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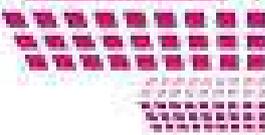
A MONTHLY NEWS MAGAZINE



COVER STORY

VANISHED???

Will we ever be able to know the fate of 239 passengers on board Malaysian Airlines flight 370?

 DREAMZ GKTM

Stands for Innovation

EDITOR

PRASHANT TEWARI

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

DR RAHUL MISRA

POLITICAL EDITOR

PRAKHAR MISRA

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CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

SANJAY MENDIRATTA

GRAPHICS & DESIGN

GREY CELLS

ONLINE PRESENTATION

AMIT SONI

PHOTOGRAPHER

RATAN SHUKLA

OVERSEAS MARKETING

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NCR: CAPT. VINAY GOYAL DHRUV JANAK & CO. R -51 BASEMENT, RAMESH PARK, LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI-92
TELE: +919871232631 FAX: 011-22056817

MUMBAI: VIJAY KALANTRI - ADVISOR NEW EXCELSIOR BUILDING, 6TH FLOOR, A.K. NAYAK MARG, FORT, MUMBAI - 400 001 (INDIA).

PHONE: 91 - 22 - 2201 9265 / 2201 9160 FAX : 91-22- 2201 9764 / 2201 9760

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EDITORIAL & CORPORATE OFFICE:

OPINION EXPRESS HOUSE 24 - A CLYDE ROAD, LUCKNOW-226001 (INDIA)

PH: 91-522-4045728/4060880 FAX: 91-522-4060880 24X7 MOBILITY +91 9984437000

Email: info@opinionexpress.in

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Aircraft with 370 passengers vanished?

Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared March 8 2014 while flying from Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia, to its destination, Beijing. The aircraft, a Boeing 777-200ER operated by Malaysia Airlines,



last made voice contact with air traffic control at 01:19 MYT, 8 March when it was over the South China Sea, less than an hour after takeoff. The aircraft disappeared from air traffic controllers' radar screens at 01:22 MYT. However, Flight 370 was still tracked on military radar as it deviated westwards from its planned flight path and crossed the Malay Peninsula. It left the range of Malaysian military radar at 02:22 while over the Andaman Sea, 200 nautical miles (370 km) north-west of Penang in north-western Malaysia. The aircraft was carrying 12 Malaysian crew members and 227 passengers

from 15 nations.

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. Its absolute Modi wave all the way and that is precisely why UP was given Yogi by RSS forcefully to consolidate this wave in tsunami for the next General Elections. UP is a matter of extreme pride for Modi-Shah combine so they avoided Bihar like risk in UP. Modi's mega personality and development agenda apart, he made a dig wherein he felt that it was good enough to get a few additional votes through the polarization angle, and he created history. In Yogi they have an equally high voltage man; making him CM of the largest state of India immediately gives him national limelight. Modi-Yogi combine will ensure no opposition and we will possibly see a UP type wipe out at national level, that's the worst thing for democracy. A strong opposition is always a must in any democracy.

—Prashant Tewari, Editor-in-Chief



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Saffron Gandhi

Is Varun BJP's New Hindutva hero?

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Monday rejected the Election Commission's advice to it not to nominate Varun Gandhi [Images] as candidate in the Lok Sabha elections and declared that he would be the party candidate in Pilibhit.

"He (Varun) is our candidate. We have turned down the advice (by the EC) because it does not have the right to give such an advise," party spokesman Balbir Punj told media persons after meeting Varun.

He said he was speaking as the authorised spokesman of the party and this was the view of the party leaders after consultations among them.

In an unprecedented action, the Election Commission on Sunday night asked the BJP not to nominate Varun as its candidate in the Lok Sabha elections after holding him guilty of making communal speeches.

'Varun Gandhi does not deserve to be a candidate at the present general elections?' the three-member Commission advised the BJP.

Punj said in a democracy, it was the right of political parties to decide on who their candidates will be and it was not for the Commission to say that.

The BJP would not accept the Election Commission's advice, he said adding it was the collective decision of the party leaders.

Punj also questioned the Election Commission's authority to advise against nominating Varun. "The entire episode smacks of prejudice and bias," he said.

"If the Election Commission is so concerned, then it should be forthright in giving the same suggestion in the case of Sanjay Dutt [Images], M K Subba, Shibu Soren, Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler," he said.

The BJP spokesperson also sought to question the competency of the Commission in deciding the veracity of the compact disc containing anti-Muslim speeches allegedly made by Varun.

"Where is the original CD? The Election Commission has no right to give such advice. It should refer the matter to an independent investigation agency," Punj said.

Whether or not Varun will be able to fight the elections will depend on the judiciary.

The hate speech that has given rise to



this controversy in the India's electoral battle, was allegedly delivered during rallies in Pilibhit constituency of Uttar Pradesh.

While cousins Priyanka and Rahul have joined the issue, criticising the youngest Gandhi for his speech, Varun says that the CD was doctored.

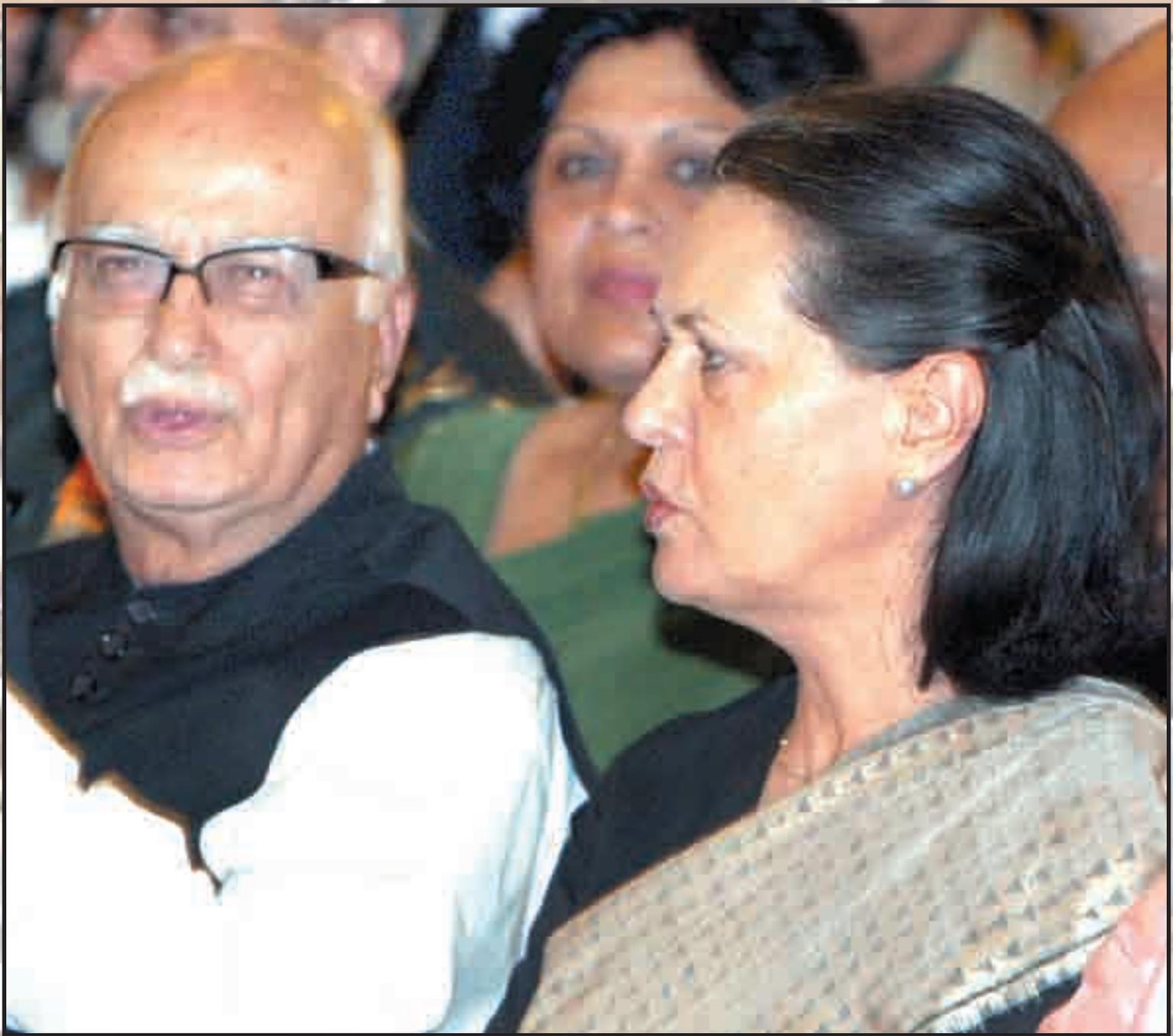
"If you ask me, I would say yes, it was a rousing speech, a strong speech. May be I should not have been so aggressive; may be, I should not have used the words which I did. However, certain expressions attributed to me have been distorted from what I spoke and one of the two CDs containing my speech has been doctored," he said

"What people should realize is that I was speaking at a village where four girls had been raped. When I spoke, I wanted to instil confidence among victims, I wanted to offer hope to the hopeless. I don't care about a warrant (for arrest) but what

bothers me is that I should not be hurting anyone and, believe me, my intent was not to hurt anybody," Varun said.

