

# India Review

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## India, U.S. sign Science & Technology Agreement



■ Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran stresses India's impeccable record on the non-proliferation front

■ Dr. Modadugu Gupta is awarded the World Food Prize for 2005; 6th Indian recipient of the prestigious award

■ U.S. companies are offered opportunity to invest in India's booming transport infrastructure sector

# India, U.S. sign Science and Technology Agreement

**I**ndia and the United States signed an umbrella Science and Technology Agreement in Washington, D.C., on October 17 to consolidate their mutual strengths in these frontier areas, promote bilateral cooperation and share the fruits with the world at large.

India's Minister of State for Science and Technology, Biotechnology and Ocean Development, Kapil Sibal, and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice signed the far-reaching agreement on behalf of the two governments.

"This agreement establishes for the first time the intellectual property rights protocols and other provisions necessary to conduct active collaborative research," Rice said in her speech before signing the agreement.

"The agreement also complements the activities of a successful Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum that our countries created in the year 2000," she said.

"In addition to expanding the frontiers of knowledge, the agreement will lead to collaborations that will improve the lives of our citizens and benefit both our economies," Rice added.

Paula Dobriansky, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, said the agreement would have an impact that goes beyond serving the interests of the U.S. and India alone. "The diplomatic developments that advance and transform relationships in ways that not only benefit our own people in our respective countries, but also across the globe, is the wave of the future," Dobriansky maintained.

In his remarks, Minister Sibal said Christopher Columbus had set out to discover India 500 years ago and discovered America. Now, after 500 years, the U.S. is discovering the intellectual capacity and cultural values of India, the minister added.

He emphasized that India's dream was "to unite around a vision and policies that will spread freedom and prosperity around the globe" and believed that the new agreement would be a great leap forward in realizing this vision.

Another purpose of the new agreement is to expand ties between the scientific communities of both the countries, apart from promoting technological and scientific cooperation in areas of mutual benefit. The agreement also touches on such science and technology issues as promotion of science-based decision-making, environmental and biodiversity protection, safe drinking water, watershed management, natural and social sciences and agriculture.

"It is quite historic that after 15 long years of negotiations, we have signed this agreement — this umbrella agreement on science and technology," Sibal told a press conference at the Indian Embassy after signing the pact.

"I do believe that this historic agreement will take the relationship of India and the U.S. to a new level, and that, in India, we will be paying more emphasis on investments in research and development in areas of science and technology."

The agreement accords priority to collaborations that can advance common goals in science, engineering, research and



Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal addressing a press conference at the Indian Embassy after signing the India-U.S. Science and Technology Agreement in Washington, D.C., (Photo: Kiran Jagga)

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— Minister for Science and Technology Kapil Sibal

education and support partnerships among public and private research institutions and industry.

It also deals with marine sciences, energy, basic space sciences, climate, AIDS, infectious and chronic diseases, health and biomedical research, telemedicine, IT, standards and metrology, sustainable development and other related areas.

# 'Historic agreement,' says Science and Technology Minister

## Highlights of the Agreement

- **Purpose of the agreement** is to strengthen the science and technology capabilities of the United States and India
- **To expand relations** between the extensive scientific and technological communities of both countries, and to promote technological and scientific cooperation in areas of mutual benefit.
- **For the first time** it establishes intellectual property right protocols and other provisions necessary to conduct active collaborative research.
- **Agreement will accelerate** cooperation between Indian and U.S. scientists in government agencies, private sector, and academia.
- **Cooperation will cover** such areas as basic sciences, space, energy, nanotechnology, health, and information technology that will advance scientific understanding and benefit people in both countries.

The agreement establishes the framework for dynamic and effective cooperation between organizations and scientists of the two countries. It delineates the guidelines for exchange of scientists and the sharing of intellectual property.

"If two great democracies in the world, the oldest and the largest, collaborate with each other on these specific issues, apart from high-technology issues, we will hopefully have solutions on issues that impact the lives of common people," Minister Sibal said.

He also said that India already had a strong intellectual property rights regime, adding that in the past year-and-a-half he had never heard any overseas investor say to him that if he makes an investment in India, it will not be protected.

"Around 150 of the 'Fortune 500' companies are in India already. If the intellectual property regime did not protect them, they would not be there," Sibal noted.

Scientific and economic links between India and the U.S. has been strong since the early 1960s — first in agriculture, and then spreading into a broad range of areas involving most of the U.S. government technical agencies.

The Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum, established in 2000, makes a valuable contribution to strengthening the bilateral U.S.-India relationship. ■

## ■ Excerpts from Minister Kapil Sibal's Press Conference

*Excerpts from the transcript of the Press conference by Minister of State for Science and Technology, Bio-Technology and Ocean Development Kapil Sibal at the Indian Embassy, on October 17.*

### ■ On the Science and Technology Agreement.

This agreement has in its Annexure an agreement on IPR issues (that) in essence stipulates that this reflects the shared responsibilities that will be undertaken by the parties and the equitable contributions and benefits which will emerge from this agreement, dependant on the respective science and technology expertise available at both ends, and the resources...

I do believe that this historic agreement will take the relationship of India and the United States to a new level, and that in India, we will be paying more emphasis on investments in R&D... I am proud of my scientific community, that despite the meager resources in R&D in our country, they have done us proud. But I think that the time has come when the country must invest more in R&D...

### ■ On collaboration in bio- and nano-technology.

...Bio-technology and nano-technology are covered under it... As you know, nano-technology is now on mission mode in India... My ministry signed an agreement with the State of Maryland, which is, of course, very advanced in the area of nano-technology, and we are already talking to them in terms of collaboration. What it does is that it allows institutions, it

allows state governments, it allows universities to start collaborating with India on all the issues.

