

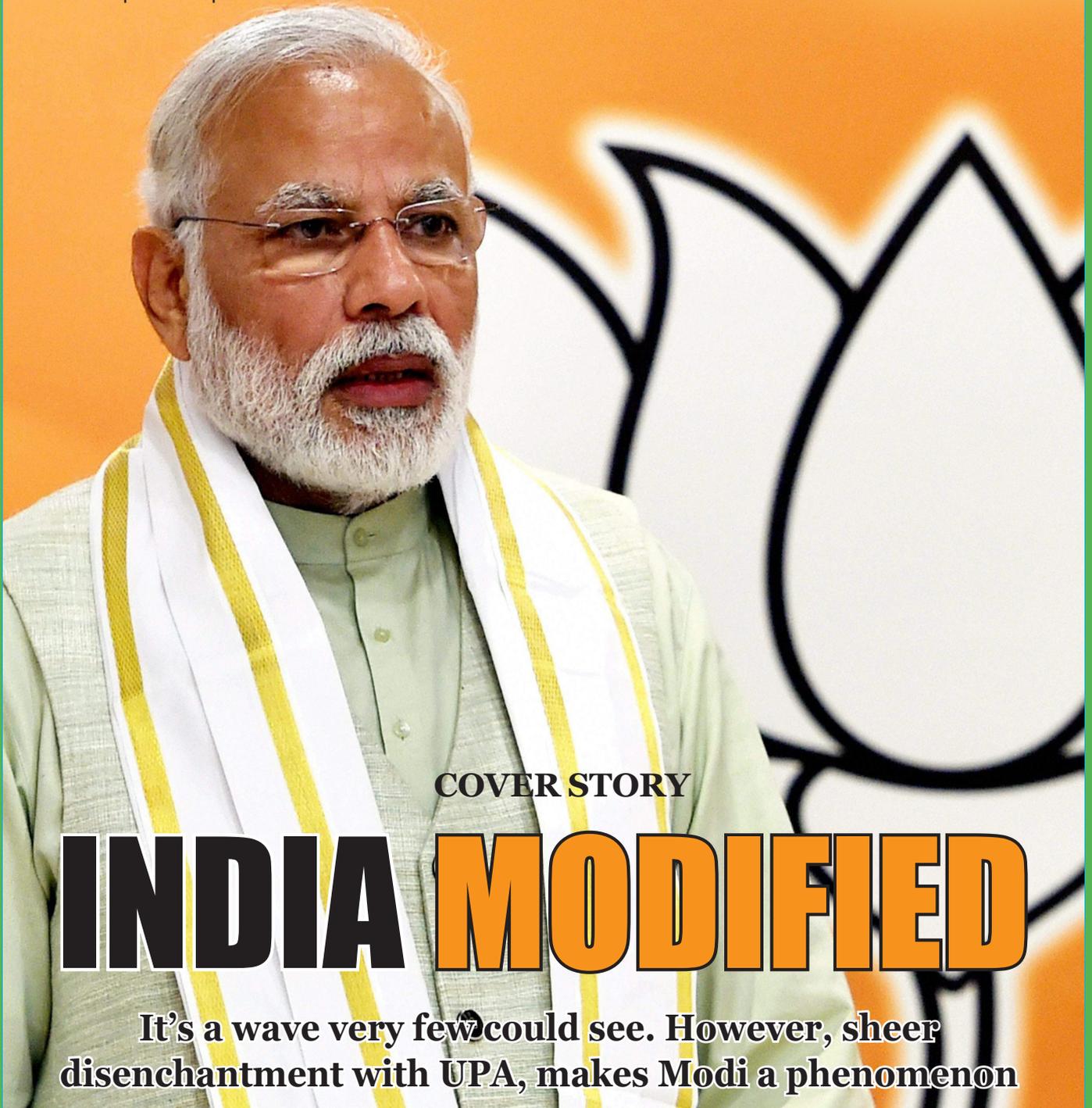
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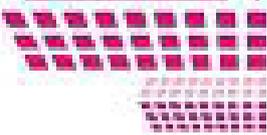
A MONTHLY NEWS MAGAZINE



COVER STORY

INDIA MODIFIED

It's a wave very few could see. However, sheer disenchantment with UPA, makes Modi a phenomenon

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Modi leads BJP to a historic victory

Eight months after the BJP named him its prime ministerial candidate, Narendra Modi, 63, proved he was worth the opposition the party originally encountered over its decision. Mr Modi has delivered the BJP's best result ever, giving it more than the 272 seats it needs to form a government. This is the first parliamentary majority by a single party since 1984.



India has won, good days are coming, Mr Modi said at a rally in Vadodara in his home state of Gujarat, where thousands chanted his name. In a clear message to those who have tagged him a polarising leader, he said, "Even if we clear majority to run the government, it's our responsibility to take everyone along in running India."

Through his campaign, Mr Modi had vowed to reboot the economy and deliver efficient governance -he said today "development for all" would be his mission. With its allies, the BJP now has over 300 of the 543 parliamentary seats. The stunning numbers provide incontrovertible evidence of the "Modi wave" that the BJP name-dropped for months. The twin headline to Mr Modi's phenomenal win is the colossal defeat that he has enforced upon the incumbent Congress. Headed by Sonia and Rahul Gandhi, the party has crashed to its worst performance with less than 50 seats after 10 years in power.

Modi himself has been elected to parliament from Vadodara and the holy city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, which he is expected to choose as his constituency.

The multinational search effort for the aircraft is the largest and most expensive in aviation history. The search began in the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea, where the aircraft's signal was last detected on secondary surveillance radar, and was soon extended to the Strait of Malacca and Andaman Sea. Analysis of satellite communications between the aircraft and Inmarsat's satellite communications network concluded that the flight continued until at least 08:19 and flew south into the southern Indian Ocean, although the precise location cannot be determined. Australia took charge of the search on 17 March when the search moved to the southern Indian Ocean. On 24 March, the Malaysian government noted that the final location determined by the satellite communication is far from any possible landing sites, and concluded that "Flight MH370 ended in the southern Indian Ocean."

The law allows doctors to kill a child if they and their parents consent, and there is thought to be no treatment for their intense suffering. They must also be assessed by a psychologist and be "capable of discernment." One man in the public gallery shouted "murderers" in French when the vote was passed after what had been a heated debate between lawmakers the previous day, according to Reuters.

To become entrenched in law, the bill needs to be signed by the country's monarch, King Philippe, but this is seen as a formality. Euthanasia, the act of a doctor directly killing a patient, has seen a rapid rise in popularity for adults in Belgium, where it was legalized in 2002. The Netherlands and Luxembourg are the only countries where the practice is legal.

However the elections in five states have proved that BJP is not unbeatable. Wherever the opposition has a slightly good leadership to answer back BJP with the capacity to consolidate anti BJP vote, BJP can be defeated. Though various states have formidable regional leaders, the nation has absolutely none. As long as Rahul Gandhi is the perceived choice for PM against Modi, irrespective of how much he has improved, he comes absolutely nowhere near Modi. Sonia is getting old and keeping a bit unwell to really run around amassing support.

—Prashant Tewari,
Editor-in-Chief



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UPA BACK TO POWER



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DEFIANT
KOREA

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Who is the real Rahul Gandhi? An upstart with childish retorts, or a master strategist? A mama's boy, or a leader in his own right?

A destiny's child, or the one who makes his own destiny? One must accept that Elections-2009 has given answer to most of these questions.

Rahul Gandhi, the scion of arguably the first family of Indian politics has evolved from his protected self. Years of grooming in the hinterland politics is clearing showing its result. And the verdict has given a decisive judgement on the 38-year-old Gandhi's acumen as a campaigner and political tactician.

If one talks of stats, Congress won nearly 60% of seats where he went to campaign for his party's candidate. And in UP, where he has been devoting much of his time, Congress sprang back to life with 21 seats, from 9 in 2004.

If one talks of stats, Congress won nearly 60% of seats where he went to campaign for his party's candidate. And in UP, where he has been devoting much of his time, Congress sprang back to life with 21 seats, from 9 in 2004

Somewhere in the course of the campaign, he changed from an apprentice politician to a tactician, shunning and wooing allies with the ease of a natural. He gambled on Congress going it alone in Uttar Pradesh, and it paid off handsomely. He complimented Nitish Kumar, Chandrababu Naidu and the Left, leaving party leaders confused and allies fuming.

Rahul was setting the political agenda on his terms. He could be king right away. But he has chosen not to. Instead of basking in the glory in Delhi, he reached Sultanpur in UP with sister Priyanka to thank his voters. Surely, the man is different.

His focus has been UP, which he knows is key for Congress to regain its old glory. Expect him to possibly change the leadership by bringing in someone younger.

Midway through the high-voltage campaigning came a patronizing snub from BJP chief Rajnath Singh when he refused to react to a barb from Rahul Gandhi: "I



EVOLVED POLITICIAN: RAHUL GANDHI

COMING OF AGE

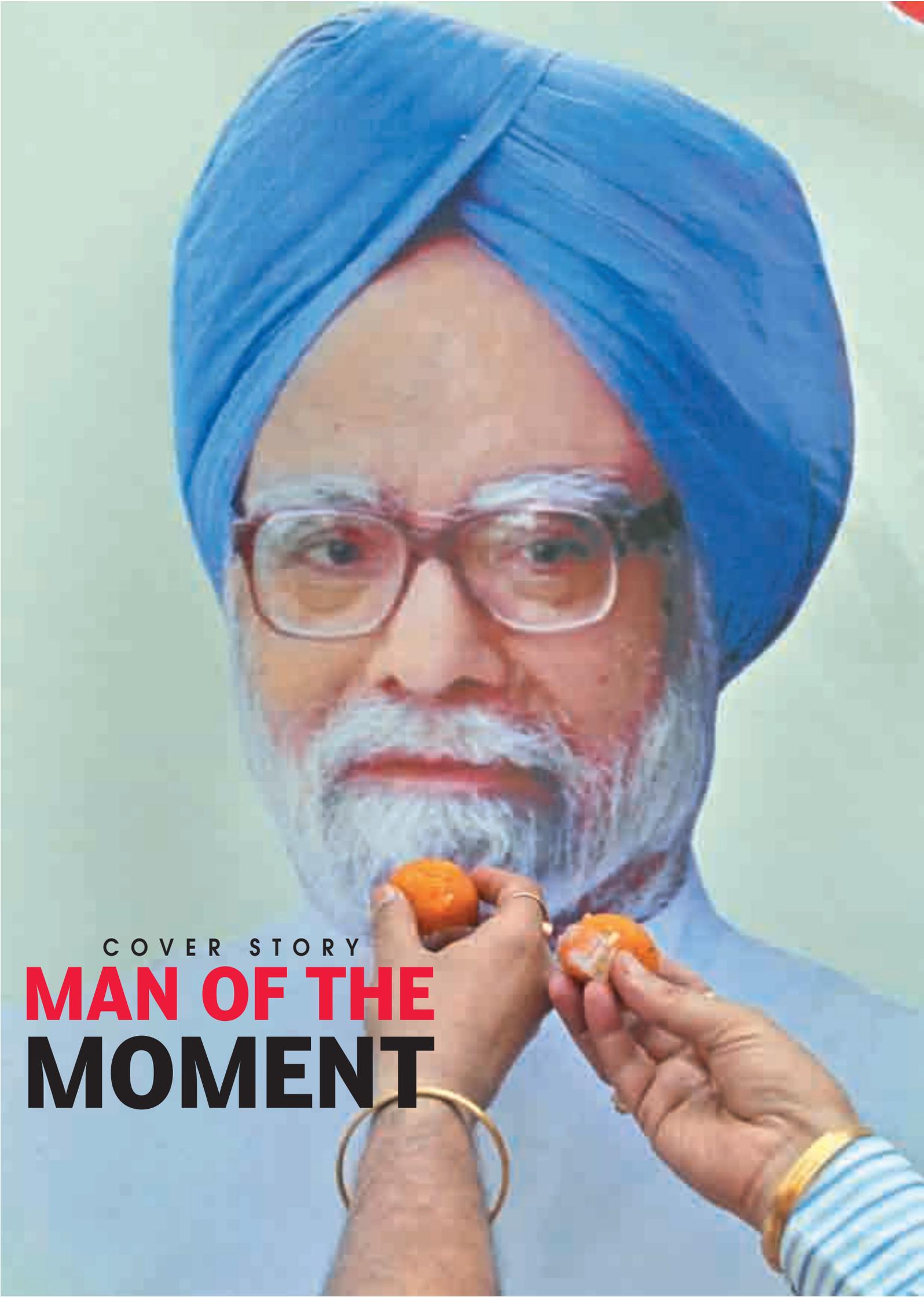
don't respond to his comments." It came on the back of a dismissive description from Narendra Modi who compared Rahul to an aquarium fish.

Inside a month, on a hot sunny Saturday, the saffron brass was left licking its wounds as everything with a stamp of the Gandhi family scion — strategy and candidates — came up trumps, leaving a virtual carnage in the BJP camp.

For a man to have clocked 125 meetings, covering 87,000km, Rahul also

proved a tireless campaigner. And it can be said with some evidence that he struck a chord with the youth across the country. The show may only have begun, feel partymen.

With UPA back in power with more strength, now his primary goal is to rejuvenate the party cadre in UP. With people of UP already showing signs of disenchantment with the BSP regime, he can have his best shot in the 2012 state polls.



COVER STORY

MAN OF THE MOMENT

Thumbs Up For Brand Manmohan

It's a mandate that has surprised all, including Congress. Result: Manmohan Singh becomes only the second Prime Minister after Jawahar Lal Nehru to be re-elected to the chair



JOY OF VICTORY: IT'S CELEBRATION TIME FOR THE CONGRESS FAMILY

Prashant Tewari

People of India have delivered a clear verdict, In the highly polarised and seemingly unpredictable general election of 2009 at a historic threshold of coalition politics in the country, the Indian people have given a clear-cut thoughtful verdict by voting for stability, predictability and moderation. Indians have clearly opted for the centrist views in politics, diplomacy and economy. While taking up the challenge to seek a renewed mandate from the people, the Congress projected Dr Manmohan Singh as the persona of predictability and stability in national politics. Sonia Gandhi provided much-needed balance in the Congress's public discourses. The Congress duo has obtained a pan-Indian approval. Nobody can doubt that after reading the much-awaited numbers.



CENTRE OF GRAVITY: RAHUL GANDHI HAS EMERGED AS A NEW FORCE

India is alive and young, the nation is full of optimism. The world is looking at India with respect and hope to provide qualitative leadership in science and technology. Every night, young radiologists in Bangalore read CT scans e-mailed to them by emergency-room doctors in the U.S. Few modern Americans are surprised to find that their dentist or lawyer is of Indian origin, or are shocked to hear how vital Indians have been to California's high-tech industry. In ways big and small, Indians are changing the world.

That's possible because India—the second most populous nation in the world, and projected to be by 2015 the most populous—is itself being transformed. Writers like to attach catchy tags to nations, which is why you have read plenty about the rise of Asian tigers and the Chinese dragon. Now here comes the elephant. India's economy is growing more than 8% a year, and the country is modernizing so fast that old friends are bewildered by the changes that occurred between visits. The major credit of writing the entire script goes to present Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, though India is fortunate to have successive quality leadership in late Rajiv Gandhi, late PV Narsimha Rao and Atal Bihari Vajpayee

since last three decade. All the leaders formulated developmental policy for the nation resulting in major surge in Indian position globally.

The Congress-led incumbent govern-

The quintessence of Election 2009 lies is that India still remains what it always has been through millennia — a centrist country of people who opt for moderation and balance, especially in troubled times in their tumultuous history.

ment has got such a convincing mandate that it is well-placed to provide a stronger government than it provided from 2004 to 2009. People can heave a sigh of relief that a period of political stability lies ahead for five years. The Congress will

talk about inclusive growth as it did last time, but in the coming days the stock exchange will have reasons to rejoice as the Left parties are out of New Delhi's power structure.

The Prakash Karat-led era of Left dominance in New Delhi is ending on a highly controversial and humiliating note. No doubt, the Communist Party of India-Marxist is being rocked to its very foundations. A historic turning point is at hand for the Indian Left, comparable in magnitude to the split in 1964. For the conceivable future, the CPI-M will be forced into a mood of introspection and a painful course correction.

In sum, the quintessence of Election 2009 lies is that India still remains what it always has been through millennia – a centrist country of people who opt for moderation and balance, especially in troubled times in their tumultuous history. Indian electorate have elected this government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh to fight economic downtrend, hostile border states promoting rouge ideologies and terrorism, growing naxal trouble challenging internal security and to counter corruption in public life to make government apparatus more transparent.

(Writer is Editor , Opinion Express Group)



THREE FOR JOY: MANMOHAN, SONIA AND RAHUL HAVE EMERGED AS A POTENT COMBO

Congress had better strategic plans and preparations

Sanjaya Baru

The day of the psephologist is over. It is time for the political analyst. The election results are not just numbers, they define a nation's ideological contours. Much of the post-poll discussion has been focused on personalities. Its time to reflect on policies.

The verdict of the 2009 general election has once again brought the 'centre' in Indian politics to centre-stage. India has returned to an even keel, I learnt the ABC of Indian politics from a Communist ideologue called Mohit Sen in his Narayanaguda flat in Hyderabad in the early 1970s. The one thing he kept drilling into my teenage mind all the time was the idea that India can only be ruled from the 'political centre.' That is how he justified the Communist Party of India's support to Indira Gandhi and that is why he was finally excommunicated by the

Communists.

Analysing Indian policies and politics over the past two decades, watching these being shaped in the Prime Minister's Office for over four years, and writing speeches for the prime minister, I often recalled Mohit Sen's wise words. India can not be governed either from the 'right' or the 'left'. India can only be governed from the 'centre'. Individual states could lurch in one direction and remain there for long periods of time, like West Bengal on the left and Gujarat on the right. But this sub-continental, civilisational republic can only be governed from the political 'centre'. That political centre has been empowered once again by the results of the 2009 general election.