"You must appreciate the fact that in my area, there has been persecution of Hindus in a particular belt. There have been 11 cases of rape in the last one year. People have been thrashed and threatened. There has been communal tension in this belt for one year. While I don't want to cement it (tension), I cannot wish it away either."

"My mother (Menaka Gandhi) has been elected to Lok Sabha from Pilibhit in seven consecutive elections, but the constituency has never witnessed a communal riot, not even in the Ram Janmabhoomi movement phase. But during the last one year, things have been different. Many of our people, including former minister Ram Saran Verma, have been arrested under the National Security Act," he said.



COVER STORY | INDIA VOTES

NO FAVOURITES

It is NDA Vs UPA agenda; young leader with conventional mind set verses experience leader with new thought process

India needs stable and strong government

Prashant Tewari

Setting a new agenda for Congress party ahead of the forthcoming Lok Sabha election, the young party general secretary Rahul Gandhi called for giving more representation to youth in electoral politics.

Pitching for the need of making "work" as the only criteria for selecting candidates for polls, the Amethi MP said, "Religion, caste, region or economic condition should be the criteria if we want genuine and promising youth leaders to join politics for serving the nation."

Addressing the grass-roots level Congress workers at a national convention in the capital, Rahul also said that though country has influential percentage of young population, youth does not find its convenient to join politics.

"They have that intention and energy to work for the community and for nation. They feel none raises the voice of people even after getting elected. We need to demolish all walls to make it convenient and reward for youth to join politics," the young leader said.

Taking up the case of block level and district level workers and their leaders, Rahul said that though they are responsible for party's victories and they lead the protests march their case are overlooked when it comes to distribution of tickets. I am strongly in favour of these people getting due share. We should not import someone else and ignore their role," the leader said.

The achievements of the UPA government were all the 52 schemes that were running in the country, but National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), Right To Information (RTI), Nuclear Agreement and debt waiver to the farmers would be the key issues, said Rahul Gandhi adding, "implementation of acts like NREGA and RTI was a historical step for the country's future."

However, experienced Advani is promising to change the primary focus of the software industry from outsourcing for foreign economies to make it mainly India-centric, BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate L K Advani today said an NDA government



PLANNERS: CEC NAVEEN CHAWLA (LEFT) WITH PREDECESSOR N GOPALASWAMI

"Whereas much of our software industry labours to make foreign economies more competitive, a BJP-led government will create a new policy climate where we use technology mainly for India's - I would add, Bharat's -- sustainable development," Advani said.

"will create a new policy climate" to achieve this aim. "Whereas much of our software industry labours to make foreign economies more competitive, a BJP-led government will create a new policy climate where we use technology mainly for India's - I would add, Bharat's - sustainable development," Advani stated in the

foreword to the party's IT Vision document.

The comment comes at a time when the US and other western countries have said that they would check outsourcing to India to boost their sagging economies and growing unemployment.

The saffron party leader said his government would bring about a radical shift of emphasis in favour of "agriculture, rural economy, infrastructure development, small and medium enterprises, informal sector of the economy, affordable health-care for all, meaningful education for all.

And national security, both internal and external". Promising to make "internet as ubiquitous as electricity", Advani said an NDA government would create 20 IT related jobs in every village.

This would mean 1.2 crore IT-enabled jobs in rural hinterland of the country, he said.



REGIONAL SATRAPs: LALU YADAV AND RAMVILAS PASWAN

Do we need regional parties?

After India attained Independence, for a long time, it was one Party dominated show. Congress use to win handsomely against Communist Parties and erstwhile Jan Sangh. Jawahar lal Nehru's Era passed away and then came Indira Gandhi. She over a period of time started treating the local Chief Ministers badly. Chief Ministers were sidelined, unceremoniously removed etc. Then to counter this dictatorial attitude of Indira Gandhi lot of Regional Parties crop up like TDP, Congress(O), Congress(S) etc. Some of them started with good principles but later on became a one person/family/caste dominated.

Then there was frequent attempt of clubbing these regional parties to form

some kind of Anti Congress and Anti BJP Front but the funny thing was that this so called Third front whenever it came to Power always decided to choose between lesser evil of that time either Congress or BJP to be in Power. So while in 1989 V.P Singh took help from BJP, in 1996 Devgouda/IK Gujral Government took help of Congress. Obviously devoid of any ideological base and formed purely on Opportunist needs these Governments couldn't last long.

Left is always behind uniting these regional forces, first to broaden its own base and secondly constant instability in India suits Left. These small regional parties squabble on small issues and always hinder the bigger Picture. But luckily some

changes started since 1991 which slowly will make these small parties irrelevant though there will be some small period of turbulence. I will explain this in more detail.

In 1991 PV Narasimha Rao was selected as Prime Minister after unfortunate demise of Rajiv Gandhi. One thing which he did good was that he slowly whisked away the Politics of Arrogance and Confrontation and instead replaced it with Policy of Consensus. He took into confidence the main opposition Party i.e BJP and brought down the support of small regional Parties instead of trying to finish or Occupy them. PVN also gave the required respect to the regional Chief Ministers. He never changed the local Chief ministers.



DALIT CZARINA: UP CHIEF MINISTER MAYAWATI

Local leaders like Digvijay Singh and Ashok Gehlot got prominence during his rule only. He started the process of Politics of Consensus.

Then the same process was continued by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He took it to next step. He took Coalition Politics to next level. First time in India pure form of Federalism was established. Vajpayee was the one who gave the real respect and prestige to position of Chief Minister. Vajpayee was so peculiar on federalism that he preferred and promoted Chandra Babu Naidu more than his own Party Chief Ministers as Babu changed the perception that CM's only need to do Dirty Politics and no work. Besides this Atal Bihari Vajpayee tolerated the tantrums of his allies to the point of being humiliated. He swallowed this for the betterment of the Country.

The NDA's success in managing the Government till 2004, running it well and doing milestone changes was one of the turning points in history of India. Because

NDA united all the allies, UPA was forced to be united and all its allies behaved very well during 2004-2009, doesn't matter whether it was on false pretext of Secularism. India has never seen such Democratic Unity in last 1000 years. It was always some ruthless dictator calling the shots. Though NDA lost 2004 Elections but it has united India and made it 2 polar which will give some amount of stability to this country albeit they will obviously differ in their performances.

Good development was that even Ruthlessly Centralized Party like Congress also started believing in Federalism and started giving importance to its Chief Ministers. Andhra Pradesh has only one Chief Minister for last 5 years. It is a great achievement for Good Old Congress which carried different trait in governance earlier. Another good development which has happened is that National Parties like BJP groomed leaders which are as good and as aggressive on any local issue as any so called regional leaders. We have lead-

ers like Narendra Modi, Shivraj Chauhan, Yeddurappa, Nitin Gadkari who are as good as any regional leaders. Thus most of the regional parties are irrelevant now.

So except for few good regional parties like TDP (Telugu Desam) party or some few NDA allies like JD(U) in Bihar, all should be wiped out. The issue with the so called good Regional Parties is that they are just dominated by one good person and one defeat in an election will totally wipe it out. e.g Nitish Kumar in Bihar is strong because of BJP backing and the day he loses one election, his colleagues who are the original Laloo team, will eat him up.