### ■ On the IPR Agreement.

...If you have, say, a joint program, where the team collectively does R&D in any field of science and technology, then the IPR will be shared. Individual projects can be dealt with differently depending on the collaboration reached amongst the two sides, and they may agree on a different formula for the purposes of sharing of IPR. Supposing for example, one side already has the IPR, and that IPR is contributed into the project — to that extent the IPR will be protected, and anything generated thereafter depends on how the project is going to evolve...

### ■ On Diaspora's role in R&D.

...We already have a scheme in place for the scientific community which provides for the Diaspora to actually come and work in India and collaborate with us on certain schemes that have been advertised. These schemes have already been very positively received by the Diaspora in this part of the world.

... There are Indian Americans who are holding key positions in many multinationals who in turn can play a very significant role in collaborations, not just between private entities, but also collaborations with Government.

**(For full text of the transcript of the Press conference, visit [www.indianembassy.org](http://www.indianembassy.org))**

# FS stresses India's impeccable non-proliferation credentials

**S**ignalling its emergence as a global player, India on October 24 asked the international community to recognise its impeccable non-proliferation credentials and abandon technology-denial regimes to enable it to reap the benefits of nuclear energy. "In considering its approach towards the resumption of full civil nuclear energy cooperation with India, the international community has to ask itself whether India is a partner or a target for the global non-proliferation regime," Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran told a group of strategy experts in an address that enunciated a new phase in India's foreign policy. "It clearly cannot be both at the same time. Technology-denial regimes that treat India as a target must, therefore, be abandoned," he added, while underlining India's immaculate credentials as a responsible nuclear state.

Saran's lecture — titled 'Nuclear Non-Proliferation and International Security' and organised by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and the India Habitat Centre — outlined a new phase in India's foreign policy congruent with its emergence as an increasingly influential actor on the world stage and its recognition as a responsible nuclear power.

"What does the international community gain in making an exception to the current regulations for India? How do we answer the proponents of the current global non-proliferation regime, who see the exception being made for India as the unravelling of this regime?" Saran asked assertively.

He then went on to list cogent reasons for making an exception in the case of India, arguing that the international community must recognise that the global non-proliferation regime is better with India inside the tent than outside.

Reinforcing India's status as a responsible nuclear power, Saran alluded to recent steps taken by New Delhi like the comprehensive weapons of mass destruction (WMD) export control legislation, harmonising of its export control lists with those incorporated in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) guidelines, and the refusal to allow transfer of reprocessing and enrichment technologies to third countries.

The Foreign Secretary also pointed out a slew of recent radical initiatives taken by India like the proposed separation of civilian and nuclear facilities and the negotiation of additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to increase "the confidence of the international community in the robustness and effectiveness of our export control systems, making us a more viable destination for

advanced dual-use technologies".

In a speech that enunciated a radical vision of India as a global power which must take a stand on major global issues of the time, Saran said: "India is poised today to enter a new phase in its foreign policy. We aspire to be a permanent member of the Security Council. We are demonstrating a growing capability to shoulder regional and global responsibilities."

"We cannot sit out the debates on the big issues of our times. Our interests demand a vigorous and articulate diplomatic effort that explains our position and advances our interests," Saran said in a reference to India's vote in favour of the IAEA resolution that paves the way for referring Iran to the Security Council.

He deplored double standards that have put Iran's nuclear programme under unflinching scrutiny while treating Pakistan's clandestine proliferation with kid gloves.

"Our own security interests have been seriously undermined by clandestine nuclear weapon programmes in our neighbourhood, aided and abetted, or at the least selectively ignored, by some Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) signatories themselves," Saran said. "In seeking clarity on such clandestine activities, the international community must focus not merely on recipient states but on supplier states as well; otherwise our global non-proliferation effort would be undermined by charges of motivated selectivity and discrimination."

"With respect to the Iran nuclear issue, we welcome Iran's cooperation with the IAEA in accounting for previously undeclared activities, but it is important that remaining issues which involve the Pakistan-based A.Q. Khan network are satisfactorily clarified as well," he said. The network refers to the nuclear black market run by the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Dr A.Q. Khan. "We should avoid a divisive vote at the IAEA's next meeting in Vienna," he said, adding that India was hopeful of the resolution of the Iranian crisis through dialogue.

Describing India as one of the "founding fathers" of the nuclear non-proliferation initiative, Saran predicted a robust future for the historic India-U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation agreement signed in July.

He also expressed confidence that the U.S. administration would fulfil its commitment and get domestic laws changed to allow full civilian nuclear energy cooperation between the two countries, adding that New Delhi was enthused by the response of the NSG to India's nuclear energy needs. ■

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(For full text of the speech, visit <http://meaindia.nic.in>)

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# Transport sector seen as a great investment opportunity

**I**ndia has sought greater participation by U.S. companies in its rapidly-growing transport infrastructure sector, which authorities on both sides agreed was the key to achieve higher economic growth. While Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has sought investments to the tune of \$150 billion in core sectors over the next 10 years, Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping T.R. Baalu and Civil Aviation Minister Praful Patel noted that the two sectors alone needed around \$80 billion in the next five to seven years.

India plans to invest around \$39 billion in the next seven years for the development of national highways, mainly through public-private partnership, Minister Baalu said at a conference on 'India's Transportation Infrastructure: Challenges and Opportunities' in Washington, D.C., on October 15.

The day-long conference, jointly organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC), was also attended by U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta.

In his address, Minister Patel noted: "There is an excellent opportunity for the (U.S.) business community to participate in (aviation) infrastructure projects in India."

"India has just under 200 commercial aeroplanes against 6,000-7,000 commercial planes in the U.S. The aspiring Indian middle-class has great potential to multiply this figure 10 times. That means more business for foreign aircraft manufacturers," Patel said.

