype: glittoexports, Contact: Mr.Sanjiv Kannan, Propreitor Email: glittoexports@gmail.com, glittoindia@yahoo.co.in Web: www.shrigurucontainers.com</p>	<p>Fresh vegetables, Spices and Herbs</p>
<p>SKYMAX CROPSCIENCE LIMITED B-206 Shapath-IV, Opp.Karnavati Club, S.G.Highway, Ahmedabad- 380015 Tel: (91 79) 26937586, Mob: (91) 9924539937, Skype: nimeshfaldu, Contact: Mr.Nimesh Faldu, Email: nimesh@skymaxcropscience.com Web: www.skymaxcropscience.com</p>	<p>Natural crop protection and nourishment products, Basmati Rice and Grains</p>
<p>EVA IMPEX PVT.LTD. So.No.14-15., 2nd floor, Ceramic Plaza, 8/A National Highway, Morbi- 363641 Tel: (91 281) 3012540, Fax: 3012432, Mob: 9913993154 Contact: Mr.Manish Patel, Web: www.evainternational.co.in Email: manish@evainternational.co.in, manishpatel158@hotmail.co.in</p>	<p>Ceramic tiles of different kinds and Sanitaryware</p>
<p>BANG POLYPACKS 103 Kewal Industrial Estate, S.B.Marg, Lower Parel West, Mumbai- 400013 Tel: (91 22) 40436565 Fax: (91 22) 24901781 Contact: Mr.Sandip Mokal, Email: sales.ppbags@bangdataforms.com Web: www.ppwovenbags.co.in</p>	<p>PP woven bags, FIBC bags, HDPE T-shirt bags, PP woven fabrics</p>
<p>DAROLYA INTERNATIONAL (P) LTD 402, Centre Point, Sector 11, Mathura Rd, Faridabad - 121002 Tel: (91 129) 4162683, Fax: (91 129) 4162683 Contact: Mr.Rakesh Darolya, Director Email: darolya123@gmail.com, darolya@darolyainternational.com Web: www.darolyainternational.com</p>	<p>Farm, irrigation & road construction machinery & implements, Cranes & Forklifts</p>
<p>OSWAL CABLES PVT. LTD Gulab Niwas, M.I. Road, Jaipur-302001 Tel: (91 141) 2369420, Fax: (91 141) 2374549 Contact: Mr.Puneet Talera, Director Email: talera85@oswalcables.com, info@oswalcables.com Web: www.oswalcables.com</p>	<p>AAAC, AAC, ACSR, LT-PVC, LT-XLPE wire & cables, conductors & aerial bunched cables</p>
<p>TECHMA ENGINEERING ENTERPRISE PVT.LTD. Stephen House, 4 BBD Bag (East), 3rd floor, Room No.51-C, Kolkata-700001 Tel: (91 33) 22314497, Fax: (91 33) 22314498 Contact: Mr.H.Bhattacharyya, Email: techmaengg@yahoo.com Web: www.techmaengineering.tradeindia.com</p>	<p>All types of railway track, track fitting and fastening items</p>
<p>VIKAS EXPORTS 896, Dhab Khatikan, Amristar-143006 Tel: (91 183) 2531946, Fax: (91 183) 5070632 Contact: Mr.R.L.Taneja Email: vikasexports17@live.com, vikasexports17@yahoo.co.in</p>	<p>Indian pure Kashmir saffron, Walnut kernels and Dried mushroom</p>

<p>TECHNO INSTRUMENTATION PVT. LTD. Plot No. 67, Street No. 1-B, Friends Colony, Industrial Area G.T. Road, Shahdara Delhi-110095 Tel: (91 11) 22112232, Fax: (91 11) 22112232 Contact: Mr.R.R.Malhotra, Head, Marketing Email: sales@tiiindia.com, Web: www.tiiindia.in</p>	<p>Underground power cable fault locating instruments</p>
<p>DYNAMIC TECHNO MEDICALS PVT. LTD. P.B.No.45, Asokapuram, Aluva-683101 Tel: (91 484) 2837788, Fax: (91 484) 2837688 Contact: Ms.Suja Veronica Xavier Email: export@dynamictechnomedicals.com Web: www.dynamictechnomedicals.com</p>	<p>Orthopaedic appliances, Surgical dressings, Bandages & Medical stockings</p>
<p>INDIA DISTRIBUTION HOUSE H.No.1-1-694/2/A, Opp.More Super Market, Gandhi Nagar, Hyderabad-500080 Tel: (91 40) 64583488, Fax: (91 40) 24606789 Contact: Mr.Surya Sunkavalli, Managing Director Email: business@indiandistributionhouse.com Web: www.indiandistributionhouse.com</p>	<p>Fast moving consumer goods & electronics appliances</p>
<p>LATA EXPORTS APPARELS PVT. LTD. 201/B, Bhaichand Textile Mill Compound LBS Marg, Bhandup (W), Mumbai-400078 Tel: (91 22) 25916490, Fax: (91 22) 25902464 Email: ajayraval@sancharnet.in, Web: www.lataexport.com</p>	<p>High fashion apparel for men and women; Woven and Knitted fabrics in cotton</p>
<p>SHRI LAL MAHAL LTD. Shri Lal Mahal House, B-16 Bhagwan Dass Nagar, New Delhi-110026 Tel: (91 11) 42787700, Contact: Mr.J.P.Bindal Email: bindal@lalmahal.in, lalmahal@lalmahal.in Web: www.shrilalmahal.org</p>	<p>Rice & other Agriculture commodities</p>
<p>OMAX AUTOS LTD. Plot No.B-26, Institutional Area, Sector 32, Gurgaon-122001 Tel: (91 124) 4343000 Ext.228, Fax: (91 124) 2580016 Contact: Mr.Thomson Rose Tomy Email: info@omaxauto.com, thomson@sdr.omaxauto.com Web: www.omaxauto.com</p>	<p>Metal home furnishing items like Wrought iron beds, Ironing boards, Stainless steel cookware</p>
<p>RAINTECH INTERNATIONAL INDIA A-77/1, Industrial Area, Wazirpur, New Delhi-110052 Tel: (91 11) 27372917, 42474409, Fax: (91 11) 27487746 Contact: Mr.Sanjay Sharma Email: export@raintechgroup.com, Web: www.raintechgroup.com</p>	<p>Stainless steel Kitchenware and Petware</p>

Advisory Regarding Satellite Telephone Services In India

Taking satellite telephone services or equipment into India is not permitted. Any person found holding or using a satellite phone, e.g. Thuraya and Iridium, without due authorization, can be arrested and prosecuted, and sets found in their possession will be seized. Satellite phone services, as available in the country, might however be used following prescribed procedures.

For any clarifications, Mr.N.Balasubramaniyan, Counsellor, may be contacted at the e-mail address <director_iccmex@prodigy.net.mx>