So it is in interest of this country that all regional party slowly withers away and country becomes bipolar between BJP and Congress. Now again Left has started the process of destabilizing the country. Most of the regional parties are involved in Blackmailing. With troubled Neighborhood and Recession looming before us we can't have weak and sleeping Prime Ministers at Centre!

As India heads for national elections this month, a group of regional parties has forged an alliance to challenge the two main parties which have dominated the political landscape - the Congress Party and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party. Now small, regional parties are becoming increasingly influential in India's fragmented politics.

For more than a decade, neither of India's two main parties, the Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party, have won a majority in parliament on their own. They have relied on the support of smaller parties to cobble together coalition governments.

As India prepares for national elections next month, both the Congress Party, which heads the governing coalition, and the opposition BJP have been furiously wooing these parties, which dominate different regions of India.

But nine influential, left-leaning and regional parties have refused to throw their weight behind either of the two major political alliances, this time.

Instead, they have come together to

launch their own political alliance, called the "Third Front", which they say will compete, on its own.

Left-leaning parties have played a key role in the formation of this alliance. A senior leader of the Communist Party of

The bid for power by the clutch of smaller and regional parties comes as their political influence grows steadily in India. They govern many of India's large and populous states. In the last parliament, both the Congress Party and the BJP together bagged slightly more than half the seats. The rest were occupied by smaller parties.

India (Marxist), Sitaram Yechury, says the Third Front will provide an alternative to the two main national coalitions, which he says have failed to fulfill the aspirations of the masses.

"At no time since independence has there been such a growing divide between the super rich and the ordinary people of our country," said Sitaram Yechury. "It is the policies pursued by the Congress-led government which has heightened this divide."

The bid for power by the clutch of smaller and regional parties comes as their political influence grows steadily in India. They govern many of India's large and populous states. In the last parliament, both the Congress Party and the BJP together bagged slightly more than half the seats. The rest were occupied by smaller parties.

Political analysts say these parties have mushroomed, as neither of the two main parties has managed to extend its appeal throughout a diverse country of more than a billion people and dozens of ethnic groups.

A road to hell? Regional parties forge alliance



LEFT TURN: CPI (M) LEADERS RELEASING THE PARTY MANIFESTO

Professor of History at Delhi University and political analyst Mahesh Rangarajan says many of these parties represent communities or regions that have been on the periphery for decades. He says these parties feel the time is right for them to play a more-prominent role at the federal level.

"The reality is that there is room in India for a coalition of regional forces, which have more of a tilt toward the underclass, who have been left out of power, and toward the rural areas, which still lie way behind the urban," Rangarajan said. "So they are actually reaching out to that space in the polity."

Political analysts say that the "Third Front" faces many hur-

POSTAL & PROXY

Q Who is entitled for voting through Postal ballot system?

Special voters, service voters, voters on election duty and electors subjected to preventive detention are entitled to vote by post subject to their fulfilling the requirements specified under the Rules.

W ho can exercise Proxy Voting?

As an alternative option to postal ballot, service voters belonging to the Armed Forces and members belonging to a Force to which provisions of the Army Act applies, have been provided with a facility to opt to vote either through proxy or through postal ballot papers.



dles in its ambition of forming a national government. It has no clear leader. Forming a common strategy to face the elections will not be easy. It could unravel easily, because of competing ambitions and differences between the various parties.

But the alliance has dreams of providing India's next prime minister. J. Jayalalitha, heads AIADMK, a regional party in the southern state, Tamil Nadu, which has joined the "Third Front." She says the issue of who will head the alliance will be settled later.

"There is nothing wrong in certain parties expressing their aspirations because someone has to aspire to be the prime minister," she said. "But, as to when the future prime minister will be selected and how this choice will take place, all that has to wait until the polls are over."

Two previous governments formed by smaller parties in the 1990s were short lived and failed to last out a full five-year term. Nonetheless, analyst Rangarajan says the emergence of the "Third Front" could be a serious factor in this election and that it may hold the balance of power after the polls.

"We have to see whether 2009 marks a new phase in the polity. 1989 India ended the phase of one-party rule," said Rangarajan. "1999, it entered the phase of stable coalition governments. Are we in 2009 going to see a different kind of coalition, built around a leadership from the underclass? That is where we are right now."

India's staggered election begins April 16 and will be held in five stages through the country, during nearly a month. A new government will be formed after vote counting takes place in mid-May.



GLAMOUR QUOTE: SANJAY DUTT

Indian Democracy: Managing Monster

43 mn more voters this year

The number of electors for the ensuing Lok Sabha polls has increased by about **6.4 percent** from the last Parliamentary elections in 2004.

Almost **43 million** more electors will choose the Lok Sabha this time. As per the latest electoral role, the number of registered electors in 2009 is **714 million**, while in 2004 it was 671 million.

While deciding the fate of the contestants, women electors will not be far behind. There are **340,649,406** women voters in comparison to **372,324,113** men electors.

However, in the States like Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Puducherry, the number of eligible women voters is more than the men electors.

Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of electors that is **116,424,101** while Lakshadweep has only **44,424** electors.

Uttar Pradesh also has the highest number of service electors registered followed by Maharashtra and Haryana.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

OF KINGS & KINGMAKERS



QUEEN BEE'S SHADOW: MANMOHAN SINGH WITH SONIA GANDHI

Randeep Ramesh

The world's biggest electorate goes to the polls soon but the 700 million voters won't decide who runs India. Instead they will elect 543 representatives, belonging to a score or more of parties, who after much horse-trading will then pick a leader.

Of course in parliamentary democracy there is no direct election for the prime minister.

The paradox for India is that the casting votes belong to the unelected. India's political parties are mostly family run - famously, India's ruling Congress Party is

Gandhi personal property.

The issue of ownership was dramatically illustrated in 2004 when Sonia Gandhi crisscrossed the country as the Congress party's prime ministerial candidate.

When she unexpectedly won, Mrs Gandhi stepped aside for her loyal aide Manmohan Singh - a respected economist who has never won an election - to take office. A shrewd operator, Mrs Gandhi retained power, wielded from behind the throne.

The exceptions to politics as family business are the two major opposition parties - the Bharatiya Janata party and the communists. But faceless men oper-

ating in the shadows decide the leaderships of these parties.

The BJP cannot easily pick a leader not approved by the central command of the Hindu nationalist movement, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, and the communists take their orders from an unelected politbureau.

Because members of political parties cannot stake a claim to the leadership of the major national parties (the Congress and the BJP) in India, people leave and create their own outfits drawing support from regional powerbases.

The other option for ambitious politicians is to start up on their own - scoop-



ing up votes from the disenchanted. This strategy works best on the local level. The self-styled champion of the lowest castes, Mayawati is essentially a provincial politician, albeit in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh.

Mayawati's rise is remarkable given that she hails from the deepest trenches of Indian society: the untouchable caste. Although the Indian constitution abolished untouchability - essentially barring the lowest castes from wells and temples - it is rampant in village and small-town India.

However, Mayawati is a troubled figure, mired in claims of corruption and an outsized cult of personality that would embarrass an eastern European communist. Her only political ideology appears to be the pursuit of power. With half a million villages and 60% of people living off the land, India's politics are rural and often very local. Corruption in politics and the inability of the poor to get a better deal remain concerns. But from the ground up it is the lack of roads, water, electricity and schools as well as complex caste issues that dominate politics.

This again makes the national parties, who are run from the top down, appear irrelevant. Unless they have exceptional local candidates, the big ticket draws are the party leaders who, thanks to India's linguistic diversity, often cannot mobilise people in their own language. These trends have an unyielding logic. Since 1989, no single party has been able to run India. As national parties shrink, the space is filled by regional parties. With an ever-proliferating array of parochial politicians, the only way to gain power is to compete for votes locally and co-operate nationally to gain power.

The last two governments, both of which lasted a full term, have been anchored by the two national parties. However most think that their executive strength has been sapped by bickering between partners. The caravan of Indian government moves only as fast as its slowest member - which is very slowly indeed.