The Indian National Congress always occupied the political centre. It may have lurched to the left at times and to the right at times, but its destiny was in the centre because it emerged as the consensual voice of a plural nation.

All those political scientists who theorised about the so-called 'era of coalitions' in the post-Emergency period forgot that the Congress party was always a coalition. Its success is defined by remaining so.

The Congress entered the 2004 campaign on a weak wicket because Atal Bihari Vajpayee had tried, fairly successfully, to usurp that centre space from the Congress. I was pilloried by many in the Congress and on the left for writing an editorial entitled 'Atal Bihari Nehru.' But that precisely was Vajpayee's project, and that is why he became the first non-Congress prime minister to serve a full term in office.

Because the BJP grabbed a bit of that centre space, the Congress was forced to turn left to regain ground. The problem with the 2004 verdict was that the Left Front, and some in the Congress, actually interpreted the result to mean India had moved left.

Because the BJP grabbed a bit of that centre space, the Congress was forced to turn left to regain ground. The problem with the 2004 verdict was that the Left Front, and some in the Congress, actually interpreted the result to mean India had moved left. The Left's '60' in 2004 came from a pro-Achutanandan wave in Kerala, after he was initially denied a ticket by the party bosses in Delhi, and a pro-Buddhadev wave in Bengal. Recall those T-shirts Thiruvananthapuram's teenagers wore with 'VS' emblazoned on them?

The ideologues of the left however interpreted this 'regional' result as an endorsement of their political platform, and tried to impose this on the Congress through the National Common Minimum Programme. Many in the Congress happily walked into this trap because they were so dazed by the result and were so happy to return to government after almost a decade.

In a classic Communist party manoeuvre Prakash Karat took charge of the Communist Party of India-Marxist by staging a virtual coup at the Party Congress in 2005 and tried to push the entire United



END OF DREAM: BJP UNDER ADVANI FAILED TO GET RIGHT DIRECTION



NON-STARTER: KARAT AND NAIDU IN A PRE-POLL PARLEYS. THIRD FRONT GOT IT ALL WRONG

Progressive Alliance leftwards. He tried to put the Congress on the defensive by charging it of abandoning the nationalist platform on foreign policy.

The Left painted Manmohan Singh as a 'neo-liberal' economist, knowing full well that he was and has always been a 'Keynesian' liberal, and charged him of a pro-US bias.

Some in the Congress, like Mani Shankar Aiyar, seemed to fall into this trap and echoed the Left view that the 2004 verdict was in favour of pro-left policies. This created an ideological confusion within the Congress that the Left exploited by seeking to drive a wedge between the party and the government. The India-US civil nuclear cooperation agreement was used as an instrument to stage that coup.

In the meanwhile, the BJP dumped Vajpayee's centrism and moved right without reflecting on why Vajpayee had tried to take the party away from its core ideology. Vajpayee was trying to 'Congressise' the BJP. Once the BJP abandoned that project under the leadership of Lal Kishen Advani] and Narendra Modi] it lost 'middle India'. So what contributed to the revival of the Congress? I believe it was the Congress' decision to strike out on its own, unencumbered by the ideological prejudices of the Left and the caste-based and regional parties. The Congress re-asserted its independent centrist identity. It remembered that it

was in fact the original political coalition in India.

Early in the election campaign Prime Minister Manmohan Singh hit out at casteism and regionalism and identified these as equally damaging as communalism to the future of our Republic. Further, by rejecting the Third Front's attempts to give the Congress a character certificate on nationalism, the Congress regained the centre space that they were trying to take away. The Left's stance on the India-US nuclear deal was motivated by a Bolshevik instinct to hijack the Congress agenda. By guilt tripping the Congress and accusing the prime minister of abandoning 'an independent foreign policy' they were hoping to shape Indian foreign policy in the manner they sought to shape economic policy in the past.

If the Congress had gone along with the Left and dumped the nuclear deal it would have once again surrendered 'its' political space to the Left.

Wisdom lay in asserting its own independence and, above all, in reclaiming the centre space of Indian political life for itself. That is precisely what the Congress did in 2009.

Returning to the ideological centre, enabled the Congress to return to the Centre.

(Sanjaya Baru served as media advisor to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, from 2004 to 2008)

INDIAN ELECTIONS 2009

S W O T analysis

Strength Weaknesses Opportunities Threats

The official results in the election to the Lok Sabha, the lower House of the Indian Parliament are out, it is clear that the Congress has not only retained its position as the largest single party, but has even improved its position as compared to the results of the 2004 election by over 60 seats.

The parties, which belonged to the United Progressive Alliance, as the coalition led by it is known, are well set to have a near absolute majority – more than 50 per cent of the total seats – if not an absolute majority. This enabled the Congress to form a coalition government headed by Dr Manmohan Singh as the prime minister once again for five years.

There is likely to be greater ideological cohesion in the new coalition and this should enable the new government to give a fresh momentum to the implementation of much-needed economic reforms. Under the departing government, also led by Manmohan Singh, the lack of an ideological cohesion stood in the way of such implementation.

There has to be a caveat here. The Trinamool Congress, led by Mamata Banerjee which has won a remarkable victory in West Bengal and which will be an important member of the new coalition, has its own retrograde baggage in economic matters – like its unrelenting opposition to special economic zones and its allergy to corporate houses. This baggage might come in the way of the needed economic reforms if the prime minister and Sonia Gandhi, the Congress president, are unable to persuade her to bury her economic baggage.

The three most significant features of the election are:

1 L K Advani, the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has failed to convince the electorate that he will be a better alternative to Manmohan Singh as the prime minister. Many of the local BJP cadres with whom I have an opportunity of interacting periodically, were not optimistic even before the election about the party's chances.

During their interactions with me, they attributed their pessimism to the fact that



DREAM SHATTRED: DEAM OF REGIONAL PLAYERS TO PLAY KING MAKERS WAS DASHED. MAYAWATI AND BSP WERE TARGETTING 40+ FROM UP. THEY GOT 20

Advani had been unable to enthuse voters outside committed supporters of the BJP and its sister organisations. They also felt that Advani was amenable to accepting wrong advice and that this could come in the way of the BJP coming back to power.

I myself felt that he came out during the election campaign as a negativist leader, who was good in criticising the government and Manmohan Singh, but was unable to come out with a positive policy package which he could place before the electorate as an alternative to what the

UPA government was doing.

Negativism tires people after some time. He also committed many tactical mistakes. The most serious of them was his focussing on attacking the prime minister as an individual leader than on his policies. Attacks of a personal nature do not go well in our civil society. They create a feeling of revulsion in people.

1 The cynicism, which in the past characterised the attitude of large sections of the people towards the Congress because



PERFORM OR PERISH: NAVEEN PATNAIK (LEFT) AND NITISH KUMAR HAVE SHOWN THAT NOW ONLY PERFORMANCE WILL COUNT

of allegations of corruption, inefficiency etc, has got diluted and people have once again started looking up to the Congress as a party capable of re-inventing and reforming itself.

In many parts of the country, the Congress is still looked upon as the party of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, K Kamaraj, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and P V Narasimha Rao.

Manmohan Singh's unquestioned reputation as an honest leader has helped the Congress in getting over this cynicism surrounding it. The Congress has a past of which it can be proud. The same thing cannot be said about the BJP. The votes for the BJP came largely – if not exclusively – from its committed supporters. The Congress was able to tap a much larger reservoir – consisting of its committed supporters as well as others.

1 Wherever the Communists had come to power anywhere in the world either through a revolution or through the ballot box, they have shown a tendency to see to it that they cannot be dislodged from power by infiltrating the governmental machinery through their cadres and through intimidation of those opposed to them. That is what they succeeded in doing in West Bengal.

The entire credit for breaking their stranglehold on the governmental machinery and initiating the process of free-

ing West Bengal from the asphyxiating clutches of the Communists should go to Mamata Bannerjee.

For years, she fought single-handed against them and has ultimately succeeded. What will be the impact of the election on the common man? All the parties, which will be in the new coalition, have had a reputation of giving equal priority to the needs of the common man as well as the business class, whereas the BJP was always seen as a party which felt more comfortable with the business world.

There will be conflicting pressures on the new government – from the corporate world for more and speedier economic reforms and from the middle and poorer classes for more populist measures like writing off bank loans, subsidised sale of essential articles etc.

If the Trinamool Congress continues to act as a speed-breaker in the way of meeting the expectations of the corporate world, inner conflicts would once again distort the economic reforms and further delay our catching up with China.

How to meet the expectations of the corporate world without sacrificing the interests of the common man? How to meet the expectations of the common man without sacrificing the needs of the corporate world? These questions will haunt the prime minister as he gets going for a second innings.

What will be the impact of the election on the Hindutva forces constituted by the BJP and its allied organisations?

Will they realise that playing an exclusively Hindu card has proved counter-productive and that the time has come to give themselves an expanded agenda not confined to the interests of the Hindu community?

The BJP has done well in the election despite its lack-lustre election campaign, though it has not done as well as in 1999 and even in 2004, but if it has to appeal to a larger spectrum of people of different religions and different regions it has to do a sincere introspection and embark on an exercise to rid itself of the negative aspects of its image.

Is it capable of such an honest introspection?

The history of many religion-based parties in other countries often is that when they do badly electorally, the die-hards in the party manage to convince themselves that their poor performance was due to not their over-focus on religion, but because of their not focussing sufficiently on religion-related issues. Instead of diluting polarising tendencies, they further strengthen them. The BJP has to resist such a retrograde step if it has to regain its elan and come back to power. What is required is not more of the Hindutva ideology, but less of it.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

What will be the impact on India's place in the international community?

B Raman

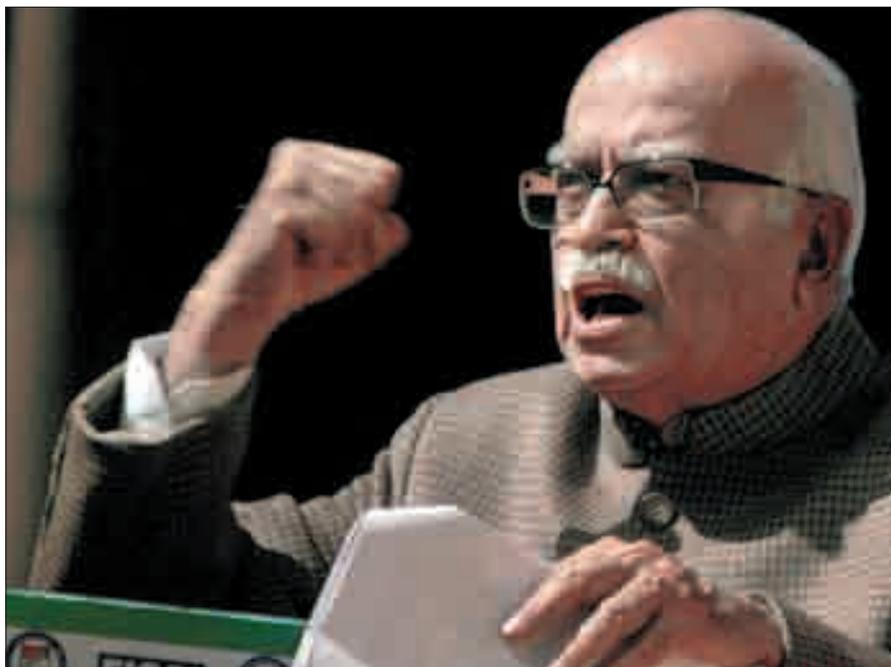
Many countries in the world must have heaved a sigh of relief over the bad performance of the Communists. Apart from China, North Korea and Cuba, no other country in the world would have relished the prospect of the Communists coming to power in New Delhi. Many Islamic and even Western countries would have heaved a sigh of relief over the BJP's poor performance. The BJP was seen in the Islamic world as a party of Hindu extremists. It was seen in the Western world as a party of Hindu nationalists.

Its anti-Communist ideology attracted the Western world. The West had no difficulty in getting along with the government headed by then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, but it was increasingly concerned by what it saw as an attempt of Hindutva elements to create a divide between the Hindus and Christians.

The world as a whole would be happy with Manmohan Singh's continuance as prime minister. The political leaderships of many countries felt more comfortable with him than they would have been with Advani. He was perceived as a moderate, balanced person, who avoids rhetoric and confrontational attitudes. The previous Bush administration in the US was very happy with him as prime minister. The Obama administration would be equally happy with him. Since coming to office on January 20, the Obama administration has been adopting a low-profile, inactivist role vis-a-vis India because of the election.

Now that the election is over, one can expect a more high profile and activist role. Such activism would be directed towards nudging Manmohan Singh into resuming the composite dialogue with Pakistan, which was interrupted by the terror attacks in Mumbai, and towards addressing at least some of Pakistan's concerns relating to India's role in Afghanistan.

On the question of the suspended dialogue with Pakistan, the failure of Asif Ali Zardari's government to arrest and prosecute or hand over to India the leaders of the Lashkar-e-Tayiba involved in the Mumbai attacks would come in the way of



LOTUS WILTS: MANY ISLAMIC AND EVEN WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF OVER THE BJP'S POOR PERFORMANCE

any decision to resume the dialogue.

Despite the fact that counter-terrorism did not play any major role in influencing the attitude of voters during the election, public opinion in India might find it difficult to support any decision to resume the dialogue despite Pakistan's obduracy on the Lashkar issue.

Since Pakistan's attitude shows no signs of changing, do we continue to keep the dialogue process in cold storage? The new government should make any resumption of the dialogue conditional on the US making Pakistan give satisfaction to India on the Lashkar issue.

Pakistan's perceived concerns about India's role in Afghanistan relate to three issues.

Firstly, India's role in the economic development of Afghanistan and particularly its role in the development of the infrastructure.

Secondly, the alleged presence in Afghanistan of a large number of Indo-Tibetan Border Police personnel to protect the economic reconstruction teams.

Thirdly, the presence in Afghan towns near the border with Pakistan of Indian consulates. Pakistan alleges that these consulates are being used to assist political dissidents in Balochistan.

The Obama administration has been supportive of India's assistance in the economic development of Afghanistan and as such the first two demands of Pakistan do not seem to have much support in Washington. Though the US has not accepted Pakistani allegations regarding the functioning of the consulates, it may still want the new government in New Delhi to address this third concern suitably. The new government should reject this firmly.

Even though the Chinese would have been disappointed by the Communists' poor performance in the election, they would be happy with Manmohan Singh's continuance in power. The Chinese leadership felt comfortable with him despite their concerns over the India's close strategic relations with the US under the Bush administration. These concerns would be less now in view of the greater importance attached by the Obama administration to the US's relations with China than with India.

The economic relations and the people-to-people contact between India and China would continue to develop, but the border dispute will defy an early solution unless there is a dramatic change in the Chinese attitude, which is unlikely.

Manmohan Singh a very wise leader: Obama

Congratulating Manmohan Singh for his second term as the Prime Minister of India, US President Barack Obama on Thursday said Singh is a very wise leader whom he respects and is looking forward to visit New Delhi at an early date.

Obama said this to the new Indian Ambassador to the US, Meera Shankar, at his Oval Office in the White House. Shankar presented her credentials to the US President as the top Indian diplomat in the US.

During the brief credential ceremony, Obama



conveyed his felicitations on the recent elections in India. He said that Singh is a very wise leader whom he respects. Obama said he is looking forward to visiting India at an early date.

Shankar conveyed the greetings from Indian President Pratibha Patil and the Prime Minister to the US President and First Lady Michelle Obama.

The envoy said that she was looking forward to strengthen the strategic partnership between India and the United States.

While continuing to negotiate on the border dispute, Manmohan Singh will avoid a confrontational situation. This would suit the Chinese for the time being. They know the art of patience.

Sri Lanka and Nepal will be ticklish issues. The humanitarian crisis affecting the Sri Lankan Tamils did not have any impact on the election results, but it is an emotional issue with sections of the Tamil population and can lead to an outbreak of violence and cause strains in the Congress's relations with the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam if the sequel to the impending final defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is not handled sensitively by President Mahinda Rajapaksa's government.

In Nepal, the dilemma faced by the new government will be of a different nature.

How not to come in the way of the Maoists's insistence on the acceptance of civilian supremacy over the armed forces and the prime minister's primacy in decision-making in all matters relating to the armed forces?

How to address concerns in the officer class over the possible ideological infection of the army due to the wholesale integration of the Maoist People's Liberation Army?

How to prevent legitimate Indian interest in these issues from being misinterpreted by the Maoists as interference in Nepal's internal affairs and thereby driving them further into the arms of the Chinese?

Mutually compatible answers to these questions have to be found. The Communists's poor performance in the election will hopefully prevent their exercising any distorting influence on our policy-making on Nepal.

What will be the impact on national security management? The national security management did not receive the attention it deserved during the election campaign.



There has been no act of terrorism by the Indian Mujahideen since September when they struck in New Delhi. There has been no incident of Pakistan-conspired terrorism since the Mumbai attacks of November 2008. This should not be interpreted to mean that their capabilities have withered away.

The BJP leaders and their advisers handled the national security debate in a shockingly inept manner, forgetting that when they were in power they were not paragons of national security management and that they had skeletons in their cupboard.

What one saw during the election campaign was more Hyde Park-style mudslinging than a well-informed debate. Advani and Narendra Modi, the chief minister of Gujarat, cannot escape a major

share of responsibility for reducing the debate to the level of Hyde Park oratory.

The nation and its people have to be gratified that the election went off smoothly, belying apprehensions that jihadi terrorists would try to disrupt the electoral process.

The credit for the excellent security arrangements should go to the entire security bureaucracy and specially to P Chidambaram, the home minister, Madhukar Gupta, the home secretary, and his colleagues in the home ministry as well as to our intelligence community.

At the same time, one should not overlook the possibility that the jihadis themselves decided not to indulge in any act of terrorism lest the people's resentment result in additional support for the BJP.