Patel told the 100-odd representatives of top American firms, including Boeing, Raytheon and Honeywell, that the recently-concluded U.S.-India Open Skies Agreement had lent a strong stimulus to ties between the two countries, but a host of opportunities still remained to be tapped. "The aviation sector, one of the fastest-growing sectors in India, needs an investment of \$30-40 billion in the next five to seven years," he said.

In a comprehensive presentation, Minister Baalu noted that with a highway and road network of 3.3 million km, India was second only to the U.S. And this network — the mainstay of the domestic transport sector — carries 85 percent of the passenger traffic and 70 percent of the freight.

Though National Highways constitute only 2 percent of this massive network, it carries as



From left, Ambassador Ronen Sen, FICCI President Onkar S. Kanwar, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping T.R. Baalu, and Minister for Civil Aviation Praful Patel at the conference on 'India's Transport Infrastructure: Challenges and Opportunities', in Washington, D.C., on October 15. (Photo: Kiran Jagga)

much as 40 percent of the road traffic, he said.

Minister Baalu said the Government of India was currently executing Phases I and II of its ambitious National Highways Development Project (NHDP), which involves the widening of 14,300 km of existing highways at a total investment of \$14.53 billion. These phases include the Golden Quadrilateral (National Highways linking the main metros of the country) and the north-south and east-west corridors. These two phases are expected to be completed by December 2005 and 2008, respectively.

Phases III and IV of the project, the minister said, would undertake the widening of another 30,000 km of existing National Highways and the building of 1,000 km of expressways at a cost of about \$41 billion.

The project has been thrown open to the private sector and the government has created an enabling policy framework, including incentives such as 100 percent foreign direct investment, Minister Baalu said.

He said the government was also focusing on improving infrastructure at ports, which handle 95 percent by volume and 70 percent by value of India's exports.

## FAA to open India office: Mineta

**T**he U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has decided to open its first ever overseas liaison office in India.

The move, aimed at strengthening the U.S. aviation sector regulator's partnership with its Indian counterpart, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), is also seen as a measure of India's growing importance in the region's aviation sector, an official statement from the Ministry of Civil Aviation said.

The liaison office in New Delhi is to be staffed by a permanent FAA representative.

Mineta's announcement came during a conference on India's transport infrastructure in which Civil Aviation Minister Praful Patel was a participant.

The announcement was made by U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, who said the opening of the FAA office was indicative of the firm commitment of the Bush administration to enhance collaboration and ties with the Indian aviation sector. ■

# Legislation on N-pact with India by early next year: Burns

**A**sserting that differences over Iran were not in any way linked to implementing the civilian nuclear pact with India, U.S. Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said on October 21 that the U.S. Congress would pass legislation "early next year" to enable full civilian nuclear energy cooperation between the two countries.

"We look forward to the U.S. Congress passing the legislation to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation between the two countries early next year," Burns told reporters at a joint press interaction after talks with Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran in New Delhi.

Burns said he was optimistic that the legislation modifying the rules of nuclear energy trade in favour of India would be passed before the visit to India of President George W. Bush, expected early next year.

"Our administration is fully committed to the India-U.S. civilian nuclear energy agreement," Burns said. "There is significant support for it on Capitol Hill. There may be some Congressmen who have doubts about it. But I am convinced that the U.S. Congress will support the agreement."

He also said he was also confident about the influential Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) backing the agreement.

The Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the U.S. in July.

Under the deal, India is to separate its nuclear and military facilities and open its civilian facilities for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The U.S., on its part, is to change domestic laws to resume nuclear supplies to Indian reactors and prevail upon the NSG to change its rules governing trade in civil nuclear energy technology in favour of India.

Asked if implementation of the nuclear pact hinged on how India votes at the IAEA meeting in November on the

Iranian nuclear issue, Burns categorically replied: "No other issue except mutual responsibilities and obligation spelt out in the joint statement is associated with it."

He, however, made it a point to communicate U.S.'s sensitivities on the Iran issue.

"There is not a single country in the world that would like Iran to acquire nuclear weapons. We want Iran to come back to the negotiating table with the European Union. There is still room for finding a solution through diplomacy," Burns said, echoing India's stance on finding a solution through diplomacy and negotiations.

On the nuclear pact, Foreign Secretary Saran said: "Both countries are deeply committed to implementing this very important understanding. The issues are complex, but we are confident that the deal will be implemented soon."

Saying that honouring mutual obligations was the key to making the deal a reality, he cited crucial steps taken by India like legislation on weapons of mass destruction and harmonising its export control list with the NSG to reinforce its credentials as a responsible nuclear weapon state.

"India and the U.S. are becoming partners in a global non-proliferation regime," Saran said. "We sought certain clarifications from each other on how to take the nuclear deal forward. We are confident of working out the modalities to translate it into a reality," he said.

Saran alluded to a radical transformation in India-U.S. ties, which was evident from enhanced cooperation spanning crucial areas, including energy, trade, agriculture, space, and science and technology.

"We also spoke about the global democracy initiative and working together to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. We will cooperate in institution building in countries such as Afghanistan," he said. ■

**(For full text of the joint press interaction, visit <http://meaindia.nic.in/pbhome.htm>)**



Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns



Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran

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## Burns reiterates commitment in meeting with External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh

**U**ndersecretary of State Nicholas Burns called on External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh on October 22 and conveyed the commitment of the U.S. administration to implement the civil nuclear pact.

"Burns conveyed to the minister the commitment of the U.S. to implement the India-U.S. nuclear agreement on the basis of reciprocal obligations assumed by the two countries during the July 18 agreement," Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters at the end of Burns' two-day visit here.