This year could see the rise of a third force, a grouping of smaller regional parties who would bandy together to form a government. This would only happen if the two national parties lost so heavily they could no longer dominate the parliament. Only the communists and perhaps Mayawati could win big enough to provide the third front with the numbers for government. Because it would be collection of regional interests, settling big national questions is likely to take longer than it does today.

SAFFRON FORCE: THE BJP IDEOLOGUE

DEMYSTIFYING election process

What is the minimum age for becoming a candidate for Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha election?

Not less than Twenty Five Years of age on the date of scrutiny of nomination papers.

A person is convicted for some offence and is sentenced to imprisonment for 2 years. Can he contest elections?

No

Supposing such person is on bail, pending disposal of his appeal, can he contest the election?

No. Even if a person is on bail, after the conviction and his appeal is pending for disposal, he is disqualified from contesting an election as per Supreme Court's decision. But if his conviction is also stayed, then he can contest.

Can a person confined in jail vote in an election?

No. Such person can not vote at any election if he is confined in a prison, whether under a sentence of imprisonment or transportation or otherwise, or is in the lawful custody of the police.

Every candidate is required to make security deposit. How much is the security deposit for Lok Sabha election?

Rs 10,000

Which candidates lose the deposit?

A defeated candidate who fails to secure more than one-sixth of the valid votes polled in the constituency will lose his security deposit.

What is the deadline after which no public meetings and processions can be taken out?

You cannot hold public meetings and processions during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of poll. Suppose, poll day is 12th June 2009 (Friday) and hours of poll are from 8.00A.M to 5.00 P.M., the public meetings and processions shall be closed at 5.00 P.M on the 10th June 2009 (Wednesday).

Are there any guidelines for setting up of election booth by candidate/political parties near polling station on the day of poll?

Election booth can be set up beyond a distance of 200 meters from the polling stations, only with 1 table and 2 chairs with an umbrella or a piece of tarpaulin or cloth to protect the two occupants with one banner (3 x 4 1/2 feet) to display the name of the candidate/ party / election symbol at the booth. No crowd is allowed.

Is there any restriction on the printing of pamphlets, posters etc ?

Yes. You shall not print or publish, or cause to be printed or published names of any election pamphlet or poster which does not bear on its face and addresses of the printer and the publisher thereof.

TROUBLED NEIGHBOURHOOD



SUPPORTERS OF MAULANA SUFI MOHAMMAD AFTER PEACE ACCORD WITH PAK GOVERNMENT

ARE WE PREPARED? NO

Anil Athale

The recent surrender by the Pakistani State to the Taliban in the Swat valley may well turn out to be a watershed in the history of the Indian subcontinent. In terms of long-term impact, this may even overshadow the recent Mumbai massacres. All signs point to the 'Talibanisation' of Pakistan. Here are several pointers:

- I A Rehman writing in the Dawn newspaper on February 12 says 'the Pakistani armed forces were indoctrinated in General Zia-ul Haq's rule to reserve senior posts for genuine Islamists. The Pakistan army may have the capacity to kill hordes of people, but it will not – and

cannot – do that.' The army and the State may well disintegrate if it does.

- General Ashfaq Kayani, son of a former soldier, is the first non-elite chief of the Pakistani army. Given his socio-economic background, he is more likely to be part of the 'natural' constituency of the Taliban. We have the example of Iran – on February 11, 1979, when the mass upsurge to impose 'Islamic rule' reached its zenith, the Iranian army declared its 'neutrality' in the ongoing conflict. This sealed the fate of the Shah of Iran. A similar happening in Pakistan is very likely.

- Slumdog Jihadis: The Dawn on December 18, 2008, quoted the Pakistan Planning Commission's Deputy Chairman Sardar Asef Ahmad Ali that poverty had

skyrocketed to above 40 per cent in the country, leaving millions helpless. It is these poor/unemployed/uneducated people that are cannon fodder for the jihadis. The interrogation of the lone surviving Mumbai terrorist Ajmal Kasab's story fits the bill. There are such 48 million Ajmals waiting in Pakistan to be primed against India.

As a student of military history, I found it extraordinary that Indians were always blissfully unaware of developments in their neighbourhood. No ruler of Delhi ever woke up when the enemy crossed the Khyber Pass. The first stirrings of action were usually when the enemy was at the gates, at Panipat, just a day's march from Delhi.



FACE OF TERROR:
KASAB IN CUSTODY

Pakistan has a very high rate of population growth. Although it has declined from three per cent at the time of the census in 1981 to the present 1.9 per cent it is still the highest among populous countries of more than 50 million, except Nigeria.

Indians have been made to totally forget the holocaust that they faced in past; the name Hindukush itself means 'Hindu killer', a reminder of the days when thousands of Indians died on the mountain slopes while being taken to Central Asia as slaves. (the Encyclopaedia Britannica quoting a 12th century traveller Ibn Batua).

Nearer our times, the 1981 UN declaration of Universal Human Rights writes; 'Among the genocides of human history, the highest number of people killed in the small span of time is in Bangladesh in 1971. An average of 6,000 to 12 000 people were killed every single day. This is the highest daily average in history.' The lower estimate shows that 15 lakh were killed, a majority of them Hindus. A commission of inquiry appointed by the Pakistan government, the Hamidoor Rehman Commission, has recorded testimonies of Pakistani army officers who have quoted General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi asking the question 'How many Hindus have you killed

today?' as a matter of routine. We have forgotten this recent episode as well.

Demography is destiny

Pakistan has a very high rate of population growth. Although it has declined from three percent at the time of the census in 1981 to the present 1.9 per cent it is still the highest among populous countries of more than 50 million, except Nigeria. The more reliable indicator of population growth is the total fertility rate – the number of children born to a woman in her reproductive span. Pakistan's TFR is four. A TFR of 2.1 is considered replacement level which leads to a stable population.

In Pakistan, the under-15 population is 37 per cent of the total. Given the poor education, health and skills of this youth, they are fodder for jihad and little else. With the mullahs constantly drumming that all of Pakistan's ills are due to the evil Hindu India/Zionist Israel/Christian America troika, Pakistan's biggest export for a long time is likely to be terror.

INDIA'S MOST WANTED

maulana masood
AZHAR

The Bahawalpur-based maulana-cum-mercenary was one of the three terrorists released by the then NDA government in 2000 in exchange of passengers of hijacked Indian Airlines plane. He later founded Jaish-e-Mohammad



hafiz mohammad
SAYEED

Engineer-turned-fanatic preacher is co-founder of Lashkar-e-Toiba for jihadi operations in Kashmir and against India. He is also blamed for the attack on the Indian Parliament. He operates from Muridke town, near Lahore in Pakistan



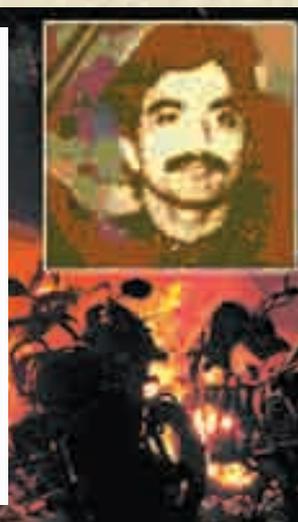
dawood
IBRAHIM

An Indian underworld don, man behind the planning and financing 13 explosions in Mumbai in 1993 in which almost 300 people died. Dawood is wanted in connection with several cases He lives in and operates from Karachi. However, reports say he has shifted base to Islamabad.



chhota
SHAKEEL

An Indian underworld don, man behind the planning and financing 13 explosions in Mumbai in 1993 in which almost 300 people died. Dawood is wanted in connection with several cases He lives in and operates from Karachi. However, reports say he has shifted base to Islamabad.



If by some miracle, Pakistan is to implement population control tomorrow, it will take two to three decades for it to take effect. Even if the re-brainwashing was to begin now, again it is bound to take time. The sad fact is that neither of these things is happening either tomorrow or any time soon.

The latest Al Qaeda video, threatening to carry out more 26/11 type attacks in India, is adding to the concerns of the security forces, who already have their hands full dealing with the likes of the Lashkar-e-Taiba and home-grown jihadi outfits.

Intelligence Bureau agents say India has never been on Al Qaeda's direct radar though the latter has backed outfits

like the Lashkar and the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami to operate in India.