There has been no act of terrorism by the Indian Mujahideen since September when they struck in New Delhi. There has been no incident of Pakistan-conspired terrorism since the Mumbai attacks of November 2008. This should not be interpreted to mean that their capabilities have withered away.

One must view this more as a tactical pause and one should be prepared for a resumption of jihadi attacks. The comprehensive plan for strengthening our counter-terrorism apparatus worked out by Chidambaram should be implemented vigorously. Complacency would be suicidal.

Though there was no act of jihadi terrorism in the months leading up to the election, the Maoists repeatedly struck killing nearly 50 members of the security forces during the election campaign.

This speaks of continuing weaknesses in our counter-terrorism capability against the Maoists, who operate essentially from the rural areas as against the jihadis, who are mainly urban-based. This should receive the priority attention of the new government.



TEAM MANMOHAN



THE OLD GUARD: PRANAB MUKHERJEE, SM KIRSHNA AND FAROOQ ABDULLAH

CABINET MINISTERS



THE OLD GUARD: FIRST-TIMER VILASRAO DESHMUKH

- A K Antony | DEFENCE
- S M Krishna | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
- Ghulam Nabi Azad | HEALTH
- Vayalar Ravi | OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
- Murli Deora | PETROLEUM
- Ambika Soni | INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
- Anand Sharma | COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
- G K Vasani | SHIPPING
- Vilasrao Deshmukh | HEAVY INDUSTRIES
- M S Gill | YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS
- Pranab Mukherjee | FINANCE
- Mukul Wasnik | SOCIAL JUSTICE
- Sharad Pawar | AGRICULTURE
- Dayanidhi Maran | TEXTILES
- P Chidambaram | HOME AFFAIRS
- A Raja | COMMUNICATIONS & IT
- Mamata Banerjee | RAILWAYS
- Sushilkumar Shinde | POWER

- M Veerappa Moily | LAW
- Mallikarjun Kharge | LABOUR
- S Jaipal Reddy | URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- Kamal Nath | SURFACE TRANSPORT
- Meira Kumar | WATER RESOURCES
- Kapil Sibal | HUMAN RESOURCES
- Pawan K Bansal | PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
- Kumari Selja | HOUSING, TOURISM
- B K Handique | MINES, NE DEVELOPMENT
- C P Joshi | RURAL DEVELOP., PANCHAYATI
- M K Azhagiri | CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
- Subodh Kant Sahay | FOOD PROCESSING
- Kantilal Bhuria | TRIBAL AFFAIRS
- Virbhadra Singh | STEEL
- Farooq Abdullah | RENEWABLE ENERGY

MOS (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

- Praful Patel | CIVIL AVIATION
- Jairam Ramesh | ENVIRONMENT & FOREST
- Prithivi Raj Chavan | SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
- Salam Khursheed | CORPORATE AFFAIRS, MINORITY AFFAIRS
- Krishna Tirath | WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT
- Dinsha Patel | SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
- Sriprakash Jaiswal | COAL, STATISTICS



OLD HAND: JAIRAM RAMESH



TEAM MANMOHAN



...AND THE YOUNG BLOOD: SACHIN PILOT, AGATHA SANGAMA AND JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA

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Prateek Patil | 35 | Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises

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GLAMOUR QUOTIENT: D NAPOLEON



TIGERS TAMED

Sri Lankan army may have given a mortal blow to LTTE, but Tamil problem in the Island nation is far from over

Sri Lanka's 26-year-long insurgency ended with a blaze of bullets as Velupillai Prabhakaran, the dreaded chief of the Tamil Tigers that was responsible for assassinating Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and several leaders of the island nation, was killed Monday while trying to flee the battle zone.

Wild celebrations erupted in large parts of Sri Lanka, including capital Colombo, as the authorities announced that the elusive 54-year-old - who fled his home in 1972 with nothing more than a dream to carve out an independent Tamil homeland - had died, ending one of the world's longest running insurgencies that bled the tiny country of 20 million people dominated by the Sinhalese.

Soldiers fired at an ambulance in which Prabhakaran was being taken by his loyalists from the war zone in the north. His face apparently caught fire and he breathed his last in a small stretch of land near the coast in Mullaitivu district, an area about 400 km from here, which he had made his hideout a long time ago, building seemingly impregnable underground bunkers.

The death came hours after his elder son Charles Anthony, who headed the group's IT wing and was being groomed to succeed him, was also killed. It marked the collapse of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which Prabhakaran set up in 1976 and which became one of the most well-armed and ruthless insurgent groups in the world with its own army, navy and air force.

It also came three days before the 18th anniversary of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, who was blown up by a woman Tamil Tiger suicide bomber at an election rally near Chennai in India on May 21, 1991. The LTTE also similarly killed Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa and several Sri Lankan ministers, politicians and other leading personalities in its quarter-century reign of terror which it conducted in defence of minority Tamil rights.

A triumphant Sri Lankan army chief, Lt Gen Sarath Fonseka, told state-owned TV: 'We have now completed our task of liberating the north and east from terrorists.' Fonseka was badly wounded when an LTTE suicide bomber sneaked into the fortified army headquarters in Colombo and tried to blow him up.

Also killed with Prabhakaran was



END OF TERROR: A TV GRAB OF LTTE CHIEF PRABHAKARAN'S BODY BEING DISPLAYED BY THE LANKAN ARMY

Shanmugalingam Shivashankar alias Pottu Amman, the dreaded chief of the intelligence wing that was responsible for all the high profile assassinations the Tigers carried out in its long and murderous history. Other key LTTE leaders whose bodies were found were Soosai, the

brokered ceasefire agreement between Colombo and the LTTE from 2002 until it collapsed under renewed violence within a few years.

The deaths sparked frenzied celebrations in Colombo and vast parts of the Sinhalese populated central and southern provinces as people poured out of their homes, waved national flags and distributed sweets.

Born into a Hindu middle class family of Jaffna in 1954, Prabhakaran was the youngest of two sons and two daughters of a junior government employee in the Sri Lankan government.

A school dropout, he set up the Tamil New Tigers (TNT) group in 1972, which became the LTTE in 1976. He singlehandedly built it into an awesome military machine that at one point controlled a third of Sri Lanka's land territory and two-thirds of its coastline.

The discovery of the bodies of Prabhakaran and the others - television footage showed the blown up face of Prabhakaran's son Anthony - marks the macabre end of a group which still commands a lot of support among Tamil expatriates spread all over the West as well as in sections of Tamil Nadu, where Prabhakaran lived 1983-87 and where the LTTE once had training camps and offices.

Anthony's body was found at Karayamullavaikkal in Mullaitivu district, 'after an unsuccessful and half-hearted

Wild celebrations erupted in large parts of Sri Lanka, including capital Colombo, as the authorities announced that the elusive 54-year-old - who fled his home in 1972 with nothing more than a dream to carve out an independent Tamil homeland - had died, ending one of the world's longest running insurgencies that bled the tiny country of 20 million people dominated by the Sinhalese.

LTTE's naval wing leader; Balasingham Nadesan, who headed its political wing; S. Puleedevan, head of the Peace Secretariat; Ramesh, a military leader; Ilango, chief of the LTTE police; and Kapil Amman from the LTTE intelligence wing.

Puleedevan dealt extensively with the diplomatic community during the Norway-

attempt by LTTE cadres to evacuate their leader's son early this morning', the defence ministry said.

Tamil sources told IANS that a large number of LTTE fighters may have committed mass suicide in Mullaitivu district by blowing themselves up so as to avoid falling into the hands of the military.

Prabhakaran's death also came a day after the LTTE made a momentous announcement that it had decided to 'silence' its guns as the 'battle has reached its bitter end'.

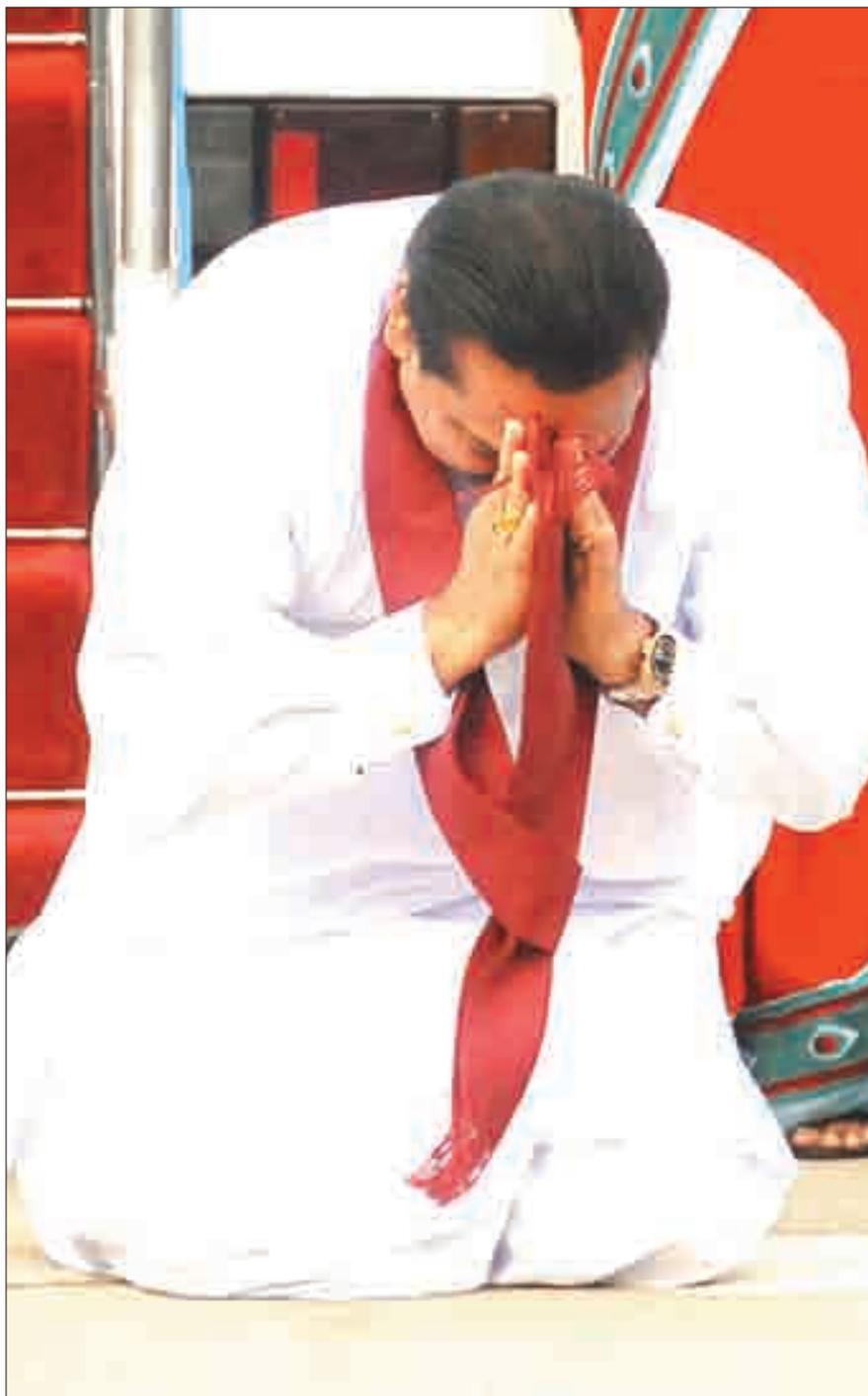
But the Sri Lankan military, determined to have a total victory over the LTTE, continued the last of its mopping up operations.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa is at the peak of his popularity, but to be remembered as the man who truly brought peace to Sri Lanka, he will have to reach a political consensus - quickly - with a shattered, fractured Tamil minority while responding to increasing international pressure...

More than 250,000 civilians who fled rebel-held areas were being housed in camps in the northern province with promises from the government that they would be resettled in their original villages as soon as possible.

The Sri Lankan national flag is everywhere in Colombo these days. In the last months of the Sri Lankan government's 26-year war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the national flag - a sword-bearing lion on a deep red field - was flown at rallies each time the Sri Lankan army gained ground against the LTTE. With the army now victorious and the LTTE's leadership - including the notorious Velupillai Prabhakaran - wiped out, every vehicle on the road, including the bicycles, seems to be flying a flag, sometimes two or three.

But not everyone is feeling the nationalist euphoria. The island's 2.5 million ethnic Tamils, who have long felt discriminated against by the nation's Sinhalese majority - are no closer to a political agreement with the Sri Lankan government than when the war began in the 1980s. President Mahinda Rajapaksa is at the



RELIEVED: LANKAN PRESIDENT RAJAPAKSA BOWS TO THE MOTHERLAND AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IN THE COUNTRY FROM A FOREIGN TRIP

peak of his popularity, but to be remembered as the man who truly brought peace to Sri Lanka, he will have to reach a political consensus - quickly - with a shattered, fractured Tamil minority while responding to increasing international pressure over the tactics used to win a war that, according to the United Nations, saw a large number of civilian deaths in its final weeks.

Rajapaksa struck a reconciliatory note when he addressed the nation on May 19, a few hours before state TV channels beamed images of Prabhakaran's body.

Rajapaksa opened his speech with a few sentences in Tamil and told parliament that he would take care of the Tamils and not let military victory lead to discrimination. "He made all the right remarks," says Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, of the Centre for Policy Alternatives, a Colombo-based think tank. "A lot now will depend on what kind of power-sharing proposals are put on the table."

The baseline for any discussion of power-sharing is the 13th Amendment to Sri Lanka's constitution. It was ratified in 1987 after the intervention of India, Sri



PRICE OF VICTORY: THE VICTORY FOR LANKAN ARMY HAS COME AFTER IMMENSE CIVILIAN CADUALTY

Lanka's powerful neighbor. The amendment set up regional provincial councils that were supposed to give more power to the Tamil majority north and east. Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama admits that the 22-year-old law has failed to live up to its promise. "It remains unimplemented in its totality," Bogollagama says, so the government is ready to go beyond it. "The President has already said that we are willing to go 13 plus 1."

What Rajapaksa is offering today is an absolute minimum, according to some Tamil politicians who have long clamored for more than just regional councils. They want autonomy over land, natural resources and police powers - demands that go far beyond the concessions of the 13th Amendment. "It was something that came into being 20 years back. Times have changed; situations have changed. We have to take all that into account," says veteran Tamil politician V. Anandasangaree, the leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

Without the LTTE, there is a vacuum on the Tamil side of the negotiating table. Throughout the war, Tigers insisted that they were the only legitimate voice of Sri

Lankan Tamils and ruthlessly eliminated their political opponents. The government

What Rajapaksa is offering today is an absolute minimum, according to some Tamil politicians who have long clamored for more than just regional councils. They want autonomy over land, natural resources and police powers - demands that go far beyond the concessions of the 13th Amendment.

has refused to negotiate with what's left of the Tigers and will instead try to use the All Party Representative Committee to reach a consensus with the civilian Tamil parties that remain. Most of those are willing to unite and negotiate with the government, but it will not be easy. With 22

out of 225 seats, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) has the largest Tamil representation in parliament, but it has been closely aligned with the Tigers, undermining its credibility.

"There was no difference between the TNA and the Tigers," says Vinayagamorthi Muralitharan, alias "Karuna," the former Tiger military commander who broke ranks with Prabhakaran in 2004 and is now a minister in Rajapaksa's Sri Lanka Freedom Party. "What the Tigers said, the TNA did." Some consider Karuna's defection the beginning of the Tigers' losing battle.

TNA leaders are already positioning themselves as hard-liners whose goals are in step with the Tigers' long fight for an independent Tamil homeland. "We do not know what the other Tamil parties are up to, or what they are looking for," says Suresh Premachandran, a senior member of Parliament with the TNA.

"However, if they too are looking for a solution that gives greater autonomy to the northeast, then we have no problem in holding discussions with the Tamil parties. There must be a radical change in the constitution. Both the north and east



FALLEN HERO: A CHILD HOLDS A POSTER OF PRABHAKARAN DURING A PROTEST RALLY TAKEN OUT BY PRO-LTTE GROUPS IN COLOMBO

should be merged and should be given a greater autonomy with more powers."

Forming a large, semi-autonomous region by merging the newly conquered north with the eastern provinces - parts of which include Sri Lanka's Tamil majority areas and have been, at times, under Tiger control - is unlikely given the growing instability in the east. The eastern provinces have been under the government's control since 2007. Elections were held there in 2008 and the provinces have been held up as a model for what Rajapaksa's government hopes to do for the former Tiger-controlled areas in the north. But peace in the east has proved to be extremely fragile. The political leadership has already split into two feuding factions, and human rights groups are worried that violence involving former

Tigers, military and paramilitary forces can erupt without any notice.

There is also mounting international pressure on the government to deliver on its promises of power-sharing and to restore the civil liberties that have been suspended during the war. "Bold actions are needed now to share power and to assure all of Sri Lanka's communities a future of hope, respect and dignity," outgoing U.S. Ambassador Robert Blake said in his remarks on May 20 before leaving Sri Lanka to become Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia. "Through such actions, a truly united Sri Lanka can emerge - a Sri Lanka that is rooted in democracy and tolerance, where human rights are respected, where media can operate freely and independently." Human rights advocates say that the arrests - one day after

the army declared victory over the LTTE - of three Tamil doctors who gave information to the media about civilian casualties is a reminder that Sri Lanka is still far from that ideal. (Read "Behind Colombo's P.R. Battle Against The Tamil Tigers.")

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon landed in Sri Lanka late in the evening of May 22 and said at the end of his 24-hour visit that the first step toward rebuilding the devastated north is restoring displaced people to their homes. More than 260,000 Tamil civilians from the north are being held in camps run by the government authorities, and unless they can return, elections there will be meaningless. Rajapaksa had pledged to Ban that 80% of those displaced by the fighting in Sri Lanka's north would be resettled within this year. "The challenges facing the government are huge," Ban warned. "If issues of reconciliation and social inclusion are not dealt with, history could repeat itself."