The two countries "stressed on tying up loose ends before the visit to India of U.S. President George W. Bush early next year," the spokesman added. ■

# 'India is what the European Union is trying to become'

**D**r. Karan Singh, scholar extraordinaire, politician and poet, has taken over as head of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). An aesthete and a man of letters, Dr. Singh has clear ideas on how Indian culture should be projected abroad and the role of "cultural diplomacy" in doing so. The image he is keen on projecting abroad is that of a "multi-faceted, pluralistic, dynamic and democratic India". Dr. Singh also said that he hopes to set up several more Indian "cultural centres" in capitals across the world, but his "pet" project is setting up one such centre in Washington, D.C. Excerpts from an interview with *India Review* ahead of his visit to the U.S.



Dr. Karan Singh

I want to focus on opening new cultural centres in Kathmandu, Kabul, the Gulf region and in Washington. My pet baby is, however, a cultural centre in Washington, which I have been trying to establish since I was an ambassador to the U.S. 15 years ago. I hope I succeed this time.

force. It was done by the force of intellect and sheer artistic vitality.

## **There has been talk of opening new cultural centres abroad. Any progress on this front?**

We already have some 17 or 18 cultural centres abroad. I want to focus on opening new cultural centres in places such as Kathmandu, Kabul, the Gulf region (preferably at Abu Dhabi) and in Washington, D.C.

My pet baby is, however, a cultural centre in Washington, D.C., which I have been trying to establish since I was an ambassador to the U.S. 15 years ago. I hope I succeed this time.

## **What kind of image of India do you wish to project abroad? Do you feel that the idea of India has changed in recent times?**

What I want to project abroad is the image of a multi-faceted, pluralistic, dynamic and democratic India which has its roots in the past (which we by no means are prepared to jettison) but which is reaching out to the future.

We have to combine the past with the future. To achieve this, we have to sponsor a new generation of artists, writers and thinkers who are grounded in traditions and yet proud of India's modernity

India is a very rich and pluralistic nation: It is multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious. India is what the European Union (EU) is trying to become.

What the EU is trying to become, we already are. We already have as many languages as Europe, we have thrice as many people as the EU has and we have twice as many religions.

## **You have said you are very excited about your new avatar as the ICCR chief. What's your vision for the ICCR?**

We don't want just the elitist Delhi, but we also want younger people and the middle class to come into the cultural ambience. I want Azad Bhavan (where ICCR is housed) to become an India International Centre-like vibrant cultural hub, but catering to a different audience. Azad Bhavan needs a facelift. It should have an AC auditorium, a gift shop, its own art collection and a vibrant café that draws culturally minded people to come here and talk culture

## **What kind of role do you see for India in a globalising world?**

What I would like to see is India playing its due role in the emerging global society. We should not simply be dragged screaming into the global society; we should be one of the leaders of the emerging global society.

## **ICCR is planning a 'Festival of India' in Europe. How is this festival going to be different from other shows of a similar nature held in the past?**

Our next big festival is going to be in Brussels in 2006. I don't want to just send magnificent Bharatanatyam dancers to this festival, but also a pop group from India. I am a rock music addict. Let them also go there; they are also part of the Indian culture. The idea is to have an entire spectrum of our cultural activities represented at the festival.

We will have a big presence in Europe next year. This festival will not just be confined to Brussels, but will have some of its segments moving to Finland, Austria and France.

At the Frankfurt book fair next year, one of the largest book fairs in the world, the focus will be on India. ■

# Indian economy grows 8.1% in first quarter of 2005-06

**M**aintaining a fast clip, the Indian economy grew by a robust 8.1 percent in the first quarter of this financial year despite a poor 2 percent expansion in farm output, official data released in New Delhi said.

The gross domestic product (GDP) for April-June this fiscal is estimated at Rs. 3,825.34 billion (\$86.9 billion) against Rs. 3,537.17 billion (\$80.39 billion) in the same period in 2004-05, the New Delhi-based Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) said.

The sectors registering notable growth included manufacturing with 11.3 percent, electricity, gas and water with 7.9 percent, construction with 7.9 percent and trade, hotels, transport and communication with 12.4 percent, the data showed.

Finance, insurance, real estate and the business service sectors with 8.3 percent and community, social and personal services with 6.1 percent also registered strong growth, the organisation added.

However, the growth in agriculture, forestry and fishing at 2 percent, and mining and quarrying at 3.2 percent during the quarter under review, were below the estimates for the corre-



Finance Minister  
P. Chidambaram

sponding period of the previous year.

Finance Minister P. Chidambaram had recently predicted in Washington that India would register a growth of 7.1 percent or more in the current fiscal, buoyed by a robust performance by the industry, services and exports sectors.

Chidambaram, meanwhile, said the Reserve Bank of India's decision to hike its key short-term borrowings rate would not

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adversely impact the credit cost as there was abundant liquidity in the system.

The reverse repurchase, or repo, rate, has been hiked by 25 basis points to 5.5 percent with a view to keeping the inflation rate lower, by the RBI said in its quarterly credit and monetary policy review. The new reverse repo rate came into effect from October 26.

"In a measured step towards moderate monetary tightening, the RBI has increased the reverse repo and the repo rates by 25 basis points," Chidambaram said. "With adequate liquidity available, there will not be any adverse impact on cost of credit for investment for productive activities," he added. ■

## 20 percent rise in jewellery exports

**I**ndia's gems and jewellery exports recorded over 20 percent growth to reach \$8.39 billion during the first half of the 2005-06 fiscal year, with cut and polished diamonds accounting for \$6.27 billion of the total.

"The exports of cut and polished diamonds for the period April-September stood at \$6.27 billion, indicating a growth of 23.91 percent as compared to \$5.06 billion during the corresponding period in 2004," the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) of India has said.

The export of coloured gemstones during the six-month period showed a growth of 8.62 percent when compared to the corresponding period last year.

"Overall, the Indian gems and jewellery industry exports were worth \$8.39 billion, recording an impressive growth of 20.73 percent in dollar terms, compared to \$6.95 billion worth in the corresponding period last year," the industry body that represents 6,500 exporters stated.