According to the IB sources, the reason for Al Qaeda's sudden, aggressive stand is because of India's growing proximity to the US. Al Qaeda's position is clear: 'Whoever is a friend of America is an enemy.'

The IB sources say Al Qaeda suspects the India-US relationship will prove fatal for its operations in Afghanistan. It hopes its threat will act as a cautionary note for India's security and strategic planners and slow down Indian designs of helping the US in Afghanistan.

Although Al Qaeda has not directly interfered in India, its influence in several attacks is clear. The Mumbai terror

strikes were inspired by earlier Al Qaeda attacks, the IB sources add. Moreover, the training modules and motivational speeches used to prepare for the 26/11 attacks were lifted directly from Al Qaeda manuals.

Even the attacks in Bangalore and Surat had Al Qaeda thumbprints, investigating agencies say. Investigating agencies say an integrated chip was used in these two blasts, and this technology is lifted from Al Qaeda manuals. An integrated chip was first used in Indonesia by the Jemaah Islamiyah, a wing of Al Qaeda.

Another interesting theory for Al Qaeda's sudden interest in India is because of the split in the Lashkar and HuJI over Pakistan's policy towards the US.

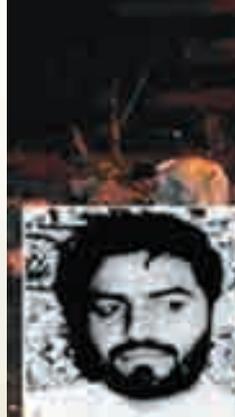
tiger MEMON

Accused of executing the 1993 Mumbai blasts. He is also wanted in several cases of murder, extortion, kidnapping, terrorism and smuggling of arms and explosives in India. He is currently living in Pakistan



ayub MEMON

Younger brother of Tiger Memon and also accused of executing the 1993 Mumbai blasts. He is alleged to have helped his brother Ibrahim Memon carry out the blasts. He is wanted in several cases of terrorism and smuggling. He lives in and operates from Karachi



syed SALAHUDDIN

Resident of Badgam district in Kashmir, he is the chief of Hizbul Mujahideen, which has claimed responsibility for dozens of attacks on Indian forces in Jammu and Kashmir. He currently operates from Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir



wadhwa singh BABBAR

Chief of the Babbar Khalsa International, which was a major terrorist group during the militancy in Punjab. Hailing from Kapurthala district of Punjab, he is wanted in a string of terrorist crimes including the assassination of former Punjab chief minister Beant Singh



ranjit singh NEETA

Hailing from Jammu, he is chief of Khalistan Zindabad Force. He is wanted in cases of murder, bomb blasts and smuggling of arms in India. He lives in and operates from Lahore, Pakistan



ishaq atta HUSSAIN

A close associate of Dawood Ibrahim, Ishaq Atta Hussain is wanted in connection with a conspiracy to kill then Indian Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister L.K. Advani. He lives in and operates from Karachi, Pakistan



IB sources told rediff.com that several Lashkar and HuJI leaders are adamant that not an inch of ground should be conceded to the US for its war in Afghanistan.

However, Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence directorate directed the Lashkar to go soft on this issue. This led to a split in the Lashkar with several of its terrorists shifting base to Afghanistan and aligning with Al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda is now under pressure from its new Lashkar recruits to do more than the Lashkar in the 'war' against India, especially in Kashmir.

Impact of the economic meltdown

For decades over 25 percent of the Pakistani labour force was employed in the oil-rich Middle East. With the econom-

ic downturn and lower oil prices, the boom is over. The Dubai shopping festival was a flop this year. The returning labour force will only add to the unemployment in the country.

In any case, Pakistan has very little industry and its agriculture is confined to Punjab and parts of Sindh. Most of the country's landmass is arid and unfit for agriculture. Rural poverty will gallop in the near future.

Ripe for implosion

The politics of extremism as represented by the Taliban, the economic meltdown and demographic pressure all point to a major implosion in Pakistan. Are we ready for the fallout?

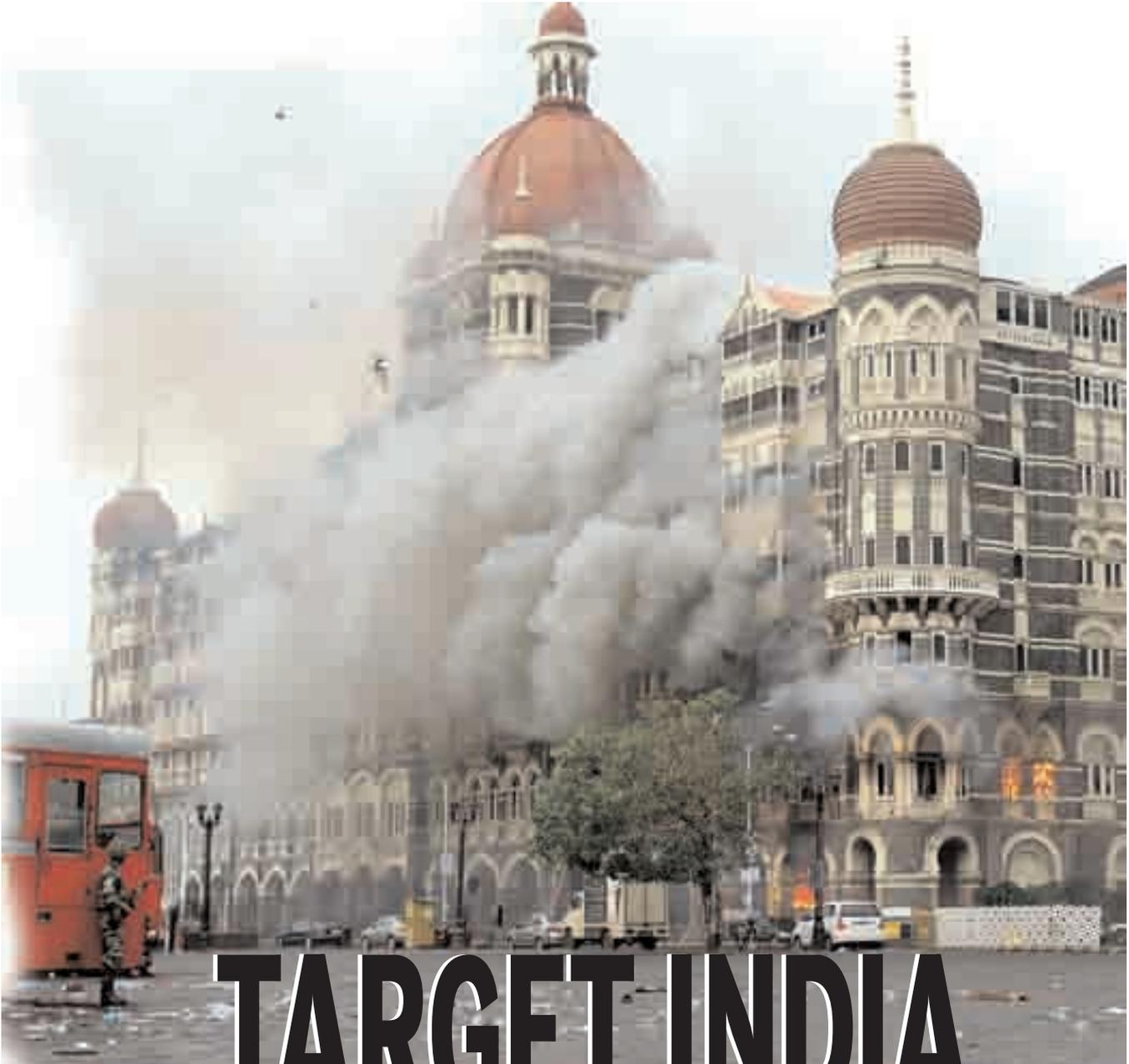
Despite this threat staring in our face

there is a palpable lack of national unity - another Indian trait. In the last four years, we have let our defence apparatus go to seed, so much so that we have lost the conventional edge over Pakistan.

Given this situation the only option for India is to 'isolate and contain' Pakistan. That still leaves the million dollar question about Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Here one hopes that all those joint exercise with special forces of the US, UK, Israel, China and Russia were in preparation for this very contingency.

If not, then God save the world!