The 800,000-strong Tamil diaspora, meanwhile, is pushing to hold the Sri Lankan government accountable for what happened during the war. Canada and the U.K., home to the two largest communities of expatriate Sri Lankan Tamils, backed a proposal brought before the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva to discuss possible violations of international humanitarian law by both sides. Sri Lanka was widely criticized because of the large number of civilian casualties - at least 8,000 this year, according to the UN - and for the severe restrictions being placed on civilians in the government-run camps. Sri Lanka mustered the support of 12 allies, including India and China, against the proposal. "There is no question of violations or war crimes," Bogollagama says, indicating that Sri Lanka will continue its aggressive resistance to any accusations of human rights violations.

Few expect the LTTE to ever return as a fighting force. Still, it has not completely disappeared. Some remnants - maybe a few dozen - are hiding in the eastern jungles and could regroup in some form among Tamil diaspora communities in Canada, the U.K., Australia or the U.S. The leadership of the organization has fallen on Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the former Tiger chief arms procurer, who is believed to be in Malaysia. Pathmanathan acknowledged for the first time on May 24 that Prabhakaran was dead, but insisted that the deceased leader's dream of eelam, a separate Tamil homeland, lives on. "His final request was for the struggle to continue until we achieved the freedom for his people."



SHORT-LIVED PEACE: LTTE CHIEF PRABHAKARAN SIGNING PEACE ACCORD WITH LANKAN GOVERNMENT IN 2002

BLOOD-SOAKED HISTORY

Following are some of the major events of the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis:

1972: Ceylon changes its name to Sri Lanka and Buddhism given primary place as country's religion, which further antagonised the ethnic Tamil minorities, who already felt that they are being marginalised.

1976: Velupillai Prabhakaran forms Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

1977: Tamil United Liberation Front, a separatist party, wins all seats in the Tamil-dominated areas in Sri Lanka's north-east. Anti-Tamil riots leave more than 100 Tamils dead.

1981: Public library in Jaffna, cultural capital of the Sri Lankan Tamils, set on fire causing further resentment among the Tamil community.

1983: 13 soldiers killed in LTTE ambush, sparking anti-Tamil riots across the north-east leading to the deaths of several hundred community members.

1985: First peace talks between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE fails.

1987: Sri Lankan troops push LTTE back into northern city of Jaffna. Government signs accords creating new councils for Tamil areas in north and east



PRABHAKARAN'S SON CHARLES ANTHONY WHO WAS KILLED IN THE WAR

and reaches agreement with India on deployment of Indian peace-keeping force.

1990: IPKF leaves Sri Lanka. Violence between Sri Lankan army and the Tamil Tigers escalates.

1991: Former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi killed in a suicide attack near Chennai. LTTE accused of carrying out the killing.

1993: LTTE suicide bomber kills Sri Lankan President Premadasa.

1994: Chandrika Kumaratunga comes to power. Opens talks with the LTTE.

2002: Sri Lanka and LTTE sign a ceasefire agreement brokered by Norway.

2004: Tamil Tiger commander Karuna leads split in rebel movement and goes underground with his supporters.

2005: Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar killed by LTTE sniper.

January 2008: Government abrogates the ceasefire.

July 2008: Sri Lankan military says it has captured the important Tamil Tiger naval base of Vidattativu in the north.

January 2009: Troops capture Tigers de-facto capital of Kilinochchi.

April 2009: Troops capture the last town held by LTTE in the Mullaitivu district.

May 16, 2009: President Mahinda Rajapaksa announces that the LTTE has been militarily defeated.

May 17, 2009: LTTE concedes defeat. (Report filed by Rajiv Agnihotri, Inputs from various global news agencies)



DANGEROUS SIGNS: PRO-TALIBAN GROUPS PROTESTING IN PAKISTAN

The Clear And Present Danger

Taliban must be taken seriously by World, India should prepare for a comprehensive proxy war

Ahmed Rashid, one of the world's foremost experts on the Taliban, has predicted that with the resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, there could very well be an Indian Taliban in the near future. Rashid exhorted India and Pakistan to resurrect their dialogue and cooperate in fighting terrorism and extremism together because if Pakistan fails to counter the sustained onslaught of the Taliban, New Delhi could be faced with a

Taliban government as its neighbour.

"If you think infiltration into Kashmir is bad now, wait until the Taliban become your neighbour. Then you will see real infiltration not only into Kashmir, but into India proper."

Rashid, who was speaking at the Woman's National Democratic Club in Washington, DC, in a discussion and book-signing of his most recent book *Descent into Chaos: US Policy and the Failure of National Building in Pakistan,*

Afghanistan and Central Asia, under the aegis of the Asia Society, said, "In 2001, we expected after the US attack (in the aftermath of 9/11) that the Taliban, Al Qaeda, would be on the ropes, if not wiped out."

"Today, we have the Taliban as a role model for an entire region. We have not only the Afghan Taliban, today, we have the Pakistani Taliban, Central Asian, and very soon you may have the Indian Taliban. You may have the Taliban stretch-



FATAL BLOW: PAKISTAN ARMYMEN CARRYING BODIES OF THEIR COLLEAGUES KILLED IN SWAT VALLEY

ing into the Caucasus and even into the Middle East," he told the gathering.

Rashid, who first wrote the seminal book on the Taliban, reiterated that "it's become a role model for extremism, it is backed financially by Al Qaeda, and it's extremely dangerous. It is now controlling something like a quarter of Afghanistan and large tracts of northern Pakistan and they are coming now down into Punjab and Pakistan is faced with a very, very serious threat."

The Pakistani military, he added, "unfortunately, even today, remains in a state of denial about the threat that it faces in the country. It remains in a state of denial over the Taliban who are encroaching in Pakistan with even more power and tactics. It remains in denial about the other extremist groups who've been active in other parts of Pakistan – in the south and the center of the country. It also remains in denial of the desperate means that the military needs to be re-aligning itself on a much more modern counter-insurgency strategy that it has so far applied in its action with the Taliban."

Rashid said the situation in Pakistan

"is very dire," and that currently "there is a fragmentation in the leadership. There is no demonstrated leadership, either be-

"The problem is all of the six neighbours have bilateral problems with each other and you cannot get them to agree on stabilising Afghanistan, unless you initiate a diplomatic process to get them to talk to each other about their bilateral issues."

ing shown by the politicians or being shown by the army right now."

With regard to the Obama administration's new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly its regional ap-

proach, the Pakistani author and journalist argued, "The problem is all of the six neighbours have bilateral problems with each other and you cannot get them to agree on stabilising Afghanistan, unless you initiate a diplomatic process to get them to talk to each other about their bilateral issues."

Rashid said it was a no-brainer that "the biggest problem here is India and Pakistan," both of whom "are unfortunately now involved in a deep rivalry in Afghanistan."

"I call Kabul the new Kashmir in a way," he said, and noted that "Pakistan believes that the Indian presence in Afghanistan is undermining the western border of Pakistan and that the Afghan government is too close to India. There is a litany of complaints here. And, this is all being affected by the Americans, by the US military and the Indian-Afghan alliance is part of a US plan to help destabilise Pakistan."

Rashid said, "This is the kind of conspiracy theory which is very prevalent in the military, the bureaucracy, in government circles, within the elite in Pakistan."

"I certainly don't agree with that and Afghanistan is today a sovereign State and it has a right to have relations with every country in the world and no other country can dictate that you can't have relations with so and so and so and so."

But, Rashid asserted, that "at the same time, the Indians need to be much more flexible than they have been."

He acknowledged that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh "has been very patient so far with the kind of strings of bomb blasts that had happened in India even before Mumbai [Images]. Mumbai was perhaps the icing on the cake and perhaps with elections looming, the Congress government couldn't really take it anymore."

"Anyway, the net result has been a total breakdown in relations, but I really think, a start should be made in trying to get India and Pakistan to discuss Afghanistan and to put an end to this covert war that both sides are mounting from Afghanistan or in Afghanistan, and the bad blood that exists between both countries and are threatened by the Taliban."

Rashid warned that if India doesn't let Pakistan "off the hook here," and doesn't help Pakistan out in this regard, India would be faced with two threats in the near future. India would be "faced with an Indian Taliban. We already have Indian Islamic extremist groups working in India, and secondly, if Pakistan slides even further, India will be sharing a border with the Taliban. You will not be sharing a border with the Pakistan state. You will be sharing a border with a Pakistan north-west frontier province that has fallen to the Taliban and even parts of Punjab fallen to the Taliban and then what are you going to do?"

"There is a real need for India to assess its national security needs and to understand that it is threatened by this," Rashid said. "It may be, for someone living in Kolkata or someone living in Madras, it may be an existential threat. But, it is very real and the kind of mayhem that was wracked in Mumbai recently is an example of what some of these groups are capable of doing spectacular strikes. The logistical support base is running deep in the Indian system courtesy Dawood Ibrahim & Co providing comprehensive operative channels in India for Taliban and rouge elements in ISI, making the task of policing our country extremely challenging."

'India, Pak must help each other'



You need India and Pakistan to talk to each other'- It is a view of Ahmed Rashid, perhaps the world's foremost expert on the Taliban, says while it is true that the Pakistani army may be in denial over the internal existential threat of the Taliban and other extremist groups and may be obsessed over the perceived threat from India, it is imperative that New Delhi cut Islamabad some slack.

Rashid's first book on the Taliban shot to the top of The New York Times's best-sellers list after 9/11 and stayed there for weeks and was also translated to more than two dozen languages. He has just published another book *Descent into Chaos: US Policy and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*.

Ahmed Rashid elaborated in details the road map to control Taliban, role of Pakistan, India and US governments. Here are important view points expressed by Ahmed Rashid.

Q. What's your take on the Obama administration's AfPak policy, particularly the regional approach, which includes India to help stabilise Afghanistan?

Ahmed Rashid: There are two aspects of the regional approach. One is to get all the six neighbours of Afghanistan around the table and get them to agree to stop destabilising Afghanistan, to stop interfering in Afghanistan and stop backing one or other proxy forces in Afghanistan.

But in order to get these neighbours to agree to that, you also have to deal with the bilateral issues. Pakistan is not going to agree to that or to give up the Taliban option (as strategic depth against India in Afghanistan) - unless you get Pakistan and India to sit down together and work out some kind of modus operandi so that Pakistan's army feels more secure and is able to deploy more troops on the Afghan border to keep the peace.

You need a series of bilateral dialogues to resolve these problems. You need America and Iran to talk to each other, you need Central Asia and Afghanistan, you need Pakistan and Central Asia. And, of course, vitally important, you need India and Pakistan to talk to each other. So, that's the idea of the recent strategy.

But in order to get these neighbours to agree to that, you also have to deal with the bilateral issues.

Pakistan is not going to agree to that or to give up the Taliban option unless you get Pakistan and India to sit down together and work out some kind of modus operandi so that Pakistan's army feels more secure...

Q. But isn't this perceived threat from India - as you have said on many occasions - a state of denial by the Pakistan army?

Ahmed Rashid: Yes, but India should understand that it is also faced with this



GROWING MENACE: THE SITE OF BLAST NEAR ISI OFFICE IN LAHORE

Taliban threat or this Talibanisation. If things go from bad to worse in Pakistan, India may face a border with the Taliban rather than with a functioning State. And, if you think infiltration into Kashmir is bad now, wait until you have to deal with the Taliban literally on the Indian border – whether it's in the Northwest Frontier Province or Punjab. So, I hope that there will be increased Indian cooperation.

There seems to be this Pakistani paranoia about India's inclusion in this regional strategy by the Obama administration and a sense that the United States and India are ganging up against Pakistan – a perceived conspiracy theory that you acknowledged, though you said you don't believe it. Islamabad went ballistic when Richard Holbrooke (special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan), while he was in New Delhi, called India's engagement critical.

There is a lot of misunderstanding amongst the Pakistani authorities — by the army, the civilian government — as to what this regional approach entails. It doesn't mean involving India. What Holbrooke means is involving India as part of the solution and helping Pakistan ease tensions with India — letting India and Pakistan cooperate on stabilising Afghanistan.

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It is not the American intention to somehow bring India into some kind of major role-playing in Kabul. So, I think elements of the Pakistan (establishment) have got it wrong. But I think, it's far more dangerous that the Indian commentators have very harshly criticised the article I wrote in Foreign Affairs in which I outlined this regional strategy back in November of last year.

And you've got former (Indian) foreign secretaries and people saying that this is a pro-Pakistan policy and all that, which is



TERROR'S FANGS: MUMBAI'S TAJ HOTEL AFTER 26/11 BLAST

ridiculous. It is not (a pro-Pakistan policy) – not at all. This is a policy that will ease tensions between India and Pakistan.

Q. How? Is cooperating on Afghanistan the way for India and Pakistan to resolve their differences?

Ahmed Rashid: Let's face it. One of the major bones of contention today is the Pakistani accusation that it makes against India's role in Kabul and India's defense of that and the defense of its role in Kabul.

India makes it very clear that its role in Afghanistan is only to help that country reconstruct and rehabilitate itself. The US has lauded this development role and looked to it as a template beyond the military strategy.

But we need a dialogue between India and Pakistan on Afghanistan, and that should be done as quickly as possible. Even though we had bad relations, even though we are now not discussing Kashmir, even though there is difficulty because of the elections in India, there has got to be a dialogue – and this should be held as soon as possible.

India and Pakistan should air their suspicions of each other on their involvement in Afghanistan. Let them be frank with each other and then let there be a process in which they can resolve these problems.

Q. Is there a danger of Pakistan collapsing soon or imploding, as many analysts, intelligence, defense and administration officials in the US believe could happen in the next few months, if the Taliban is not stopped in its tracks?

Ahmed Rashid: I don't believe that Pakistan is about to implode, but certainly the government and the army have to show more leadership than what we've seen so far. And I think they are fully aware now that the threat is reaching Punjab, it is reaching Karachi, it is reaching parts well outside the NWFP. And, yes, the army's continuing awareness of the Indian threat has a lot to do with what it sees as the threat from India still.

India has to understand that it is suffering enormously because of the Taliban and it should be more flexible. India has to help us get off the hook. We are on the hook of the Taliban right now, unfortunately, and India has to be a little more cooperative in getting us off this so that we can move (Pakistani troops off the Indian border to fight the Taliban).

Q. You have slammed the Bush administration and lauded the Obama administration for its AfPak strategy, saying it should have been in place years ago.

Ahmed Rashid: There was this enormous failure by the Bush administration to take Afghanistan seriously when it should have, and particularly to help in nation-building in the wake of the 9/11 and after winning the war.

It failed to provide sufficient troops, aid, resources in order to get the Afghan economy working and to help in rebuilding the country's infrastructure and to get reconstruction going.

It could have helped in the building up of state organs like the army and the police. By the time it woke up to the dangers of the revival of Al Qaeda and the Taliban, more than three years had gone by and this window of opportunity to build a strong Afghanistan had been lost. As I said, it was no accident that as soon as the US got involved in Iraq, the Taliban started its insurgency.

Iraq was such an incredible distraction for Afghanistan and to Pakistan. And it was this invasion that really fueled the whole new wave of anti-Americanism and also helped the revival of Al Qaeda and the resurgence of the Taliban. It was not just in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but Iraq was the spur for much of the radicalisation that has taken place by Muslims in Europe and elsewhere rather than any other event.

Of course, the other major mistake of the Bush administration was first of all to depend solely on the military in Pakistan and that too solely on one man – (former Pakistani) president (Pervez) Musharraf – to deliver. He did not go after the Taliban, but instead gave them sanctuary.

He only went after Al Qaeda and there was all this massive aid – more than \$11 billion over eight years – from the US which went only to the military and did not reach the poor on the ground, which fueled even more anti-Americanism.

The other major mistake of the Bush administration was its failure to adopt any kind of a flexible regional strategy by bringing in the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan into some kind of a pact to support the US strategy and ultimately North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's effort to try and stabilise Afghanistan and stop the resurgence of the Taliban and the revival of Al Qaeda.

(Inputs from Rediff News)

ROAD AHEAD FOR OBAMA

Bhaskar Roy

The election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States of America was truly historical. Despite the fact that his father was a Kenyan and mother a white American, he was identified more with the African Americans, an identity he used well. The wave in his favour swept away any attempted mischief by some opponents to use his middle name "Hussein" in a negative connotation. It would have been terrible for America if this sabotage was allowed to work.

President Obama's public relations acumen which galvanized the American people does not cease to amaze. Taking the Independence route from the old capital Philadelphia, to Washington D.C. for his inauguration, for instance. He also brought the dormant civil rights issue to the fore, garnering applause.

Most important, he brought the politically reluctant African-Americans, Hispanics and other minorities back as one: Americans, the vision of the founding fathers of the country.

Every American President goes through the inauguration ceremony. The difference is how each of them weave their way to the event. Barack Obama gathered history and its people to the oath of office podium.

The core of President Obama's inaugural speech on January 20 was that his predecessor honestly tried for the betterment of the US, but his policies were wrong. "We must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, begin the work of remaking America", was the theme of his promise to the US and the world. He sent a message to the Muslim world to rebuild bridges, but told Pakistan the time to deliver on terrorism had come.

Outgoing President George W. Bush's graciousness in relinquishing office and wishing his successor well may go down well among both the Democrats and Republicans in the US Congress as they settle down to the job of legislation. To say the new President of the US has landed in a whirlpool of challenges will be an understatement. The country has been hit by an economic meltdown that is making it ever more dependent upon the global economy. This is a weakness that the US had not faced for decades.

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS: OBAMA HAS GIVEN NEW HOPE TO THE US AND THE WORLD

This obviously demands new thinking, and a new approach in foreign policy and strategic objectives. There is a world outside that is waiting to see how President Obama and his new team move.