The gems and jewellery sector is the single-largest foreign exchange earner in India's export basket.

"The first half of this financial year has witnessed an impressive growth. Looking at the performance, we are confident of achieving the set target of \$18 billion," GJEPC said. ■

## FDI norms for telecom sector modified

**T**he Union Cabinet on October 20 modified and relaxed many provisions of the foreign direct investment (FDI) norms for the telecom sector.

Briefing reporters after the Cabinet meeting, Information and Broadcasting Minister S. Jaipal Reddy said the government has made certain relaxations in the 74 percent FDI cap in the telecom sector whereby the proportion of foreign component in a company will also be counted towards the ceiling.

The announcement updates the policy announced in February, raising the cap for FDI in the sector from 49 percent to 74 percent.

It was clarified that for the 26 percent Indian holding, proportionate foreign component of an Indian company will also be counted towards the ceiling of 74 percent, but the total holding of Indian public sector banks and Indian public sector financial institutions will be treated as Indian holding.

The licensee will be required to disclose the status of such foreign holding and certify that the foreign investment is within the ceiling of 74 percent on a half-yearly basis. ■

# Cisco Systems to invest \$1.1 billion in India over three years

Cisco Systems, the U.S.-based networking major, has announced a \$1.1 billion investment in India spread over the next three years.

"This is Cisco's largest and most comprehensive investment outside the U.S. and it will cover all aspects of our business, including research and development, finance, venture capital and customer support," Cisco Systems chief executive and president John Chambers said.

Cisco's \$1.1 billion, three-year expansion plans in India will see research and development (R&D) getting the major chunk of the investment pie, with \$750 million being allocated to it and other allied activities.

Apart from R&D, investments will be infused into training, development and staffing and the company's own research activities will be complemented by work done by strategic partners in India, Chambers said. He added that an investment of \$150 million would be dedicated by Cisco Systems Capital — a division of Cisco Systems — to provide leasing and other financial solutions to customers and partners.

A sum of \$100 million in venture capital will be earmarked by Cisco to invest in Indian start-ups. A further investment of \$100 million will be pumped into customer support operations, Chambers said.

A significant portion of this sum will be allocated for tech-

nical services, spare parts depots and channel development.

Chambers said the company was looking at doubling the present staff strength of 1,400 employees to about 3,000 employees in the three-year period that the investment would be laid out. Asked whether Cisco was also looking to enter the manufacturing segment in the country, Chambers said that the

company would be looking hard at further investment options in the sector over the next year and he would announce plans on his next trip to the country. He, however, refused to spell out specific details of the proposed location of the R&D centre.

Chambers also signed an agreement with the government-owned telecom company Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) in the presence of Communications and Information Technology Minister Dayanidhi Maran.

Under the deal, Cisco will pump in \$10 million to establish Asia Pacific's first Internet Protocol Next Generation Network lab in Chennai.

The American giant will also collaborate to support the Indian government's national e-governance plan and

efforts to provide digital connectivity across the country. This includes the establishment of service centres in 100 Indian villages to provide citizens online access to government services, which can serve as role models for the initiative. ■

The U.S.-based networking giant will collaborate to support the Indian government's national e-governance plan and efforts to provide digital connectivity across the country. This includes the establishment of service centres in 100 Indian villages to provide citizens online access to government services.

## Dell's 2nd global development centre in India

Global technology major Dell Inc. has unveiled its second global development centre in India as part of the company's expansion strategy in one of the world's leading software services centres.

Laverne Council, vice president (IT, global business solutions and development services) of Dell Inc., inaugurated the centre in Hyderabad. The company has another global development centre in Bangalore.

According to Dell, its global development centres are critical in enabling the company to deploy technology for competitive advantage and growth of its business worldwide.

The company's global development centres have made important contributions to many of its mission-critical systems — from e-business and manufacturing to inventory management and supply chain.

"Since launching the first global development centre in Bangalore in the year 2001, our global software development model has expanded into one of Dell's most important technical assets," Council said at the opening of the Hyderabad centre. ■

## FedEx set to fly five additional flights to India

India will be a major focus for FedEx with five additional flights a week, even as the U.S.-based air cargo major is expanding its global presence, according to a top company executive.

"We are expanding our operations throughout the world. But, India is in our focus now," said Hamdi A. Osman, regional vice president of FedEx operations in the Indian subcontinent, Middle East and Africa.

"The economy of the country is growing at a rapid rate and a suitable business atmosphere is building up," Osman said.

"It's a great experience to do business in India. It is challenging, and if one can make it in India, one would make it almost anywhere in the world," he said.

Osman said FedEx workers in India are rated very highly by the company. "The employees are the biggest strength for us in India. The Indian employees are an asset for us: They have helped us build up a wonderful business environment in the entire subcontinent. They are second to none in the world," he said. "We recently hired 184 new employees for our India operations, taking the total number to 425," he added. ■

# ICICI Bank, Infosys, Wipro in Forbes list of Asian companies

**P**ivate sector financial service major ICICI Bank and leading software makers Infosys Technologies and Wipro are the three Indian companies that have made it to *Forbes* magazine's list of 50 fabulous Asian companies. Asian companies with at least \$5 billion in revenue or market value and best aggregate

scores for long-term profitability, sales and earnings growth were considered for the 'Asian Fabulous 50 Companies' list, according to the website of the U.S.-based financial magazine.

"Some 500 public companies in the Asia-Pacific region meet our definition of big and therefore could be considered for this first designation of the Fabulous 50," said a statement issued by the magazine.



"About half the sample survived our additional criteria for sustained and rising profitability. From the remainder we picked this group," it added.

"Thus we have included some top performers that gained from state parentage or blessing, as long as they are sharp from competing in today's marketplace."