(Colonel Dr Anil Athale (retd) is a former joint director, war studies, ministry of defence, and co-ordinator of the Pune-based Initiative for Peace and Disarmament)



TARGET INDIA

India remains Pakistan's primary target

Bharat Verma

Today, India is ringed by turbulent states – Pakistan (land boundary with India 3,310 km in the northwest), Nepal (land boundary with India 1,751 km in the north), Bangladesh (land boundary with India 4,095 km in the south-east) and Myanmar (land boundary with India 1,463 km in the northeast).

Turbulence has percolated through India's porous borders in the form of arms and narcotics to finance insurgents, militants, terrorists and religious fundamentalists.

India remains Pakistan's primary target and operating ground

for Islamic fundamentalists and terrorist groups who infiltrate through Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), Nepal and Bangladesh and carry out anti-Indian activities with impunity.

Nepal is vulnerable to China's influence. Its extremists have linkages with the People's War Group in India. In its bid to expand its influence, the PWG has carved a corridor ringing the states of Andhra Pradesh-Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh-Orissa-West Bengal-Jharkhand-Bihar.

This endless internal turbulence in India is also inter-linked with external factors. To the north, India shares a 3,440-km long border with China, which can pose the entire spectrum of conventional, nuclear and missile threats. It can also influence and use as proxy India's neighbours to weigh India down in every possible way.

In short, India's 14,058-km long land frontier is impacted by a perpetually hostile or semi-hostile environment. Indian security stands threatened by demographic assault, arms and drug smuggling, and the safe havens that the insurgents have in

Fundamentalist-religious groups in Bangladesh under Pakistani tutelage, West Asian finance and China's patronage have synergized sufficiently to add to India's security headache. The grim reality is that the unending turbulence will continue to afflict our land and sea frontiers and airspace.

AVERAGE INDIAN IS HIGHLY INDIVIDUALISTIC

By nature, the average Indian is highly individualistic and an entrepreneur. In every endeavour, his calculation is simply based on, "What's in it for me?" He does not have the time or the inclination to actively get involved with the intricacies of the nation's security.

This kind of entrepreneurial society requires a steel frame of military, naval and air power to ensure that India's accommodative temperament and societal characteristic of gentleness remains protected from the turbulent violence that as-

Field Marshal Wavell who was India's British Viceroy in 1946, was prophetic when he said "... the stability of the Indian Army may perhaps be a deciding factor in the future of India."

MANPOWER SHORTAGE MUST BE REMOVED SPEEDILY

For a number of reasons, and despite considerable efforts, the armed forces remain short of the manpower they need.

It is imperative that this manpower shortage be removed speedily before the system buckles under the ageing profile of its leadership.

There is only one viable strategy to attract the kind of talent that is needed and that is to assure military personnel of assured lateral induction into the paramilitary and police forces, the intelligence services and the civil administration.

Unfortunately, a consensus has not been achieved that "lateral induction" is the best way to attract India's young but savvy population to the tough profession of arms where risk-to-



SIMPLY ROBUST: T-90S MBT

saults the values of our democratic polity.

INDIA'S ARMED FORCES

On attaining Independence in 1947, India inherited possibly the best instrument of war in Asia – a fine battle-ready military machine with a formidable reputation of winning wars in distant lands. Britain had employed it skilfully for over a century to sustain her empire and treasured it as the jewel in its crown. In the years after Independence, India's Army has been unendingly deployed for internal policing tasks to cope with the complex security situation. This deployment has kept the Union of India physically intact. But it is sad that 60 years after Independence, the stability of India still depends directly on the stability of the Indian Army.

life is an everyday affair. Major benefits will accrue from lateral induction. First, the transfer of highly disciplined, trained and skilled manpower to the civil set-up will contribute towards the creation of a 'discipline culture' the country. Second, the superior training standards of lateral inductees will aid civil and paramilitary forces in combating terrorism and internal violence. However, placing a large segment of a young Army on the land borders cannot entirely ensure security of India. There are two aspects to it.

First, if a football team defends only its half of the field, it is certain that an adversary determined to create mischief, short of going to war, will create opportunities for its irregular forces (jihadis) to score goals through infiltration, smuggling and creeping invasion.

The hostile environment that impacts India's long frontiers requires that the role of military power to defend strategic frontiers must be firmly embedded in India's foreign policy.

The second aspect is the need for political will to project the power of Armed Forces beyond the Indian subcontinent to secure the sea-lanes for external trade and ensure the security of imported energy supplies.

INDIA NEEDS A RUTHLESS WINNING ATTITUDE

India's geo-strategic location with its 7,500 km-long peninsular coastline jutting into the Indian Ocean makes India a continental as well as a maritime power.

India impacts directly on East, West and Central Asia. As a rising economic power dependent almost entirely on foreign energy supplies, a time may come when India has to project its military power to protect and preserve the energy resources from Central and West Asia, and Africa.

For India, with its pacifist temperament, this may sound imperial. But without a ruthless winning attitude, India's multi-religious and multi-cultural society cannot survive endless undermining by disaffected elements.

The world has already recognized that with its democratic institutions, its liberal philosophy and its unique strategic location, India's influence will extend beyond South Asia and directly affect Asia's well being.

DOVETAILING FOREIGN-ECONOMIC-MILITARY OBJECTIVES

A nation's foreign policy is dependent primarily on the strength of its economic and military power. The ability and the will to wield military power ruthlessly, to defend and advance national interests, when combined with the capacity and resolve to create wealth, constitute the proven route for every aspirant seeking recognition as an eminent power.

India has the potential and the prerequisites of becoming a great power within the next few decades, provided it can dovetail its foreign, economic and military objectives and mainstream its military power.

The crucial question is whether India will be a surrogate power or be a 'great power'?

INDIA'S FREE MEDIA CAN BE INTELLIGENTLY HARNESSSED

Obviously, our national objectives are to have a peaceful neighbourhood. What should be the strategy to achieve it? Statements like a "stable and secure neighbours are in India's interest" are well meant. The fundamental question, however, is - "Will India's neighbours ever be stable and secure?" Appeasement of neighbours cannot constitute a strategy for any country.

India's larger objective in Asia is to emerge as a geo-economic hub that can integrate and influence its extended neighbourhood through mutually beneficial economic linkages and military relationships. As a benevolent power that has no external territorial interests, India is uniquely located - geographically and culturally to play this role effectively.

India's free media can be intelligently harnessed to further these national objectives and develop the complementarities that influence Asia.

To attain eminence in Asia, India needs to move simultaneously on three axes. These are India-West Asia, India-Southeast Asia and India-Central Asia. Of these, the critical one is the India-Afghanistan-Iran-Russia axis.

Today, Russia is reacting firmly to intruders into its neighbourhood. Her economic and military resurgence presents an opportunity for a relationship which would lend stability to the region.

Moreover, as the second largest consumer of oil and gas in Asia, the assurance of uninterrupted energy supplies is a vital factor in India's security calculus. By 2010, a substantial amount of oil and gas will be sourced from Central Asia

INDIA'S 'NEAR ABROAD' IS UNDER TURMOIL

This resource-rich region will succumb to fundamentalist-religious Talibanisation if India and like-minded countries do not pre-empt it. In such an eventuality, American oil corporations will be expelled, particularly with the Chinese gaining ground and occupying positions that could dictate the future agenda in Central Asia.

It is therefore timely for American capitalists to join hands with Indian counterparts in joint ventures.

CREATE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

India's 'near abroad' is under unprecedented turmoil. Pakistan is almost split into two states. The Pakistan Army controls one part and the other it ceded to Radical Islam. Pakistan Army appears to be under retreat. In Bangladesh the war between Pakistan backed radical Islam threatens to undermine the present regime.

Maoists in Nepal look up to China. Beijing successfully out manoeuvred New Delhi's influence in latter's backyard. These regimes being authoritarian in one way or the other have more in common amongst themselves than a multi-cultural democratic India.

They are also technology deficit regressive states. Therefore, to preserve

its values, India needs to create an international alliance with like minded technologically surplus 'far abroad' to out manoeuvre the inimical intentions of the 'near abroad'.