No one is quite sure yet how Barack Obama's mind will work, despite his inaugural speech. Will he follow President Bill Clinton's line, especially since he has appointed Mrs. Hillary Clinton as the Secretary of State? Or will he have a mind of his own which will transcend both President Clinton and President Bush?

People and statesmen both inside the US and outside will be holding to Obama to his campaign speeches and promises.

Election campaigns are to a large extent meant raise the adrenalin and poke holes in the strategy of the opponent. But Obama does not appear to have made too many outlandish promises, especially in the area of foreign policy except raising some serious hopes on Iraq and Afghanistan-Pakistan.

Set pieces of foreign policy thoughts can however be rudely intercepted. The Israeli incursion into Gaza in the last week of December and the three weeks of bombings by Israeli jets has made the Arab-Israeli conflict the immediate issue on the table.

Both the Israelis and the Hamas have lost sympathy in this 3-week conflict which left more than one thousand Palestinian civilians dead. But with a new American President whose mind is yet to be discovered fully, Israel apparently felt the issue could not be left to float.

There are a number of "hot-spots" left to deal with apart from the Middle-East. They include withdrawal from Iraq, which is not going to be easy; the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, terrorism and dealing with the Al Qaeda and Taliban is proving to be intractable so far.

It would be wise for him to find a new approach to Iran because any attempt at a military solution to Tehran's nuclear

programme could set the region on fire; and the North Korean nuclear issue is pending with Pyongyang periodically spinning new positions with some quiet abetment from China to gain bargaining points.

Then, of course, there are larger issues like Sino-US relations, the Asia Pacific region, relations with Russia, energy and global warming.

Leaving aside the larger issues for the moment, what does President Barack Obama portend for India? The answer lies in the time frame and route the new President would like to take to achieve American strategic objectives abroad, and how he priorities each milestone.

There appears to be a common perception that American foreign policy is generally fickle and executed at the whims of the Commander-in-Chief of the time. Aspects of this perception may be partially true because personalities do matter, but the objectives have been well set following World War-II. Only new developments like terrorism and separatism have come to intervene to compel partial readjustments.

Since World War-II it has been the avowed policy of successive American governments to establish western democracy all over the world and dismantle Communism. The policy succeeded in most cases, but sometimes at terrible human cost. Vietnam, Cambodia and Iraq are some examples.

The strategy of "Peaceful Evolution" in sabotaging communist rule from the inside broke up the Soviet Union, and China is the next target. President Obama would have to see if the human costs of adventures like Cambodia and Iraq were worth it, and whether the Iraqi adventure was misplaced. Was President George W. Bush misled by neo-conservatives and the oil lobby?

Previous US administration including the Clinton administration played many games with India and India's security. If

American policy makers in and outside the government continue to express concern over proliferation they must check their own track records over proliferation in South Asia.

They must face the truth squarely that it was they who kept a benevolent eye on China's nuclear and missile proliferation to Pakistan since even after the Cold War was over India continued to be seen in some quarters as aligned with the pro-Soviet/Russia bloc to obstruct US interests. Pakistan was seen as an ally. That set the proliferation monster out of the bag.

In some manners, this is similar to the case of Wahabi terrorism. It is easy to create a monster but difficult to eradicate it.

Unfortunately, till the end of the Bush regime it did not appear the top US officials really understood the problem of terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

It does not seem that there was a political determination to fully eradicate the roots of terrorism and dismantle their perpetration from Pakistan's power structure.

The whole issue is still being viewed in the narrow tunnel of American interest in the region and Central Asia on the one hand, and protecting the American soil. It appears that the policy makers were willing to sacrifice some American lives and interests abroad for this greater goal.

If this policy is not reviewed urgently and efforts are made to roll up their menace from roots upwards, efforts to eradicate terrorism may fail.

President Obama's strategic policy team must understand two things. First, Pakistan's military and security establishments are not going to give up the main Taliban led by Mullah Omar. It has become an extension of their foreign policy in Afghanistan and represents Pakistani power and influence in Afghanistan.

In turn, Mullah Omar and the Taliban are unlikely give up Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. The US made the best offer of official recognition to Taliban as the Afghan government in 1998-99 in exchange for Osama, but was turned down.

Osama is mortal, but there is no guarantee his movement will crumble after his death. He has made Al Qaeda a religion, and has written a scripture of anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism.

Therefore, the only path to a decisive war against terrorism must start from the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Pakistan army.

One can say with a certain conviction that a danger of an Indian surgical strike on Pakistani terrorist camps is now over. But one cannot say with any certainty that an Indian strike will not take place if another Mumbai-like attack from Pakistani soil takes place.

If this happens, it may be more than surgical strikes on a few terrorist camps. Raising the flag of possible nuclear conflict to restrain India will not work. A nuclear war is a bogey, and even if there is a nuclear war Pakistan may have to reconstruct itself from radioactive archeological records.



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The new American strategic team including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who needs no introduction to South Asia, especially India and Pakistan, must carefully review the Pakistan army's "India Doctrine".

Pak army Chief General Asfaq Kayani made it very clear in Brussels last October at a NATO conference that there was no meeting ground with India historically, politically and culturally.

It must also be realized that Pakistan is a society that is dividing. The civil society, including the

business community and a large section of the liberal media are moving away from the army-politico-intelligence mindset about India and the Kashmir fixation. This is the force that can bring peace, stability and development to South Asia.

They need support, not the Pakistan army which gets billions of dollars of arms and equipment. This is the force that can defeat terrorism and obscurantism from inside Pakistan.

Of course, there is some agitation in India on how Obama is going to deal with the Kashmir issue. His remark about appointing a special envoy for Kashmir is a disturbing thought.

Former US Ambassador to India and an influential voice among Democrats, Frank Wisner is of the view that the President will not touch Kashmir. Others are not so sure.

The White House and the State Department might read the report of British Foreign Secretary, the good Mr.

David Miliband's views that the cause of terrorism was the Kashmir issue. The British foreign policy head must have read up leaflets of Pakistani propaganda on Kashmir before he embarked on his India and Pakistan tour earlier this month.

He was left with eggs on his face and tried to retrieve his position without much success.

It will not only be naïve but outright dangerous to raise the Kashmir issue. The India-US relations have been carefully built over the last eight years. There were many near slips, swords drawn but blood not split, before it finally arrived on an even platform.

There is a military relationship, technology exchange agreement, and a nuclear deal on which some fingers are still crossed.

New Delhi and Washington still have to walk together on important and tricky issues like CTBT, FMCT and proliferation at large. There is no dearth of proliferation hawks among the Democrats waiting to pounce on India.

Therefore, the Obama administration should try to build on what started towards the end of the Clinton administration and worked through the eight years of the Bush administration. Let Kashmir be resolved between India and Pakistan.

It is possible to take the next step to strategic cooperation. "Partnership" may still be too strong a word.

(Bhaskar Roy, who retired recently as a senior government official with decades of national and international experience, is an expert on international relations and Indian strategic interests)



DEFIANT: A PUBLIC CELEBRATION TO MARK NORTH KOREA'S UNDERWATER NUCLEAR TEST

DEFIANT KOREA

North Korea Test-Fires More Missiles, Defies International Warnings With Its Underwater Nuclear Test

North Korea says it has successfully conducted an underground nuclear test, defying international warnings and raising concerns over its nuclear weapons program. Pyongyang said Monday's test was more powerful than the country's first test two-and-a-half years ago.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency also reports that North Korea test-fired a short-range missile just hours after the nuclear test.

A South Korean news agency is reporting that North Korea has test-fired two more short-range missiles, even as international condemnation of its Monday test of a nuclear bomb grows. The Tuesday report by South Korea's Yonhap news agency cites unnamed government sources who say the missiles were fired from an east coast launch pad. The report says the missiles have a range of 130 kilometers. North Korea test-fired three missiles Monday shortly after setting off an under-

ground nuclear device.

An emergency session of the 15-member United Nations Security Council - including the United States, Russia and China - unanimously condemned the nuclear test. The Security Council says it is preparing a strong response to Pyongyang.

Interfax news agency in Moscow quoted a Russian Foreign Ministry source as saying the adoption of tough resolutions is probably unavoidable because the authority of the Security Council is at stake. Russia is a permanent veto-holding member of the Security Council and has previously blocked stronger sanctions against Pyongyang.

North Korea has repeatedly said it needs a deterrent to protect itself from a possible attack from the United States, and accuses America of being hostile. The nuclear test was the biggest explosion North Korea has ever carried out. The test and heightened tensions prompted Seoul Tuesday to announce plans to join a U.S. led-initiative to intercept ships suspected

of carrying weapons of mass destruction. North Korea has previously said it would consider such a move an act of war, and the South had avoided joining the U.S. offshore action in order not to provoke the North. Nuclear test and missile launch has triggered condemnation across the globe.

Even China, a neighbor and traditional ally of the communist North Korean state, says it is resolutely opposed to the test.

The United States has assured Japan and South Korea that it would give them its support. U.S. President Barack Obama, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso agreed to work closely and to support U.N. action to curtail North Korea's nuclear and missile activities. Mr. Obama says Pyongyang's nuclear program and missile launches are a grave threat to peace and security around the world, and a blatant violation of international law.

Diplomats in New York say work is under way on a new Security Council resolution addressing the North Korean nuclear crisis. The Council was criticized in the past for acting too slowly against North Korea's military gestures. Foreign ministers from Asia and Europe have also condemned North Korea for its nuclear test. In a draft statement Tuesday, ministers from more than 40 countries urged the North not to conduct further tests and return to six-nation talks aimed at ending its nuclear weapons programs.

Analysts have been divided in their assessment of the reason for North Korea's military moves. Some say North Korea may be trying to gain leverage for negotiations with the international community; others say the test could be part of an internal political struggle in Pyongyang.

U.S. President Barack Obama said that the reported tests are a "matter of grave concern" and warrant international action. He said in a statement, "By acting in blatant defiance of the United Nations Security Council, North Korea is directly and recklessly challenging the international community."

Russia's envoy to the United Nations said the U.N. Security Council will hold a special meeting Monday to discuss the issue.

South Korean Presidential Spokesman Lee Dong-kwan called North Korea's nuclear test Monday a "serious threat to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula."

He says South Korea will work together with the United States, Japan, China and Russia to seek a response at the United Nations Security Council.



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Russia's Defense Ministry said the nuclear explosion had a force of up to 20 kilotons, the same size as the bomb the U.S. dropped on Nagasaki, Japan in 1945. Seismologists from around the world reported a tremor in northeast North Korea a little before 0100 UTC, near where Pyongyang conducted its first test in October, 2006.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak convened an emergency security session immediately after news broke of the nuclear test. The report also shook South Korean financial markets with the main share index falling nearly four percent.

The Japanese government said it has set up a task force at the crisis management center of Prime Minister Taro Aso's office.

A satellite image provided by Space Imaging Asia of the Yongbyon Nuclear Center, located north of Pyongyang, North

Korea Last month, North Korea threatened to restart reprocessing work at its once closed Yongbyon nuclear complex. The move was a retaliation to international criticism of its April launch of a rocket it says was fired to put a satellite into space.

The United States and other countries believe the rocket was a test launch for a ballistic missile.

In addition to threatening to restart its Yongbyon facility, North Korea has also dropped out of six-party talks aimed at ending its nuclear weapons programs and said it will conduct nuclear and ballistic missile tests.

Washington's top nuclear envoy, Stephen Bosworth, returned from a trip to the region earlier this month that included stops in China, Japan and South Korea. Bosworth says Washington is ready for direct talks with Pyongyang. North Korea has yet to respond to the offer.

The U.N. Security Council has condemned North Korea's carrying out of a nuclear test as a "clear violation" of existing council resolutions, and says it will begin work immediately on a new resolution.

The emergency meeting of the 15-member council lasted less than an hour. Afterwards, diplomats emerged with a united voice saying they opposed and condemned Pyongyang's latest defiance of international law.

The United States and the international community are reacting with outrage and strongly condemning North Korea's latest nuclear test and the launch of three short-range missiles.

Speaking from the White House, U.S. President Barack Obama denounced North Korea's nuclear test and used blunt language to describe his concerns.

"North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs pose a grave threat to the peace and security of the world and I strongly condemn their reckless action," said President Obama. "North Korea's actions endanger the people of Northeast Asia, they are a blatant violation of international law, and they contradict North Korea's own prior commitments."

President Obama says North Korea's actions have flown in the face of United Nations resolutions banning the country from developing weapons of mass destruction.

"North Korea will not find security and respect through threats and illegal weapons," said Mr. Obama. "We will work with our friends and our allies to stand up to this behavior and we will redouble our efforts toward a more robust international



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nonproliferation regime that all countries have responsibilities to meet."

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice would not say if the resolution the council will begin drafting would carry new sanctions, but she said it should be strong, with appropriately strong contents.

"The U.S. thinks this is a grave violation of international law and a threat to regional and international peace and security," said Susan Rice. "And therefore, the United States will seek a strong resolution with strong measures."

France's deputy ambassador, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, said his country believes new sanctions are necessary.

"The French national position is that this resolution should include new sanctions, in addition to those already adopted by the Security Council, because this behavior must have a cost and a price to pay," said Jean-Pierre Lacroix.

Japan, which has been at the forefront of urging strong council action on North Korea and called for Monday's emergency meeting, said Pyongyang's nuclear test was a serious threat to regional and international peace and security, but also to the authority and prestige of the Security Council.

Russia and China have traditionally been North Korea's strongest allies on the council. But Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, who chairs the council this month, criticized Pyongyang's actions as contrary to U.N. resolutions, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

"We are one of the founding fathers, Russia is, of those [the NPT and CTBT] documents," said Vitaly Churkin. "So we think they are extremely important in current international relations. So anything which would undermine the regimes of those two treaties is very serious and needs to have a strong response to it."

China says it is firmly opposed to North Korea's nuclear test, but is repeating its call on the international community to remain calm in formulating a response. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said China firmly opposes the North Korean nuclear test on Monday. He says Beijing has two main objectives - a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, as well as safeguarding peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Ma says China calls on what he described as "relevant parties" to respond in a "coolheaded and appropriate way." He says the Chinese government would like to see all sides resolve the issue peacefully, through consultation and dialogue. He repeated his government's ear-

lier calls for North Korea to return to its commitment of denuclearization. And said China has directly expressed its position to North Korea. He also urged Pyongyang to return to the six party talks, which include the United States, North Korea, China, South Korea, Japan and Russia. The six party process began in 2003, but has been stalled since the end of last year.

The Chinese spokesman did not directly say whether his country will support any United Nations Security Council resolution against North Korea that includes sanctions. He said only that China hopes any UN Security Council action will help denuclearization efforts and will help maintain stability.

China is North Korea's closest ally in the world. In the past, observers described the relationship "as close as lips and teeth." Although China is North Korea's main international benefactor, Ma rejected suggestions that Beijing has any special influence over Pyongyang.

The spokesman says the word "influence" does not exist in China's diplomacy. He says his country's foreign affairs policy is conducted on what Beijing terms the five principles of peaceful co-existence.

These principles emphasize sovereign equality, respecting diverse civilizations, promoting mutually-beneficial economic cooperation, maintaining peace through dialogue and placing importance on the United Nations.

Most nations have signed an international treaty banning the testing of nuclear weapons. But nine key states with nuclear capabilities are preventing the ban from entering into force.

Those nine have yet to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Among them, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel and the United States have signed the treaty. But North Korea, India and Pakistan have not.

The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty prohibits all nuclear testing everywhere on the planet - above and below the ground, in the air and underwater. All 44 countries with nuclear technology capabilities (at the time of the treaty's final negotiations in 1996) must sign and ratify the treaty before it can take effect. Until then, the ban is merely a suggestion that countries not develop or test nuclear weapons. Worldwide, 180 states have signed the treaty, of which 148 have actually ratified the ban. Fifteen countries have not signed the treaty.

While the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was open for signature between 1945 and 1996, more than 2,000 nuclear tests were conducted.

The U.S. conducted more than 1,000 tests, while the former Soviet Union held more than 700. France ran more than 200 nuclear tests, and the United Kingdom and China each conducted 45.

Three countries have broken the unofficial ban on nuclear tests since 1996. India and Pakistan each tested nuclear weapons in 1998, while North Korea tried out its nuclear capabilities in 2006 and 2009.

How dangerous North Korea is?

For those with access to it, the environs of Yongbyon, home to North Korea's main nuclear complex, can be a lovely place to visit. The country's founder, Kim Il Sung, so adored the region's azaleas and autumn foliage that he built a vacation home there, on a mountain overlooking the clear blue waters of the river near Yongbyon. Late last month Yongbyon was the site of a party of sorts, thrown by 100 North Korean officials and attended by the two U.N. weapons inspectors assigned to monitor the complex for signs that North Korea is trying to restart its nuclear-weapons program. In full view of the inspectors, the North Korean officials cut dozens of seals from a 5-megawatt nuclear reactor—reopening it for the first time in nearly a decade—and covered over U.N. surveillance cameras fixed to the walls of the plant. When they finished the task, the hosts celebrated with a round of beers.

They were just getting started. The next day, North Korean scientists began removing seals and surveillance cameras from a cooling pond where spent fuel rods had been lying untouched. They reopened a nearby facility designed to extract plutonium, which can be used to fashion nuclear bombs, from the spent fuel. Appearing at the door of the Yongbyon guesthouse accommodating the two U.N. inspectors, a smiling North Korean official read aloud a letter informing them it was time to leave—immediately. The official volunteered that there were in fact two seats on the next Air Koryo flight from Pyongyang to Beijing. The inspectors left with 14 discs of surveillance-video footage and 200 discarded seals.

Thus did the North Korean regime escalate a showdown that began last October, when it confirmed U.S. intelligence reports that it was illegally building a new uranium-enrichment factory—another pathway to the Bomb. The expulsion of the inspectors was the clearest sign yet that Pyongyang is intent on pushing the stand-off to the brink. The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, lamented that the world now has "no clue" what Pyongyang might try to develop in coming months. In fact, it does have a clue: North Korea, which the CIA believes already has enough fissile material for one or two bombs, is poised to extract enough plutonium from the spent fuel to produce four to eight more within a matter of months. It is unknown whether North Korea has ever actually constructed a nuclear weapon. But given the relative simplicity of making a crude device, some U.S. analysts suspect that it has a bomb, albeit an untested one.