According to *Forbes*, ICICI Bank, with sales of \$3.9 billion, is ahead of Azim Premji's Wipro (\$1.9 billion) and the country's second-largest software exporter Infosys Technologies (\$1.6 billion) of N.R. Narayana

Murthy in the list of fabulous companies.

The top 10 companies in the list included Japan's Toyota Motor, China Mobile, South Korea-based Samsung Electronics and Yahoo Japan. ■

## 'Clinical trials in India cost 30% less'

**G**lobal health firms can reduce costs of clinical trials by 20-30 percent if they outsource from India, thanks to the country's talented but comparatively inexpensive personnel, says an Unctad report, titled 'World Investment Report 2005', that was released globally recently.

According to the report, clinical trial for new pharmaceutical products is a time consuming, expensive and ethically difficult process that involves several hundred, or even thousands, of people to volunteer for testing.

"India is an increasingly attractive destination for clinical research for pharmaceuticals groups looking for faster and more efficient ways to test drugs for Western countries," the report says.

The report says India is not only endowed with skilled research and development personnel but also has a relative abundance of people with diseases that exist in developed countries, with a vast pool not exposed to drugs and medicines.

It says 30 million people in India have heart diseases, 25 million have type-II diabetes and 10 million suffer psychiatric disorders, and notes recruits in India are more likely to comply fully with the trial processes.

It says the 20-30 percent estimated savings in costs come from hiring clinical researchers, nurses and IT staff at less than a third of wages in the West, in addition to costs associated with patients.

"It is estimated that the number of clinical research organisations based in India increased four-fold between 2001 and 2003. Indian firms, too, are participating in this new industrial activity." ■

## \$1 billion FDI in real estate sector planned

**A** U.S.-based infrastructure company has unveiled plans to invest \$1 billion in Indian real estate in what is being billed as the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) in the newly-liberalised sector.

Royal Indian Raj International Corporation (RIRIC), a Nevada-based company promoted by people of Indian origin, is firming up plans to build integrated townships and planned cities in the country. The company has entered into a strategic partnership with New York-based real estate investment banking firm The Greenwich Group International to finance the development of multiple private cities in India.

"We have already been working on our inaugural residential project on a 17-acre plot on the outskirts of Bangalore," said RIRIC CEO Manoj C. Benjamin.

"With the Indian real estate sector in transition and recent landmark legislation allowing FDI into it, the opportunity for participation in this formerly closed market is heightening," Benjamin said.

RIRIC said it aimed to take advantage of India's immense housing shortage by developing large-scale commercial and residential townships in four megapolises — Bangalore, Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi.

The company claimed its plans for the next 10 years in India would provide direct employment to nearly 10,000 people and indirect employment to another 40,000.

"We have got into a contract to acquire nearly 5,000 acres of land near Mumbai, 3,000 acres near Delhi, 5,600 acres near Bangalore and another 5,000 acres near Kolkata," Benjamin claimed.

Benjamin said Mumbai alone would need anywhere between 180,000 and 200,000 additional residential units in the next 10 years. India is expected to see an annual shortfall of 20 million housing units till 2011. ■

# Indian aviation sector forecast to grow 15 percent annually

**T**he Indian civil aviation industry is expected to log an average annual growth of 8.4 percent in international traffic over the next four years, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has predicted. The association, which represents 265 carriers worldwide, said the country will also register an overall growth of at least 12 percent and a jump of 10 percent in freight during the same period.

“Generally, air transport grows at twice the gross domestic product (GDP). With Indian GDP expected to expand at 7.2 percent for 2005-2009, we would expect the growth in the 15-percent range,” said IATA director general Giovanni Bisignani.

“Airlines are moving fast. The government policy is moving in the right direction. But infrastructure must catch up,” Bisignani told a seminar organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in New Delhi. The IATA chief executive said that without massive upgrades of airport and airspace capacity, the country would neither be able to tap the potential the aviation industry has, nor handle the growth.

He said since Indian carriers placed over \$12 billion in new aircraft orders at this year’s air show in Paris, it would be very difficult for the country to accommodate all of them without expanding its infrastructure now.

“The number of carriers in India has grown from two state owned players in 1991 to 11 today, and another four carriers are set to start operations soon. But to tap the potential, we have to make infrastructure expansion an urgent issue.”

Bisignani listed four other challenges for India for the successful development of its aviation industry — enhancing safety, reasonable tax rates, commercial freedom and simplifying business with the effective use of technology.

“Safety is the number one priority in the \$400 billion aviation industry. Though India’s record on this front is satisfac-



An aircraft of the privately-owned Jet Airways. The Indian aviation sector is expected to see a boom in traffic over the next four years, according to IATA. (Photo: AFP)

tory, constant effort must be made to maintain the IATA safety norms,” he said.

On taxation, Bisignani said the association was happy that the Indian government had abolished the fuel uplift levy of 2002.

Speaking about the global aviation sector, Bisignani said the potential for air transport was too large to be taken lightly. “Globally airlines are a \$400 billion industry that generates \$1.3 trillion in economic activity. We are the backbone of the tourism industry. That is 11 percent of the global GDP,” he said. Bisignani said 94 percent of scheduled international traffic is accounted for by 265 carriers that are members of IATA.

IATA’s Indian members are Air India, Indian Airlines, Jet Airways and Air Sahara. ■

## Airbus to outsource 60% of its production; India to benefit

**A**irbus plans to outsource as much as 60 percent of its production and intends to allocate more work to India and China to gain a bigger foothold in the two fast-growing aviation markets, a senior official has said.

The company plans to build more parts for its aircraft outside Britain to help it achieve higher growth, but insists that jobs at its aerospace complex in Deeside in Wales are not under threat.

Company chief executive Gustav Humbert has revealed that Airbus is looking to outsource up to 60 percent of its production but has emphasised that the company would retain what he called “core competencies”.