The international community, including Russia in near future, will be compelled to wage the next Great War against forces of Radical Islam threatening the world at large. As the core of jihad is located in a State wielding nuclear weapons, the evolving scenario appears to be more threatening than witnessed during Nazi Germany. New Delhi's support in the looming next Great War will be a critical element for swift victory for democracies and others. India's strategy must be to strengthen existing friendly relationships while decisively cementing mutually advantageous new relationships in the favourable geo-political scenario now emerging.

The columnist is the Editor of the Indian Defence Review)



India's larger objective in Asia is to emerge as a geo-economic hub that can integrate and influence its extended neighbourhood through mutually beneficial economic linkages and military relationships. As a benevolent power that has no external territorial interests, India is uniquely located -- geographically and culturally to play this role effectively.

No stopping the haze

No government
has shown the
will to stop the
rampant abuse
of nature



Global Warming, Pollution — Myth & Realities

Anil Sood

The Ghost of Global Warming is haunting every citizen and the media is consistently drawing attention of all those who matter. But so far the ground realities are concerned both the State Governments and the Central continue to abuse the nature left right and center. During sixties in India it was a case of nature against mankind as we as a Nation had to face furry of floods, draughts and natural calamities that aggravated poverty, hunger. Now it is a case of mankind against Nature.

Today's Planners i.e. Political class and bureaucrats plan massive projects while sitting in Air Conditioned Chambers based on DATA that is invariably outdated and cannot be relied upon. The reasons for such a blunder are that the DATA picked up at the time idea is conceived it is already almost three years old. By the time the plan is prepared the DATA becomes six years old and by the time the plan reaches drawing boards it is older by 9 years and when the actual execution starts the same is aged about 15 years.

It is shameful that both the Apex Court and Central Government are at logger heads on the issue of the powers to protect the forest areas between the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) constituted by the Apex Court and Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) constituted by the Central Government under the Ministry of Environment & Forests. The media has reported very recently that FAC had accorded approvals to many ill conceived projects in the Forest Areas without application of mind. It may also be worth while to note here that despite presence of Supreme Court Monitoring Committee in Dehradun Mussoorie Valley massive deforestation has taken place and forests continue to be erased. It is matter of record that the Apex Court had ignored the recommendations of CEC regarding protection of Forests in the Capital City of Delhi that too in an area that was mandated to be protected under Master Plan of Delhi and squarely covered under the Judgment of Apex Court itself.

All said and done our efforts seems to have lost the track and we continue to deplete the Green Cover without application of mind. One such classic example is missing Public Transport Policy at National Level. The last Public Transport Policy was prepared some where in 1977 and thereafter till date no efforts have been made to prepare policy on Surface Transport at National Level except in 2006 when Draft National Policy on Public Transport has been prepared but without will to implement.

It appears that the lack of will has percolated down from the Apex Planning Body of the Country i.e. National Planning Commission. If we read the Transport Policy of 10th Planning Commission Report one would find that the Plan has been pre-

pared for Civil Aviation, Railways and Shipping. The only reference to the Surface Transport is profitability and operations of State Transport Undertakings.



As a consequence to the myopic planning we find Marutas - Bullock Carts fitted with Diesel Engines ferrying in many parts of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana. One can spot cycle rickshaws fitted with scooters on many roads of almost most of the cities of the country. Needless to say that all the so called improvised vehicle ply on roads without insurance, registration and do not pay any tax. Only GOD can save the victims if any of such vehicle is involved in accident no steps have been taken by the Governments to curb use of such vehicles that are dangerous not only for other road users but also pollute the environment.

In absence of National Policy on Public Transport the Public Transport systems within and Intercity have virtually collapsed. No one seems to be bothered about ever growing number of personal vehicles on the roads leading to multiple problems impact of which has not been even assessed and analysed till date. The missing Public Transport is one of the major contributors towards Global warming some of which are as under:-

1. Over crowding of roads
 2. Increase in congestion on City/ Inter City roads;
 3. Grossly inadequate parking space;
 4. In turn multiplies congestion on roads and traffic Islands;
 5. Traffic snarls and blockades- increase in fuel emissions-
- Our survey conducted on 20 such intersections revealed that annually fuel worth Rs. 24 Crores and man hours worth Rs. 1300 Crores go up in smoke. The number of such intersections in the

City of Delhi has increased manifold due to construction of Flyovers on the City Roads as well as Highways- Classic Example - Express Highway on NH-8

6. Increase in Pollution due to emissions at traffic congested intersections and Roads;

7. Increase in fuel import bill and foreign exchange outgo;

8. Necessitates Road widening;

9. Depletion of Green cover- The photographs on NH 8 prove this point -Wherever flyover are under construction- Smalkha, Panipat- Haryana, Zirakpur - Punjab. The Roads after Karnal in Haryana have dense population of trees on the both sides of the road. The moment you enter this area the temperature needle on the Dash Board drops. The cause of concern is that the way NH-1 is being widened these trees would disappear as has happened in Ambala Cantt where massive fly over has come up. It may be noted that the trees could have been protected by following Karnal Bye pass where the vehicles heading for Ambala use the central roads and City Bound vehicles use the service roads. There was no need of huge capital investment and criminal wastage of State Exchequer and massive deforestation. What all was required a bit of planning and application of mind.

10. Increase in temperature- The need air conditioned cars, Air Conditioners and Coolers at home;

11. Increase in power demand that's already short in supply;

12. Generation of more power - increase in coal consumption.

No one seems to be bothered about the quality of Fuel produced and sold at Petrol Pumps. Adulteration of Petrol, Diesel seems to be most profitable business. Who cares so long as corrupt continue to make money. The Politicians and Bureaucrats are bothered about wide roads to increase the speed and it hardly matters that the roads are without trees.

If we go around the Country we find that in order to accommodate the ever growing need of space to accommodate ever increasing number of personal vehicles massive deforestation has taken place whether it is Mumbai - Pune Expressway or NH-1 or NH-8. Even accredited NGO without any credible studies and analysis continue to blame the Diesel vehicles responsible for pollution little realizing that world over the Diesel is being

used as one of the fuels for public transport.. During my five

days stay at Istanbul - with a population almost equal to Delhi, I did not find even a single vehicle on the roads emitting smoke. Even the number of petrol pumps is much less than we have at Delhi. The only reason is that quality of Fuel and vehicles is ensured.

We claim that the only city in the World has entire bus fleet

If we go around the Country we find that in order to accommodate the ever growing need of space to accommodate ever increasing number of personal vehicles massive deforestation has taken place whether it is Mumbai - Pune Expressway or NH-1 or NH-8. Even accredited NGO without any credible studies and analysis continue to blame the Diesel vehicles responsible for pollution little realizing that world over the Diesel is being used as one of the fuels for public transport.

operating on Cleanest Fuel is the City of Delhi. We don't assess the damage to the environment caused by the long queues of vehicles waiting for their turn at such filling stations located on the main City Roads due to congestion on roads. Even the suggestions to the State Government to change the filling timings from peak hours to non peak hours did not find favour. Who cares? Because as and when Bureaucrats, Politicians, Judges or Senior Police Officers pass through particular area their vehicles find smooth traffic as the Traffic cops manage to give them smooth rides.

It is the common citizens who breaths pollution and bears the brunt. The lax attitude of the Ministry of Environment & Forest is clear from the fact that the Ministry of Environment & Forest has issued a White Paper on Pollution in the City of Delhi still the position continues to go from bad to worse.

(Author is Secretary of CHETNA)



RATAN RATA AT THE
FORMAL LAUNCH OF
NANO

SMALL WONDER

Tata's People's Car redefines
automobile industry and
makes four-wheeler
affordable to all

VITALS STATS

Predecessor	None
Class	City car
Body style(s)	4-door sedan
Layout	RR layout
Engine(s)	2 cylinder SOHC petrol Bosch multi-point fuel injection (single injector) all alu minium 623 cc (38 cu in)
Transmission(s)	4 speed synchro mesh with over drive in 4th
Wheelbase	2,230 mm (87.8 in)
Length	3100 mm (122 in)[1]
Width	1500 mm (59.1 in)[1]
Height	1600 mm (63 in)[1]
Kerb weight	580 kg (1,300 lb)-600 kg (1,300 lb)[2]
Fuel capacity	15 L (4 US gal)

TATA Nano is up for grab, the most keenly awaited car in recent times have hit the road. Proud Chairman of Tata Motors Ratan Tata stated, "Nano will redefine automobile industry of the world". The name 'Nano' was chosen as it denotes high technology and small size.