The Bush Administration has done its best to counsel the world not to panic, making daily appeals to give diplomacy a chance. Secretary of State Colin Powell refused even to call the situation a "crisis." But with each new North Korean gambit, that official insouciance sounds more off-key. Seemingly overnight, the U.S. begins the New Year eyeball to eyeball with a paranoid, ruthless regime hell-bent on obtaining nuclear weapons to complement an army the Pentagon rates among the most formidable in the

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world. And so, despite their stoic miens, White House officials are grasping for some way to yank North Korea back from the precipice and return everyone's focus to that other spoke in the axis of evil, Iraq. "Is it a distraction?" says a White House official. "Yes. It's a serious issue. Does it change what we're doing on Iraq? No."

But US must keep channel of communication open with North Korea leadership

When Kim Jong Il and the North Korean government get on a roll, they really get on a roll. On April 5, Pyongyang fired a missile disguised as a satellite directly over Japan and into the Pacific, in direct contravention of a 2006 U.N. resolution forbidding the North's ballistic missile program. Then, in a life-imitates-art moment, the U.N. Security Council issued what amounted to a strongly worded letter straight out of Team America: World Police condemning the missile test. The North, in response, called this "an unbearable insult," and said it would again fire up its reactor at Yongbyon, the source of missile material for the North's suspected small arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Finally, Pyongyang threw out monitors from the International Atomic Energy Agency and said the so-called six-party talks - the forum in which the U.S. and its key partners in East Asia (South Korea, China, Japan and Russia) have tried to talk Pyongyang out of its nuclear-weapons program for the past six years - were over. Not only would the North no longer participate, it would no longer abide by anything that it had previously agreed to during the talks, which includes the dismantling of the Yongbyon reactor.

Publicly, the Obama Administration made the standard disapproving noises. "A serious step in the wrong direction," said White House spokesman Robert Gibbs. But in truth, North Korea's latest gambit could not have been altogether surprising to anyone in Washington - least of all to the State Department diplomats who have been dealing with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for the past decade. They know that even in Pyongyang, North Korean officials have access to the Internet. If they cared to, they could have read yesterday's New York Times, which reported that the Obama Administration is considering dropping the U.S. demand that Iran cease enriching uranium before any direct Washington-Tehran talks about Iran's nuclear program. This would explicitly reverse the Bush Administration's position that talks could start only after the enriching stopped. "If you're the North Koreans and you read that, you're naturally going to ask, 'Why not deal directly with us too?'" says an East Asian diplomat seasoned in North Korea diplomacy.

The worst-kept diplomatic secret in the world may be that the State Department pretty much sees eye to eye with North Korea on a central issue: Washington should deal with Pyongyang one-on-one. The multilateral approach of the six-party talks has been at best cumbersome and at worst counterproductive, some diplomats say. Charles L. (Jack) Pritchard, Bush's former special envoy to the DPRK, has said all the participants in the talks "made it abundantly clear" that they support direct U.S. engagement, including the Chinese, the North's putative big brother and protector. He has said the only time significant progress was made was when U.S. officials negotiated directly with their North Korean counterparts - a point a senior South Korean diplomat involved in the talks confirms.

It's likely the White House shares this view, even though in public it has harped on getting the North Koreans back to the six-party format. This is probably no longer possible, after Pyongyang's announcement yesterday. So the trick for Obama now is twofold. He must figure out how much time to let pass



ROGUE POWER: NORTH KOREAN LEADER KIM JONG-IL

before trying to re-engage the North. (Even before the April 5 launch, Obama's special envoy, Stephen Bosworth, talked of letting the "dust from the missile test settle." Then Obama must decide what to say to Pyongyang whenever the moment of reaching out arrives.

Executing this seemingly simple agenda is more complicated than it appears. Obama, as Bosworth intimated, has to let a decent interval pass after the U.N. reprimand lest he appear to be caving in to pressure from Pyongyang. He can't dawdle, though. North Korea continues to be a serial proliferator of missile and nuclear technology. More sanctions, the diplomatic crowd argues, aren't obtainable, as the recent U.N. exercise showed, and in any event they don't work against a regime that seems to enjoy pain. The only way to get a grip on the danger the North poses is to instigate direct talks as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

Once talks begin, the U.S. ought to be willing to put a range of blandishments on the table - just as it has in the past. Economic aid, security guarantees and, down the road, even diplomatic recognition for North Korea - all that would be available to Pyongyang, so long as it verifiably stands down its nuclear program and curbs its missile exports. The State Department's position has long been that this sort of deal is achievable. It believes the North will abide by agreements it makes, so long as the U.S. does the same by providing the benefits it promises up front. There are many people, including some former members of the Bush Administration, who think this is delusional. But count on this: Obama is going to give those diplomats a chance to prove whether they're right.



A global stress test for countries & how India is better placed to clear it

Smaller countries with population of less than 30 million are better placed to face the economic slowdown and benefit quicker from any recovery, indicates a 'stress test' conducted by the international business school IMD to supplement its annual IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2009.

The stress test finding, favouring small countries, goes against generally prevalent economic thinking that large economies like China and India are better placed to face economic slowdown because of the diversified nature of the economy, in which some sectors witness robust demand to mitigate the impact of a demand slowdown in other sectors.

The IMD test ranks India 13th, with a score of 68.1 on 100, and China 18th, with 64.6 points, while Denmark topped the list. The report identified general is-

sues facing the world economy, too. For example, Stphane Garelli, director of the IMD World Competitiveness Centre, warned that a severe drop in prices could hit specific sectors like automobiles across the globe. He predicted a rise in cross-border mergers and acquisitions, as emerging powers, their sovereign funds and some companies moved in with free cash. Garelli warned some signs of recovery could be expected during the second half of 2009, but added stronger results were due only in early 2010.

The 100 top global companies had some \$600 billion in cash and this money could be used to buy back shares or acquire industrial assets and companies, he added.

Garelli indicated that with some \$6,000 billion in currency reserves, emerging powers would increase their weight in international organisations, while sovereign

funds with around \$3,000 billion would finance infrastructure projects, buy assets abroad and finance the development of local companies and brands.

Unemployment was a worry, with the International Labor Organization anticipating a 50-million increase in world unemployment figures, and Belgium, Ireland, Russia, Spain and South Africa would be among the worst-hit. Protectionism was a real danger as a result. To pay for massive government debt, tax havens would come under attack to prevent money from escaping higher taxation, Garelli added.

He warned of high inflation accompanying the recovery, driven by excess of money supply (especially dollars) and a rapid rise in commodity prices owing to demand from emerging nations. He predicted central banks would ignore inflation so as not to impede recovery and because inflation

would reduce the value of debt.

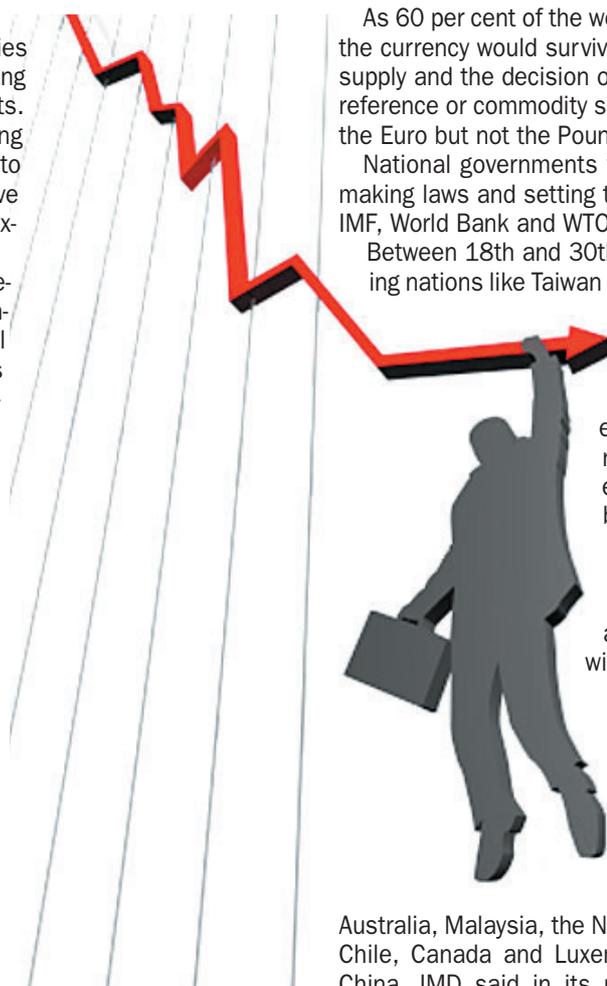
Garelli also added that companies would manage inflation by moving from cash to more tangible assets. The future-looking test, assessing the preparedness of countries to face financial crisis and improve competitiveness, focussed on exposure, readiness and resilience.

Denmark revealed strong resilience in business and government and long-established social stability. Other smaller countries with less than 30 million inhabitants from Northern Europe and Southeast Asia fared well as "smaller economies are often more fit to adapt and rebound in difficult times," Garelli said.

He added: "A nother explanation is that several of these nations have already undergone quite severe financial and real estate crises in the not-so-distant past and may have been more cautious in their policies."

Depression, defined as 10 per cent fall in GDP or 3 years' recession, threatened Iceland and the Baltic States, while deflation loomed over Britain, Japan and Spain.

Stimulus packages, collectively valued at \$5,000 billion or the cumulative Budget deficits in 2009 and 2010, would see people in the industrialised world saving money and delaying purchases while emerging-economy citizens would purchase immediately.



As 60 per cent of the world currency holdings were in dollars, the currency would survive but weaken, owing to excess dollar supply and the decision of several nations to shift for currency reference or commodity sales from the dollar to currencies like the Euro but not the Pound or Yen.

National governments would gain in power, printing money, making laws and setting taxes, while multilateral agencies like IMF, World Bank and WTO would decline, he warned.

Between 18th and 30th positions in the report were export-nations like Taiwan (21st), Brazil (22nd), Germany (24th), Japan (26th) and Korea (29th). The UK was 34th, France 44th, Italy 47th, Spain 50th and Russia 51st.

"The stress test shows that smaller nations, which are export-oriented, resilient and with stable socio-political environments are better-equipped to benefit immediately from the recovery," Garelli said.

"However, only the good performance of the very large exporters such as the US, Germany, China or Japan will send a credible message to the world that the worst is over a change that everybody will be able to believe in," he added.

The stress test was based on prospect of the economy for 2009. Denmark scored 100 points. Among the countries which ranked above India were Qatar, Hong Kong, Australia, Malaysia, the Netherlands and New Zealand. Austria, Chile, Canada and Luxembourg featured between India and China. IMD said in its parallel IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2009 that the most competitive country was USA, besides the toppers in its stress test.

The US, among the first to enter into recession, would lead the recovery, while the last to recover would be Germany, Japan and Switzerland, owing to "structural rigidities".

Sectors to watch out in near future

Liquidity-starved sectors such as infrastructure and realty could be the biggest beneficiaries of the vote of confidence for the UPA.

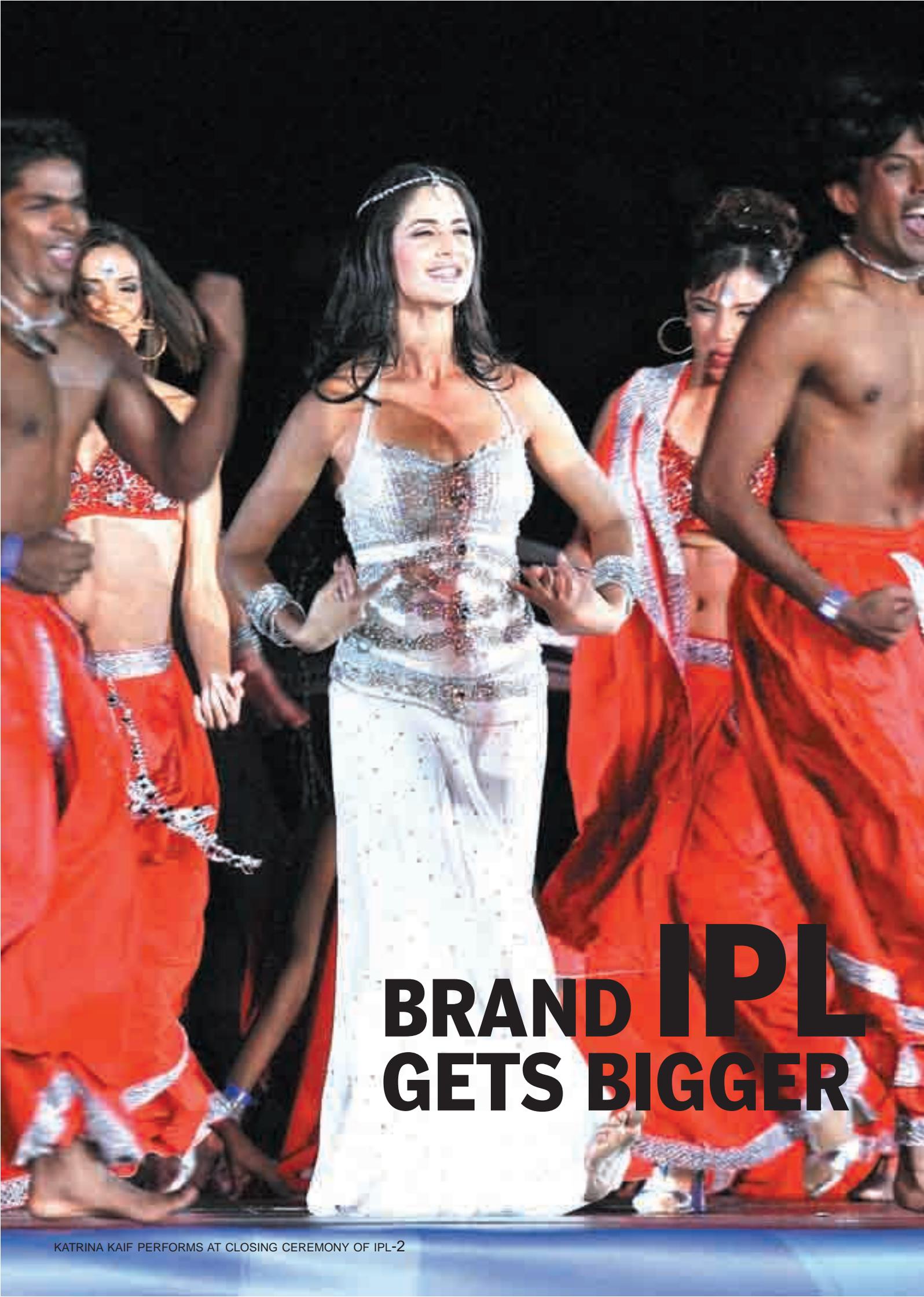
A clear mandate for the United Progressive Alliance and the continuity of the current government's policies are likely to keep the markets buoyant for a while. Market men believe that foreign institutional investors and domestic institutions, which were not participating aggressively in the markets thus far, are likely to invest for the long term, given the stable government at the Centre.

Opening up of the economy, allowing foreign direct investment and easier interest rates should improve liquidity and are expected to help sectors such as infrastructure, banking, real estate, telecom, power, education and retail.



With the Left crutch that crippled decision-making now out of the way, the new government is likely to speed up the divestment of its stake in various PSUs. While experts believe that the markets could touch the 16,000 mark, stiff valuations and the burgeoning fiscal deficit could cap the upsides.

Analysts said sectors such as telecom could also see action if the government speeds up the 3G auction process, merges MTNL with BSNL and lists the new entity, and divests its 26 per cent stake in Tata Communications. FMCG and pharma sectors, which are considered defensive, are likely to underperform as the market chases growth. IT services, which is another defensive sector, is unlikely to participate in the rally given that the rupee is expected to gain in the short term.



BRAND IPL GETS BIGGER

KATRINA KAIF PERFORMS AT CLOSING CEREMONY OF IPL-2



TURNAROUND: LAST-YEAR'S BOTTOM FINISHERS DECCAN CHARGERS LIFT TROPHY THIS TIME

Deccan Chargers script amazing turnround

IPL 2 Watched by President Jacob Zuma, the Deccan Chargers held their nerve and beat the Royal Challengers Bangalore by six runs to win the second IPL Trophy - 12 months after finishing stone last in the first IPL.

A capacity Wanderers crowd cheered, whistled and screamed as the match went down to the wire - the Challengers, chasing a target of 144, needed 15 runs off the last over, but they had only one wicket left, and the task proved too much. They finished their innings on 137 for nine.

The Challengers started at a measured pace, scoring at more or less a run a ball until Jacques Kallis was bowled by RP Singh for 15 in the third over, and Manish Pandey - the hero of the Challengers' semifinal victory over the Chennai Super Kings on Saturday - was caught by Gilchrist off Ohja for just four.

Titans all-rounder Roelof van der Merwe held centre stage for a short time, hitting three sixes and a four on his way to 32, before he was stumped by Adam Gilchrist off Ohja.

His innings was short but fiery - he and Australian Andrew Symonds exchanged some words - and while not all his strokes were textbook, they had the desired effect. Rahul Dravid made nine before he was bowled by Harmeet Singh, and the Challengers' run chase started to falter.

But it was Symonds that turned the game around, when he took two wickets off successive balls to dismiss Ross Taylor (27) and Virat Kohli (7).

From then on, the required run rate grew with every ball, and the Challengers' wickets continued to tumble.

Mark Boucher was caught by Proteas teammate Herschelle Gibbs off Harmeet Singh for 5, Ohja claimed his third scalp to dismiss Praveen Kumar, who was caught by RP Singh for two, and Harmeet Singh caught Vinay Kumar off Ryan Harris for eight.