The wing manufacturing plant in Deeside employs 8,000 skilled workers from Merseyside, Cheshire and Wales and makes the wings for all Airbus aircraft.

Company spokesman David Velupillai, speaking from

Airbus’ headquarters at Toulouse, France, told the *Daily Post*, Liverpool: “We may be looking to outsource 60 percent of our production, but we will keep the core competencies to ourselves.

“That means we will be keeping the skills and expertise which we think are at the core of our business. Deeside, which is a centre of excellence for wing manufacture, is a core competency. We have always made the wings for our aircraft there and that will continue.”

He pointed out that Airbus was already outsourcing up to 40 percent of its A380 super jumbo production. Deeside workers make the A380 wings but some wing parts are manufactured overseas and flown in. Aviation experts believe some of such work could be outsourced to India.

Airbus currently has 143 commitments for the A350 from 10 customers. ■

# Dr. Modadugu Gupta awarded World Food Prize 2005

**D**r. Modadugu V. Gupta was awarded the prestigious World Food Prize for 2005 at a glittering ceremony held at the majestic Iowa State Capitol building in Des Moines on October 13. The annual award was created by Nobel Laureate Norman Borlaug in 1986 for outstanding achievements in food and agriculture aimed at reducing hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty, and is funded by the prominent Ohio philanthropist John Ruan. The award, which is widely regarded as the equivalent of the Nobel Prize in the field of food and agriculture, carries a proclamation by the Governor of Ohio and a citation, an original sculpture created by Saul Bass and a cash award of \$250,000.

The first World Food Prize was awarded to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan in 1986, and thereafter to four other Indian scientists. Dr. Gupta is the sixth Indian to receive this coveted recognition for his work in improving the nutrition, substantially raising the income and empowering women in over one million poor rural families in Bangladesh, Laos, Vietnam and some African countries by dramatically increasing freshwater fish production. A number of Ambassadors of African countries were present at the ceremony.

Iowa Governor Thomas J. Vilsack read out the proclamation honouring Dr. Gupta. Ambassador Ronen Sen read out a message from Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh felicitating Dr. Gupta for his path-breaking work and for the distinction conferred on him. Sen also recalled the India-U.S. Knowledge Initiative in the field of agricultural research launched during the Prime Minister's visit to the U.S., and the role that the



Dr. Modadugu V. Gupta (second from right, front row) receiving the World Food Prize for 2005 at the Iowa State Capitol building in Des Moines on October 13. Also seen in the photo are, from left, front row, Ambassador Ronen Sen; Noel Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug; and Ohio philanthropist John Ruan. From left, back row, Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, President of the World Food Prize Foundation; Iowa Gov. Thomas J. Vilsack; and Iowa Lt. Gov. Sally Pederson. (Photo: Embassy of India)

eminent Iowan, Dr. Borlaug, and centers of excellence like the Iowa State University would play in taking this initiative forward. The President of the World Food Prize Organisation, Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, recalled the personal correspondence between George Washington Carver, the former Iowa slave who emerged as a renowned scientist, and Mahatma Gandhi, in 1929. Carver had advised his friend, the Mahatma, to augment his vegetarian diet with ingredients like soyabeans to give him the strength to carry out his noble mission. ■

## ICCR President Karan Singh on visit to D.C., NY, Chicago



ICCR President Dr. Karan Singh at a working luncheon with a select group of Indologists, friends of India and members of the Indian community engaged in the promotion of Indian culture in the Washington, D.C., area, on October 29. (Photo: Jayachandran)

**D**r. Karan Singh, President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), visited Washington, D.C., from October 28 to 30.

On October 28, he delivered a public lecture on 'The Many Dimensions of Peace' under the auspices of the Bahai Chair for World Peace at the University of Maryland and held discussions with Dr. C.D. Mote Jr., President of the University, on strengthening exchanges between the U.S. and India in the field of culture and education.

On October 29, he inspected properties identified by the Indian Mission for the establishment of an Indian Cultural Centre in Washington, D.C., and held discussions with a select group of Indologists and Indians engaged in the promotion of Indian culture in the D.C. area. He also visited the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution.

Dr. Singh visited New York from October 30 to November 3 and Chicago from November 3 to 6 before returning to India. He delivered a talk on Auroville at the Asia Society in New York on October 31 and was chief guest at the Diwali celebrations in Greater Chicago on November 4. ■

# Ambassador Sen inaugurates 'India Year' at the DMACC

**A**mbassador Ronen Sen inaugurated 'India Year' at the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) on October 14, following a proclamation read out and handed over to him by Governor Tom Vilsack. Others who spoke on the occasion were the College President Dr. Robert Denson; Congressman Jim Leach, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Asia in the House International Relations Committee; Iowa State Representative Swati Dandekar; and the main coordinator and initiator of the 'India Year', Dr. Reggie Sinha.

Congressman Leach, in his remarks, called for U.S. support for India's inclusion as Permanent Member of the U.N. Security Council without further delay.

The launching of the 'India Year' was marked by the screening of the moving film 'Mystic India' produced by BAPS at the IMAX theatre of the Science Centre of Iowa, and also by a food festival and other events.