Earlier, Challengers captain Anil Kumble tore through the Deccan Chargers, taking four wickets for just 16 runs to restrict the team from Hyderabad to a total of 142 for six.



EARLY EXIT: DESPITE WARNE'S INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AND SHILPA SHETTY'S CONSTANT PRESENCE, DEFENDING CHAMPS RAJASTHAN ROYALS COULDN'T MAKE IT TO THE LAST FOUR

He made his most telling breakthrough in the first over, when he dismissed his Chargers counterpart, Adam Gilchrist for a duck.

Gilchrist was the hero of the Chargers' semi-final victory, scoring a whirlwind 85 off 35 balls to put his team into a winning position.

Tirumalasetti Suman fell two overs later, caught by Manish Pandey off Vinay Kumar for 10. Andrew Symonds made a quick 33 off 21 balls before he was bowled by Kumble in the ninth over.

With his partners falling by the wayside, Herschelle Gibbs played an uncharacteristically subdued role, although he hit a magnificent six to take him to his half century, which came off 47 balls.



STAR PARADE: IPL CEO ALIT MODI (FAR RIGHT) WITH FRANCHISE OWNERS SHAH RUKH AND PREITY

He and Rohit Sharma shared a fourth wicket stand of 52 before Kumble claimed his third wicket when Sharma was caught by Pandey for 24, and his fourth wicket in the same over when Azhar Bilakhia was caught by Ross Taylor without scoring.

The match was followed by a spectacular closing ceremony, addressed by President Zuma. The Indian Premier League, while entertaining and educational, has also been a terrible inconvenience for South Africa. It hasn't helped that the organisers have been arrogant, rude and demanding. Lalit Modi, Sony Television, IMG, and the all the League's sponsors owe the South African public as well as Cricket South Africa and its provincial affiliates a massive debt of gratitude that stretches far beyond giving cheques to schools, money to school kids and offering some attractive woman an audition in a Bollywood movie. Cricket SA and South Africa saved Modi's backside by scrambling to get the event hosted here in such a short time after the Indian government's failure to provide guarantees over security for the tournament. It was a monumental logistical achievement that spoke volumes for the IPL's organisation and for South Africa's patience - which was tested enormously.

The scale of the sacrifices some provincial unions made to accommodate the IPL will only become clear in the coming months. Long-time sponsors and other supporters of SA cricket have been treated poorly. Some may never return.

'I love this tournament': Cricket SA's hastiness in allowing the IPL to be played here, clouded its judgement and left many of its provincial affiliates at the whim of the IPL who bullied them into a corner over issues such as hospitality suites, beer pouring rights and security.

There were some very good matches and some poor ones, while the tournament offered fans an opportunity to see how legends from yesteryear starred alongside youngsters in a for-

mat that seems tailor-made for the youth.

Matthew Hayden and Adam Gilchrist looked and performed as well as they did in their international prime.

"I love this tournament. I will take year off and have another crack next year. That sounds alright doesn't it?" Gilchrist quipped after his thrilling innings led his side, the Deccan Chargers, to victory in Friday night's semifinal against the Delhi Daredevils.

The IPL has provided the likes of Gilchrist, Hayden, Anil Kumble and Shane Warne with the perfect cricketing pensioner's package. They're well paid, the competition is intense, but lasts only three hours. "Twenty-over cricket applies more psychological pressure and players need to be tough. It's a real battle of wits."

The format's rapidly increasing popularity - as shown by the large number of fans who have come through the turnstiles - has placed the spotlight on the relevance of the game's other two formats.

Certainly the 50-over format appears to be in danger though the World Cup still has a pedigree that 20-over cricket lacks.

Earlier in 2009 South Africa's coach Mickey Arthur spoke of the importance of keeping the 20-over format mainly for domestic consumption, but as talk grows of a franchise-based English league, a franchise city-based Southern Hemisphere league and the Champions League 20-over tournament involving all the domestic champions, concerns grow that young players who don't make it into their national sides, will choose the cash option and forego international careers.

Gilchrist said he wouldn't encourage young guys to ditch international careers, but he really is an old-fashioned romantic in thinking that days passion, enthusiasm and love of the game are paramount. Money is. Just ask Lalit Modi.

(Report filed by **RAJIV AGNIHOTRI** from South Africa)



AYUSH MANESH KHEDEKAR Indian child actor from the movie 'Slumdog Millionaire' Ayush Manesh Khedekar, second left, arrives with unidentified guests for the screening of the film 'Looking for Eric' at the 62nd International film festival in Cannes, southern France

Opening of doors

With "Slumdog Millionaire" having made waves on the global scene, Indian movie themes and filmmakers are beginning to reap the benefits in the international sales and co-productions arena at the ongoing Cannes Film Market.

"Slumdog has opened a door for Indian cinema," says Hollywood producer Ashok Amritraj. "We have to put our foot in and capitalise on the opportunity."

The happy augury is that several Indian films have been picked up for global distribution by frontline sales agents and the going could only get better from here on if filmmakers from this part of the world, as Amritraj points out, can learn the rules of

Also playing for big global stakes is Ambika Hinduja's Serendipity Films. It is pitching the Leena Yadav-directed "Teen Patti" for widespread global sales in the Cannes Film Market.

the game.

The Indian Film Company (TIFC) has made history by selling its "Road, Movie", written and directed by Dev Benegal, to Fortissimo Films, which is one of the world's leading sales agents with offices in Amsterdam, London, Paris, New York and Hong Kong.

"'Road, Movie' is an important milestone in our company's endeavour to support India's growth on the cinematic world stage," said Sandeep Bhargava, CEO of the advisory board of TIFC.

TIFC has also got leading British distribution company HanWay Films on board to handle Gurinder Chadha's "It's a Wonderful Afterlife", starring Golden Globe winner Sally Hawkins, Sendhil Ramamurthy, Jimi Mistry and Shabana Azmi.

Endeavour Independent has bought the distribution rights of Venus Records and Tapes' "Hisss", a Hindi-English film directed by Jennifer Lynch and starring Irrfan Khan and Mallika Sherawat.

Also playing for big global stakes is Ambika Hinduja's Serendipity Films. It is pitching the Leena Yadav-directed "Teen Patti" for widespread global sales in the Cannes Film Market. The film features Amitabh Bachchan, Ben Kingsley, R.



Indian model Aishwarya Rai and Abhishek Bachchan arrive for the screening of the movie Chun Feng Chen Zui De Ye Wan (Spring Fever) in competition at the 62nd Cannes Film Festival on May 14, 2009. Defying the authorities, controversial Chinese director Lou Ye is offering a movie on love and homosexuality at the Cannes film festival this week that was shot on the quiet in east China despite a state work ban

(From L) The Jury, Taiwanese actress Shu Qi, USA's actress Robin Wright Penn, British novelist and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi, South Korean director and screenwriter Lee Chang-Dong, Italian actress and director Asia Argento, Indian actress Sharmila Tagore, French actress and president of the jury Isabelle Huppert, Turkish director, screenwriter and actor Nuri Bilge Ceylan and US director James Gray arrive for the screening of 'Coco Chanel & Igor Stravinsky' by French director Jan Kounen and the Closing Ceremony of the 62nd Cannes Film Festival on May 24, 2009 in Cannes, southern France.

Madhavan and Saira Mohan.

"We want to make cinema that will appeal to audiences in both India and around the world," Hinduja, whose previous production was Homi Adjanian's wickedly quirky "Being Cyrus", told Variety here. India's biggest entertainment sector player, Reliance Big Pictures, has brought a slew of arthouse films, besides Anurag Basu's Hrithik Roshan-Barbara Mori starrer "Kites", to the Cannes market. The response, company representatives say, has been hugely encouraging.

Big Pictures' offbeat regional line-up includes Buddhadeb Dasgupta's "Janala" (Bengali), Shaji N. Karun's "Kutty Srank" (Malayalam), Amol Palekar's "Samantar" (Marathi), M.S. Sathyu's "Ijjudu" (Kannada), and Rituparno Ghosh's "Abohomaan" and "Shob Charitra Kalponik" (both Bengali). "We will be unveiling these films in various major festivals in the coming months," says Reliance Entertainment chairman Amit Khanna.

MOVIE REVIEW

*Kambakht Ishq***Viraj (Akshay Kumar)**

Viraj is a successful Hollywood stuntman who loves women but thinks that commitment and marriage are words that should not exist in the dictionary. He gets paid the big bucks for doing what the heroes can't do and lives a lavish life. Women, parties, and the adrenalin rush during a stunt...these are the highs in life. Women exist only to have a good time with. Play and play well... but why take the game to its conclusion? ...After all there are numerous playmates on this extensive playground.

Simrita (Kareena Kapoor)

Simrita is a hardened feminist, part time supermodel and an aspiring surgeon who does not see the need to have a man in her life. She believes that all men are no good losers. Life's experiences have taught her that men are just not worth the effort. To top it all Donald Trump and

SYNOPSIS

Kambakht Ishq explores the relationship between two individuals as different from each other as chalk and cheese. No matter how many times they are pushed together, there are only fireworks... no fire. Viraj Shergill (Akshay Kumar) is a swashbuckling stuntman in Hollywood who lives by the mantra "women are only good for two things... making love & making love" Simrita Rai (Kareena Kapoor) is a firebrand who is more than able to stare down the most arrogant male with her caustic wit and sardonic tongue... he firm belief "there's no such thing as love". So what happens when the two people who hate each other the most meet at Simrita's best friend Kamini's and Viraj's brother Lucky's wedding? ...a wedding that both Viraj and Simrita are violently opposed to and desperate to stop. Sparks fly, accidents occur, And both are thrown together in the most absurd, hilarious situation until one dramatic twist of fate binds the two together in a manner that they could have never ever even dreamed of in their wildest fantasies. The battle of the sexes is on. Who is going to throw the punches and who is going to blow the kisses?

every other man is getting married AGAIN! That just proves her point. She has a great career, and soon she will become successful. Who needs men?

Kamini (Amrita Arora)

She is ditzzy, innocent and beautiful. She is one of the top lingerie models but her dream is to get married to a man who loves her. She wants the whole package...

a loving husband, cute kids and a white picket fence house.

Lucky (Aftab Shivdasani)

He is Viraj's younger brother, he is genuine and loveable. He has been protected his entire life by Viraj and isn't as hard and practical as Viraj is. Madly in love with Kamini, he wants to marry her. But that is one thing that Viraj is against.



Tata Housing eyes Rs 700 cr from low-cost projects **Nano dreams in realty too!**

Mumbai: After Rs 1-lakh people's car Nano, the Tatas on Wednesday unveiled a low-cost realty project which offers a house for less than Rs 4 lakh.

Tata Housing, the real estate development arm of the Tatas, will build one-room-kitchen flats for just Rs 3.91 lakh in a township being developed at Boisar, 100 km from Mumbai.

The salt-to-software Tata conglomerate plans to develop the township within 24 months and allotment of flats would be made through lottery, Tata Housing's Managing Director Brotin Banerjee said.

The company has plans to replicate the project, Subha Griha, in the National Capital Region (Delhi) and Bangalore in the current fiscal itself, he said.

Tata Housing Development Company, a unit of Tata Sons, expects to earn Rs 700 crore in revenue from low-cost housing in the next four years, a top company official has said.

Tata Housing is launching over 1,000 low-cost houses under the brand "Shubh Griha" priced between Rs 3.9 lakh and Rs 6.7 lakh in Bhoisar, on the outskirts of Mumbai, and plans to launch around 4,000 such houses across other cities in the next four years, mainly targeting industrial workers and other low-wage earners.

The company is targeting Rs 15,000 crore revenue by FY13 from its projects, covering an area of 20 million square feet. It plans to build 10,000-13,000 homes by then. The company aims to earn 5 per cent of its revenue from low-cost houses.

"Low-cost projects have more velocity and can be completed in two years. We see huge opportunity in this space, especially in industrial belts," said Brotin Banerjee, managing director and chief executive



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of Tata Housing.

The company is launching two-three such projects in Bangalore and the national capital region in this fiscal and plans joint development with land owners, wherein it will share a percentage of revenues with the owners of the land, and outright of purchase of land in other cases, according to Banerjee.

A host of companies such as Omaxe and Ansal API have launched low-cost apartments

to target the low-wage earners and generate cash in the downturn.

While New Delhi-based Omaxe has launched 5,000 apartments in Rs 5.99-8.99 lakh range at Mayakhedi in Indore, Ansal API has launched 4,000 low-cost apartments in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Agra and Meerut.

"Our revenues are doubling every year and we hope to continue by being present in different categories and launch-

ing innovative products," said Banerjee. Currently, the company has more than 10 million square feet under development.

Banerjee says more land is now available for developers and land prices have come down to realistic levels. "Earlier, land prices used to escalate within a month. Prices have hit their bottom and I expect them to remain sluggish for the next eight-nine months," he said.

Fuel Up With Healthy Breakfast Everyday

Dr Vivek Dubey

As the old saying goes – ‘Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a queen and dinner like a beggar’, it clarifies how important is breakfast as the first meal of the day.

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day as it is considered as the brain food. After a long fast of about 7-8 hours of sleeping our body need fuel to carry out the activities throughout the day. Skipping breakfast with an intension of losing weight is not a wise idea, as the fasting period increases making you feel hungrier. As a result you tend to binge in the meal which you first eat leading to over consumption of excess calories

Why breakfast scores high as a meal?

A nutritious breakfast refuels the body and replenishes blood sugar (glucose) thereby releasing the energy required to start the day. The body and brain are low on fuel after sleep and need recharging after the long fast. It is completely illogical to skip breakfast on the pretext of dieting. Skipping breakfast leads to sudden dip in energy levels and people can be seen making unhealthy choices for filling up later. Many also feel that breakfast makes them sluggish for the rest of the day but it really depends on the type of food we select for breakfast. Sugar-based juices and refined flour foods don't form a healthy breakfast at all.

Healthy breakfast is good nutrition

A healthy breakfast is right amounts of carbs, proteins and fiber together.

- Fiber - Fresh fruits and vegetables and their juices without added sugar
- Carbohydrates - Whole-grain cereals & rolls, oatmeal, low-fat crackers, brown bread, etc.
- Dairy - Skimmed milk, low-fat yogurt & cheese.
- Protein - Boiled eggs, peanut butter, soy, beans, lean meat, fish.

Beware of sugar-based cereals, juices and refined flour items because they get digested faster and you feel the craving quick again. Protein and fiber digest slowly thereby releasing energy at frequent in-



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tervals, thus keeping you feeling full. Morning time is when metabolism is highest and hence a good breakfast acts as your day's powerhouse. As the day advances, the body's metabolism dips and hence it is suggested that the lunch should be moderate and dinner lightest. The body needs to be fueled the right way to perform well.

Benefits of a healthy breakfast

Eating a healthy breakfast sets your day ahead. It has long-lasting health benefits and people who have a nutritious breakfast regularly are likely to-

- be more efficient and productive at work due to better concentration.
- Brain is energized due to replenishment of glucose with a breakfast.
- Consume less fat and cholesterol later in the day. A study states that increase in daily eating frequency is connected with eating more good nutrients and lesser fats and cholesterol.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Eating breakfast is linked with reduced hunger later in the day which means making healthy meal choices later.
- Are more active and energetic. Breakfast shoots up energy levels.
- Maintain low cholesterol levels. This reduces the risk of heart disease. Eating

breakfast helps consume less dietary cholesterol.

- Children having regular breakfast have good concentration, problem-solving skills and eye-hand coordination. They are quite active and creative.

No time for breakfast!

Most of us come up with this excuse often, though we agree that breakfast is good. Early morning chores and rushing to work leaves you with no time for breakfast. But is it really the time? Think again and you can set your time table five minutes early to save yourself the time to eat breakfast. Take your time the night before and plan what you will eat next morning or just simply pack breakfast to have it on your way or at work.

Always carry a small supply of crackers, nuts, pretzels, a brown bread sandwich with healthy dressing, a fruit and some juice with you for those empty times and you will find yourself bingeing on less of unhealthy items. Juice will help you cut on caffeine content. The way you carry an umbrella foreseeing rain; similarly carry food hampers thinking you might feel like munching sometime!

Now, remember to start your day with a healthy breakfast tomorrow.

Iran for better ties with India

India and Iran enjoy good cultural and economic relations. This is an opportune time to expand our friendly relations for betterment of commercial relations and development of both the countries said Mr. Rasoul Mansouri, Chairman, Commercial Organizations of Zanjan while addressing the members of the All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and the World Trade Centre, Mumbai. This high level delegation was led by Mr. Rasoul Mansouri, Chairman, Commercial Organizations of Zanjan and Mr. Mohammad Azizi, Mayor of Zanjan Municipality.

Mr. Mansouri said that Zanjan province due to its location which is in the nearness of the most important industrial centers of the country such as Tehran, Qazvin, eastern and western Azerbaijan can be considered as a distinguished area for creation of the industrial regions in the northwest of Iran. This province by having powerful infrastructure facilities such as airport, railway, custom office, freeway. The province is also situated on transit route to Europe and the existence of miscellaneous mineral potentialities has created varied opportunities for growth and development of mineral and industrial investment.

Various excise incentives on readymades, food mixes, reduction on excise on petrol and petroleum products as well as doing away with import duty on steel scrap and coking coal are steps in right direction.

The province's main export industrial commodities are as follows: Transformer-Chinaware-Cable-Wire, Granule, Different kinds of BCF thread, Textiles – Machines – made carpet, hand-

Various excise incentives on readymades, food mixes, reduction on excise on petrol and petroleum products as well as doing away with import duty on steel scrap and coking coal are steps in right direction.

made carpet, granite stones.

Mr. Mansouri further added that India with its unique characteristics such as the second most populous country and existence of widespread market and high level of consumption and economic growth has always been a potential country for bilateral trade. India's leading position in the field of IT makes it very attractive destination for the Iranian companies for outsourcing and finding investment partners.

Mr. Ebrahim Jamili, Chairman, Zanjan Chamber of Commerce, Mine & Industries said that we expect new techniques from India for our relevant manufacturing units and look forward to work together in areas of petrochemical, chemical, mining, pharma, auto sector and agro based industries for promoting bilateral trade.

Mr. Jamili further added that presently India is doing lot of trade with Iran but most of this trade is through Dubai and other countries. We need to deal directly with Indian companies in order to reduce

transaction cost and he also hoped that trade would flourish after the implementation of the pipeline project.

Mr. Vijay G. Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) in his welcome address said that India-Iran relations have been nurtured through centuries of trading. Bilateral trade between India and Iran has improved significantly in recent years reflecting the steady momentum in economic relations between the two countries. Bilateral trade excluding oil and petroleum products during 2006-07 totalled \$ 2295 million registering a growth of 430 percent from a level of \$ 433 million during 2000-02. India exported goods worth \$ 1450 million in 2006-07. India's imports from Iran were of the order of \$ 845 million during this period.

The principal items of India's exports to Iran are manufactures of metal, iron and steel, machinery and instruments, drugs, pharmaceuticals and fine chemicals, transport equipment, manmade yarn, fabrics and madeups, rubber products, processed minerals, inorganic and organic chemicals, tea, basmati rice among others. Significantly, exports of transport equipments registered an increase of 130 percent during 2006-07 added Mr. Kalantri.

AIAI also signed MOU with the Zanjan Chamber of Commerce, Islamic Republic of Iran to promote bilateral trade between the two countries.

Mr. Ali Mohammadi, Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Dr. Khosro Payandani, Commercial Attache, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran were also present and spoke on the occasion.

Need for greater networking between govt & MSMEs

In his welcome address, Mr Vijay Kalantri President of AIAI and Vice Chairman of World Trade Centre Mumbai said that the MSME sector faced various problems such as untimely and inadequate credit for eg. the credit, flow was 12% has come down to 8.3%, needs upgradation and technology and improve marketing skills. Despite recommendations from several committees that 20 percent of the total bank credit should be reserved for the MSME sector, one finds that presently only around 10-12 percent of bank credit is made available to the MSME sector.

"The micro, small and medium

(MSME) sector continues to attract high attention given the fact that this sector generates large scale employment and promotes inclusive growth. The MSME sector thus significantly contributes to the removal of regional disparities," said Mr. Pravir Kumar, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises while addressing a meeting organized by the All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and the World Trade Centre (WTC) Mumbai.

With less investment, the MSME sector has the capacity to create greater employment. Networking between the government and the MSME sector, could

be improved by placing representatives of the government on various MSME organizations, Mr Kumar stated. Further, problems of basic infrastructure such as power, roads, ports, telecommunications, etc need to be addressed to enable the MSME sector to function more efficiently and reduce transaction cost.

Mr Kalantri suggested that the MSME sector should have representation on the various finance committees. The developed countries play proactive role in promoting their MSME sector and our country must focus on this important sector which makes a significant contribution to the overall economy.

Forex mgmt important component of business

Foreign exchange rates, like any other asset class move depending on various factors, like demand supply, interest rate parity, trade and capital flows, speculators taking positions, clients hedging risk arising from their trade and capital flows etc. Introduction of currency futures will complete the suite of instruments available for trading and hedging to the Indian resident. The strong correlation that foreign exchange has to interest rates, equity flows and commodities

porter, and have USD payments to make at a future date. You can hedge / crystallize you foreign exchange exposure by buying USDINR and fixing your pay out rate today. You would hedge if you were of the view that USDINR was going to depreciate. Trading in futures allows you to trade in interest rates implied by the foreign exchange market.

Foreign exchange which to date has been an asset class only banks and corporates with currency exposure



Seen in the picture – Mr. R. Sundararaman, Sr. Vice President, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. (NSE) (Centre) during an interactive meeting on ‘How to manage currency risk’ organized by All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and World Trade Centre (WTC). Looking on L to R are Mr. Y. R. Warekar, Executive Director, World Trade Centre, and Mr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI).

will translate to opportunities to trade currency futures independently or in conjunction with equities commodities like gold or oil etc. Based on the evolving needs of the market place, our exchange introduces trading in Currency Derivatives, said Mr. R. Sundararaman, Sr. Vice President, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. (NSE) while addressing the members of All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and World Trade Centre (WTC), Mumbai.

Mr. Sundararaman further added to take a view on USDINR appreciating or depreciating over a specified time frame. For e.g. if you expect oil prices to rise and impact India’s import bill, you would buy USDINR with a view to INR depreciating. Alternatively, if you believed

that strong exports from the IT Sector, combined with strong FII flows will translate to INR appreciation you would sell USDINR. If you are an im-

were allowed to trade has finally been made available and easily accessible to all resident Indians. In the context of growing integration of the Indian economy with the rest of the world and a continuous move towards capital account liberalization, Securities Exchange Board of India and Reserve Bank of India have permitted trading in currency futures based on the USD INR exchange rate.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) said that the foreign currency derivatives is a very specialized subject, which helps you to assess the foreign exchange risk and requirement from time to time. Further, the various products like Spot and Forward FX rates, Forwards v/s Futures, Trading in Currency Futures which one could avail off. Mr. Y. R. Warekar, Executive Director, World Trade Centre proposed the vote of thanks

‘Meltdown would be more serious than expected’

India is in urgent need of fiscal stimulus in order to arrest the current economic slowdown and sustain the growth momentum. While there has been good measure of intervention from the Reserve Bank of India to improve liquidity, the government has so far offered little to ease the economic crisis. Indian economy is not delinked from the world economy and the malady seems to spread from the financial sector to the mainstream economy.

These sentiments were unanimously articulated by a panel of experts at a discussion meet on



“Global Financial Crisis and the Way Forward” organized by the World Trade Centre and All India Association of Industries in Mumbai.

Speaking on this occasion, Mr. Pradip Shah, Chairman of Ind Asia Fund Advisers Private Ltd., called for urgent measures to cut consumption taxes such as custom, sales tax, excise, vat etc. Mr. Shah suggested a reduction of 20-25 per cent in excise duty and proposed reduction in VAT. India need no longer worry about inflation or budgetary deficit and must prepare for strong fiscal measures, he said. Further, there is a strong case for liberalizing the FDI regime by allowing more foreign investment and portfolio investments to improve foreign exchange reserves and energise the capital markets. The government needs to review the sectoral caps in the FDI policy, Mr. Shah opined.

According to Mr. S. S. Bhandare, Former Economic Advisor to Tata Group, the country is witnessing large scale flight of capital alongwith erosion in the external value of the rupee, the foreign exchange reserves will be severely hampered. Mr. Bhandare expressed that nearly 30-35 billion dollar worth of foreign exchange reserves may be wiped out in the coming months and so there is an urgent need to strengthen the FOREX reserves.

The other important issue is how to sustain export growth. Global trade has significantly contracted. Particularly the SME sector will be under severe strain as the flow of funds from the banking system becomes weaker.

GOPIO helps Hoover Medal Board to honor APJ Abdul Kalam

In an award ceremony conducted in the magnificent Low Memorial Library of Columbia University, New York, and attended by Nobel Laureates, Diplomats, academicians, engineers, students and leaders of the Indian American community, Dr. Kalam was presented the prestigious Hoover Medal for 2008 by Beatrice E. Hunt of STV Inc., chair, and Professor P. Somasundaran of Columbia University, vice-chair of the Hoover Medal Board. Dr. Thomas Abraham, Chairman of the Global Organization of People of Indian and other GOPIO volunteers helped in organizing the event.

The Hoover Medal, founded in 1929 and named after its first recipient Herbert Hoover, former President of the United States, was created to honor engineers whose preeminent services have advanced the well-being of humanity and whose talents have been devoted to the development of a richer and more enduring civilization. Some of the previous recipients of this honor include former United States presidents Dwight David Eisenhower and James Carter, Jr., and inventors Arnold Beckman and David Packard. The Hoover Board of Award is made up of representatives from five American engineering societies - the American Society of Civil Engineers, American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, American Institute of

Dr. Kalam was chosen for "making state-of-the-art healthcare available to the common man at affordable prices, bringing quality medical care to rural areas by establishing a link...

Chemical Engineers, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Dr. Kalam was chosen for "making state-of-the-art healthcare available to the common man at affordable prices, bringing quality medical care to rural areas by establishing a link between doctors and technocrats, using spin-offs of defense technology to create state-of-the-art medical equipment, and launching telemedicine projects connecting remote rural-based hospitals to super-specialty hospitals."

During his acceptance speech Dr. Kalam told his rapt audience how personally satisfying it was for him to have a man of modest means with two Kalam-Raju stents implanted in his heart request a chance to sit beside him for a few minutes during a train trip in order to thank him for making it possible for him to have the stents.

Dr. Kalam became the 11th president of India in 2002 and was popularly known as the "Peoples' President".

Accepting the award, Dr. Kalam talked about "Transforming a billion people to prosperity," and made a detailed pres-

entation of his vision for India that encompasses rural connectivity, energy independence and a water mission with the application of science & technology management. Dr. Kalam later opened the floor to take questions from the audience, interacting with them, and fielding queries on a wide range of subjects from India's need for nuclear energy, education, terrorism, and nuclear weapons to HIV/AIDS in India. Dr. Kalam said the eradication of poverty was important to end terrorism. He pointed out that "Rich nations have to come together to help remove poverty from the poor nations. That is the only way to rid the world of terrorism". He said he believes the ignited minds of the youth are the most powerful resource on earth. Ever the optimist Dr. Kalam said India would succeed in finding a solution to combat HIV/AIDS in the next four to five years; would produce thorium-based nuclear energy in the next 10 years and eradicate poverty by 2020.

Asked what his message was for the Indian youth pursuing higher studies in the U.S., Dr. Kalam said, "For those students who intend to come back to India after completion of their studies, my message is that they learn what is most unique to the U.S. - entrepreneurship - and become entrepreneurs on their return to India. And for those students who decide to settle in this country, my message is: Work and do your best for the country you are in."

GOPIO-T&T condemns religious intolerance and hate speech

Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) Trinidad and Tobago strongly condemned is regarded as religious intolerance and hate speech contained in the article by Kenneth Assee, titled "Weak Criticisms by Baldeosingh", in the Trinidadian Guardian newspaper, on Sunday May 10, 2009. Specifically, reference is made to Assee's statement: "This is why religions like Hinduism and Islam continue to exist despite rational criticism of the cruelties they sanction. Their followers choose to believe." GOPIO Trinidad and Tobago's Press Statement stated that it "categorically rejects Assee's claim that Hinduism and Islam sanction "cruelties", and the characterization that Hindus and Muslims "choose to believe." It continued, "While Hindus and Muslims may be tempted to respond with the long list of cruelties perpetrated in the name of religion throughout the past

two millenniums, we caution against descending to such low levels of behavior; instead, we urge everyone in our multi-religious rainbow nation to practice tolerance of all religious communities".

"GOPIO cautions against dangerous and harmful generalizations that may portray Hindus, Muslims, and Christians as extremists and enemies of our nation who seek to destroy our society. GOPIO Trinidad & Tobago reminds all that bigotry, intolerance, sectarianism, and fanaticism have resulted in nothing but violence, death, despair, and destruction. GOPIO believes we must develop a society that moves beyond tolerance, to mutual acceptance, with the core values of community and individual responsibility; equality of opportunity; and respect for freedom of rights, including freedom of speech but refraining from hate speech that discredits and denigrates fellow citizens".

4 Indian Americans in White House fellows prog

Thirty outstanding men and women from across the country have been selected as National Finalists for the White House Fellows Program - the nation's most prestigious program for leadership and public service. The National Finalists represent a diverse cross-section of professions, including business, medicine, law, non-profit sector, media, state government, finance, and education. Additionally, four branches of military are also represented. The four Indian Americans at the list of the National Finalists are as follows: Sudip Bose, Attending Emergency Physician, Advocate Christ Medical Center; Chicago, IL Anish Mahajan, Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar; Poughkeepsie, New York Manish Sethi, Surgical Resident, Harvard Combined Orthopedics Program; Brookline, MA Raj Shah, MBA Candidate, University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business.

Celebrating Indian American heritage

The Indian community of Southern California got together on May 3 at the Woodlands Banquet Hall for a Seminar and Luncheon to pay tribute to the several Indian American and Patriots who had paved the way to a better life and future for the 2 million living in the United States today. Divided into two sections separated by a short tea break, the first panel discussed the history of "Migration and Settlement" of the earliest immigrants and the second on a more recent subject of "Contributions of Indian Americans after citizenship and liberalization of US Immigration Laws.

The event was the brainchild of Inder Singh, President of GOPIO International who had conducted a similar event a few years ago in Northern California to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Gadar Movement. He told India Journal when President Obama proclaimed May 2009 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, he was motivated to put together a function to once again re-vive the memories of the many who had come earlier, worked at menial jobs, lived in appalling conditions and after a long and tedious struggle got rights of US Citizenship in 1946. He soon rounded up a group of equally enthusiastic citizens and the team quickly brought together a panel of several recognized

academicians, scholars, politicians and philanthropists to address the community.

After opening remarks by Inder Singh, the first seminar commenced, chaired by Professor Arnold Kaminsky, Director of Yadunandan Center of India Studies, Cal State University, Long Beach. The panel contained a fascinating mix of individuals who are direct

The event was the brainchild of Inder Singh, President of GOPIO International who had conducted a similar event a few years ago in Northern California to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Gadar Movement.

descendants of many of the pioneers for whom the tribute had been arranged and whose ancestors' lives had intertwined during the bitter struggle for justice and acceptance. Opening the session Professor Emeritus Ram Mohan Roy, Cal State Northridge spoke on "Migration and Struggle for Survival" referring to the discriminatory laws against Indian nationals during the first half of the 20th century and on how he himself was humiliated as recently as 1965 when he was relegated to sleep in the

storage room of a hotel. He conceded things had changed for the better but there were still vestiges of discrimination lingering. His fear is that, like the British did during the Raj, the US would exploit Indian talent to serve the US Empire and that it was very important to remind future generations not to forget their origins and their culture.

Surinder Pal Singh narrated fascinating episodes from the life of his grandfather, the late Bhai Bagwan Singh Giyani, which took him on voyages through Canada from where he was deported, the USA, Hong Kong where he was arrested twice and Singapore among others.

Throughout his colorful journeys, the British Government kept a close watch over his national activities, yet at the end of it all he remarked that he bears no hatred for the British people but was only against the British who were interfering with Indian life. After being shunted around several years he was finally able to come to the US when he became President of the Gadar Party and started the "do or die" movement and "Allan-e-Jung in 1914. At the end of the seminar he was presented a set of 78 rpm records of lectures of his grandfather by Greg Alexander who had found them in his father's collection in the garage.

2 new chapters, scientific council inaugurated

On Friday May 8th GOPIO in The Netherlands, on a very well attended evening, announced the opening of two new chapters and a scientific council. It was also an opportunity to welcome the newly appointed ambassador of India to the Netherlands, Mr. Manbir Singh who was accompanied by his wife on the occasion. GOPIO also invited Mr. Arun Amirtham, president of the Indian Association of Switzerland to present the Indian Diaspora of his country to the audience.

Rajindre Tewari, president of GOPIO in The Netherlands welcomed Ambassador Singh and guests and thanked everyone to witness the inauguration of the new chapters. During his speech the ambassador stressed his interest for the PIO's living abroad by narrating his personal experience with PIO's from different countries. He also stressed the fact that India has grown in such a pace that it has also attracted the interest of the PIO's to expand their activities to the Indian sub-continent.

Chapter Rotterdam was presented by Ms. Ratna Jainandusing who asked the audience for more attention to the

issues facing last generation

Indians in The Netherlands in defining and scoping their identity. Mr. Shridath Salikram presented an overview of the Indian society in the Eastern part of The Netherlands representing a group of small cities in the province of Overijssel. He proudly summarized the achievements of Indian scientists at the University of Twente especially in nanotechnology. Finally, Dr. Hari Sharma presented the highlights of his ambitions with the Scientific Council which will start with a register of Indian scientist with proven credentials on scientific subjects and specializations in order to reduce the barrier for PIO's to exchange and transfer knowledge on PIO related diseases or cures to the laymen.

Mr. Arun Amirtham of the Indian Association in Switzerland gave a lively overview of the Indian community in his country and especially explained how the cultural exchange between Indians and the Swiss is taking place producing a blended performance in Swiss national cultural happenings. He presented a lesson of integration with the local culture while remaining Indian.

New Zealand chapters donate for Fiji flood relief

GOPIO Auckland Central Chapter donated FID 4,500 towards one of the Rota Homes in Lautoka (Fiji), a very proud moment for GOPIO New Zealand. The check was personally handed over by one of the executive members, Jack Singh to Peter Drysdale (Rotary) who is looking after this particular project.

Besides GOPIO Auckland Central Chapter, GOPIO Auckland Botany Downs and GOPIO Northshore Chapters also sent cash to the flood victims in Lautoka.

Ambassador Dayal energizes Indian American community

Ambassador Prabhu Dayal, Consul General of India in New York attended a reception in his honor organized by GOPIO Connecticut at the Hampton Inn in Stamford, CT on Friday, May 15, 2009.

GOPIO-CT President Mrs. Sangeeta Ahuja welcomed everyone to the program and provided an account what GOPIO-CT has been doing for the last three years and invited everyone to participate in future programs. Speaking to a packed audience of almost 100 members of the Indian-American community, Mr. Dayal congratulated the community for their outstanding success in all walks of life. "The Indian community is the most successful ethnic community in the United States and the most law-abiding," Ambassador Dayal said.

He said he was impressed by the vibrancy of GOPIO Connecticut and the warmth and hospitality of the local community. In talking about US-India relations, he underlined that our countries are "two of the greatest democracies in the world.

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