During an earlier call on him at the State Capitol, Ambassador Sen invited Governor Vilsack to visit India. Sen also had detailed discussions with Nobel Laureate Norman Borlaug and with the President and scientists at the Iowa State University on implementation of the India-US Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture. Sen had earlier discussions in this regard with the Chairman and CEO of Cargill, Warren Staley, and the Chairman and CEO of Monsanto, Hugh Grant, on the establishment of commercial linkages on the Agriculture Initiative. During his visit to Des Moines, Sen also had talks with the Chairman and CEO of Principal Financial Group, Dr. J. Barry Griswell, on expanding the company's business operations in India. ■



Ambassador Ronen Sen (second from right) receives an honorary degree of the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) from 'India Year' Chairperson Reggie Sinha, DMACC President Rob Denson and DMACC Board Vice President Ben Norman, during ceremonies at the 'Focus on India' seminar held at the Ankeny Campus on October 14. Ambassador Sen received an honorary Associate of Arts degree given to individuals who make extraordinary contributions to the College. Ambassador Sen was also given a framed 'India Year' poster and a DMACC 40th year medallion made by DMACC Instructor John Neumayer. (Photo: Embassy of India)

## ■ Indo-U.S. Forum of Parliamentarians Delegation Meets Condoleezza Rice



A six-member delegation of the Indo-U.S. Forum of Parliamentarians called on Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Washington, D.C., on October 26. The Indian delegation consisted of Shahid Siddiqui (Samajwadi Party), Sachin Pilot (Congress Party), Suresh Prabhu (Shiv Sena), B.J. Panda (Biju Janata Dal), Dinesh Trivedi (Trinamool Congress), and Madhu Goud Yaskhi (Congress Party). Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General, FICCI and President FICCI Onkar Kanwar were also present. Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns is on Rice's right and Assistant Secretary of State Christiana Rocca is on her left. (Photo: Mohammad Jaffer/SnapsIndia)

## Events at the Embassy



### 'MEET THE ARTIST'

Noted dancer and choreographer Mallika Sarabhai at a 'Meet the Artist' event at the Embassy of India on October 26.  
*(Photo: Kiran Jagga)*

### RECEPTION FOR AUTHOR

Ambassador Ronen Sen with Alexandra Villard de Borchgrave, author of 'Healing Light: Thirty Messages of Love, Hope And Courage', at a reception hosted by the Ambassador in her honour on October 3.  
*(Photo: Jayachandran)*



### SOUTH ASIAN LITERARY AND THEATRE ARTS FESTIVAL

Ambassador Ronen Sen, author Anita Desai (second from right), Albert Keidel of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (second from left), and Nidhi Khatri of the World Bank at a reception hosted by the Indian Embassy in honour of the South Asian Literary and Theatre Arts Festival (SALTAF), on September 30.  
*(Photo: Nithin Verma)*



# Lahaul-Spiti

## Nature at its starkest

Situated some 3,000 to 6,000 metres above sea level are the twin valleys of Lahaul and Spiti in the remote and frozen heights of Himachal Pradesh along the Indo-Tibet border. The lush green ambience of Kullu is replaced by an awesome vista of bare, brown mountains, hanging glaciers and snowfields in Lahaul and Spiti district, making it an ideal destination for climbers and trekkers. The region also abounds in fascinating Buddhist art and culture, and its well-preserved monasteries hold rich repositories of ancient murals, *thankas*, woodcarvings and golden images of Padmasambhava.

The district is named after its two subdivisions, Lahaul and Spiti, with their headquarters at Keylong, which is located 115 km from Manali. The Spiti valley is connected to Lahaul through the 4,500 metre Kunzum Pass.

Spiti Valley has around 30 monasteries and is often referred to as "Little Tibet" owing to its physical similarities with Tibet. Spiti means "Middle Country", as it lies between Tibet, Ladakh, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Kullu.

### Attractions

**Gondla:** Located 18 km from Keylong, this village holds royal houses and a monastery, which is famous for its fair in July when Lamas dance with abandon. The residence of the Thakur of Gondla, the local chieftain, is an eight-storey building that was built in 1700 A.D.

**Tandi:** Situated at the confluence of Chandra and Bhaga rivers and just 8 km from Keylong, Tandi has mythical significance as it is believed that Chandra, the daughter of the Moon, and Bhaga, the son of the Sun god, were married here.

**Guru Ghantal Monastery:** Located above Tandi, this is believed to be the oldest gumpa of Lahaul. This wooden structure has pyramidal roofs, wood carvings and idols of Padmasambhava and Brajeshwari Devi. The Ghantal festival is held here in mid-June.

**Keylong:** It is an oasis of green fields and willow trees, streams surrounded by brown hills and snow-capped peaks.

**Kardang Monastery:** Believed to have been built in the 12th century, this monastery, located 5 km from Keylong, has a large library of Kangyur and Tangyur —

Buddhist scriptures in Bhoti. Kardang village was once the capital of Lahaul.

Other important monasteries in Lahaul are the Shashur Monastery and Tayul Gompa, which houses a five-metre-tall statue of Guru Padmasambhava and a library that has 101 Kangyur volumes.

Among other attractions around Keylong are Koksar (21 km), the coldest place in Lahaul; Jispa (20 km), ideal for trout fishing; Darcha (24 km), the starting point for the trek to Padem; Baralacha La (73 km), the point of origin of Chandra, Bhaga and Yunam rivers.

Some of the important places to visit in Spiti Valley are: Kye Monastery; Dhankar Monastery; Tabo Monastery; Kunzum Pass; Kaza; and Kibber, locally known as Khyipur, it is one of the highest human habitats in the world (4,205m). ■

## TOURIST INFORMATION

### How to Get There

**By Air:** The nearest airport is at Chandigarh. Kullu has an all-weather small airport.

**By Rail:** Main railhead is at Chandigarh.

**By Road:** Well connected by road from Delhi, Chandigarh and Shimla (only in summer months).

### Climate

**Winter:** Temperature ranges from 6 degrees Celsius to minus 19 degrees Celsius.

**Summer:** Maximum temperature is 26

degrees Celsius; minimum is 1.4 degrees Celsius.

### Best time to visit

May to mid-October.

### Where to stay

Hotel Gangtang, Keylong  
Hotel Moonlight, Kaza  
Tourist Complex, Keylong  
Tourist Bungalow, Keylong  
Tourist Lodge, Kaza

For more information, visit  
[www.hptdc.nic.in](http://www.hptdc.nic.in)



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