The car will be available in both standard and deluxe versions. Both versions will offer a wide range of body colours, and other accessories so that the car can be customised to an individual's preferences.

STYLISH, COMFORTABLE

- Designed with a family in mind, the Nano has a roomy passenger compartment with generous leg space and head room.

- Can comfortably seat four persons. Four doors with high seating position make ingress and egress easy.

- With a length of 3.1 metres, width of 1.5 metres and height of 1.6 metres, with adequate ground clearance, it can effortlessly manoeuvre on busy roads in cities as well as in rural areas.

- Its mono-volume design, with wheels at the corners and the powertrain at the rear, enables it to uniquely combine both space and manoeuvrability, which will set a new benchmark among small cars.

FUEL-EFFICIENT ENGINE

- The Nano has a rear-wheel drive, all-aluminium, two-cylinder, 623 cc, 33 PS, multi point fuel injection petrol engine. This is

the first time that a two-cylinder gasoline engine is being used in a car with single balancer shaft.

- The lean design strategy has helped minimise weight, which helps maximise performance per unit of energy consumed and delivers high fuel efficiency.

- Performance is controlled by a specially designed electronic engine management system.

SAFETY

- The Nano's safety performance exceeds current regulatory requirements. With an all sheet-metal body, it has a strong passenger compartment, with safety features such as crumple zones, intrusion-resistant doors, seat belts, strong seats and anchorages, and the rear tailgate glass bonded to the body.

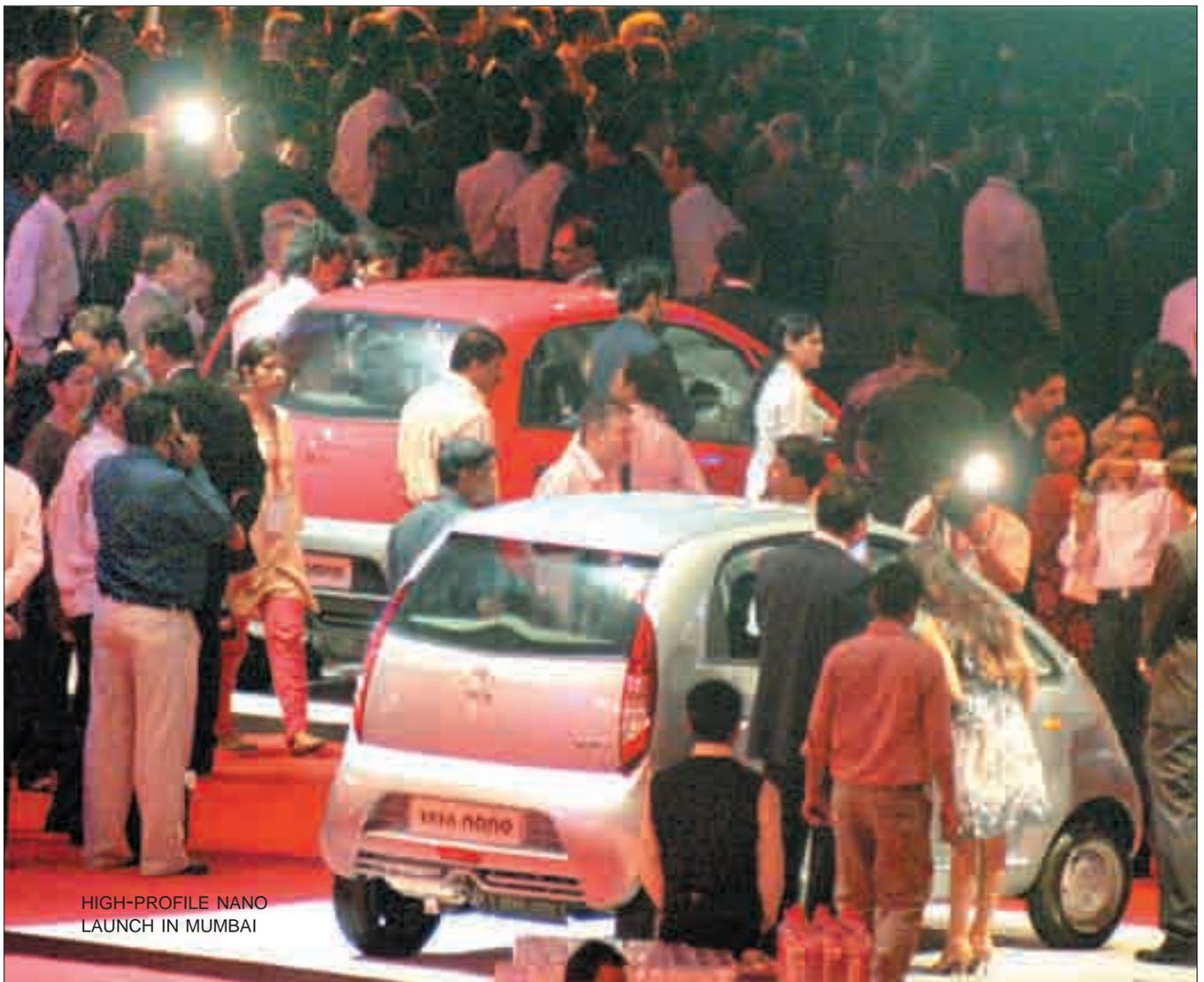
- Tubeless tyres further enhance safety.

ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY

- The Nano's tailpipe emission performance exceeds regulatory requirements. In terms of overall pollutants, it has a lower pollution level than two-wheelers being manufactured in India today.

- The high fuel efficiency also ensures that the car has low carbon dioxide emissions, thereby providing the twin benefits of an affordable transportation solution with a low carbon footprint.

Source: Tata Motors



HIGH-PROFILE NANO LAUNCH IN MUMBAI

DREAM DEBUT

This is what cinema was always meant to be. But somewhere in its chequered course from information to entertainment, our movies began to feel like vaudeville entertainment meant more for diversion than intellectual stimulation. 'Firaaq' doesn't aim to be a cerebral treatise on communalism. Nor does it suffuse the narrative with what one may call intellectual masturbation for the sake of creating an aura of socio-political importance. Non-judgemental and utterly bereft of stylistic affections, 'Firaaq' is a graceful and glorious homage to the human spirit. Much of its visual power comes from Ravi Chandran's articulate but restrained camera work, Sreekar Prasad's seamless but trenchant editing that leaves nothing (not even destiny) to chance, and Gautam Sen's artwork which makes the city's riot-torn colours emblematic of the red anger and the blue despair felt by the characters.

Set in those turbulent tension-filled days right after the Godhra incident in Gujarat, 'Firaaq' depicts the loss of human faith and the complete absence of the rules of civilised conduct in the day-to-day working of the administration vis-à-vis civilians. ►



NANDITA DAS' DIRECTORIAL DEBUT LEAVES YOU SPEECHLESS

Language, in fact, is an amazing tool of unhampered eloquence in 'Firaaq'. The characters in the riot-torn city speak in three languages Hindi, English and Gujarati. They do so without design or self-conscious purpose. The outstanding words do not stand outside the characters' ambit of everyday expression (sometimes colloquial, otherwise poetic).

Even when the narrative pauses to debate the polemics of communal politics among the characters, we the audience are one with the pause. This is excellence without the silent sound of applause. The spoken words are not designed for the camera. They are said because they have to be expressed.

'Firaaq' first and foremost deserves the highest praise for the remarkably even-pitched writing by Nandita Das and Shuchi Kothari. No character jumps out of the screen in trying to make its presence felt.

The people who live in Nandita's film are the people we know in one way or another. And yet they are here, special in a very unobtrusive way. The narrative episodes, written with finesse and passion, are constructed to accentuate the post-communal friction among people who till the other day were

neighbours.

There is a mixed-married Hindu-Muslim couple. Before the day is done the husband (played with silent sincerity by Sanjay Suri) has made peace with his environment and the fact that his name is Sameer Sheikh, not Sameer Desai. Sameer in the context of the film's volatile communal statement becomes a metaphor for the Hindu-Muslim divide which is now a looming reality in middle class lives.

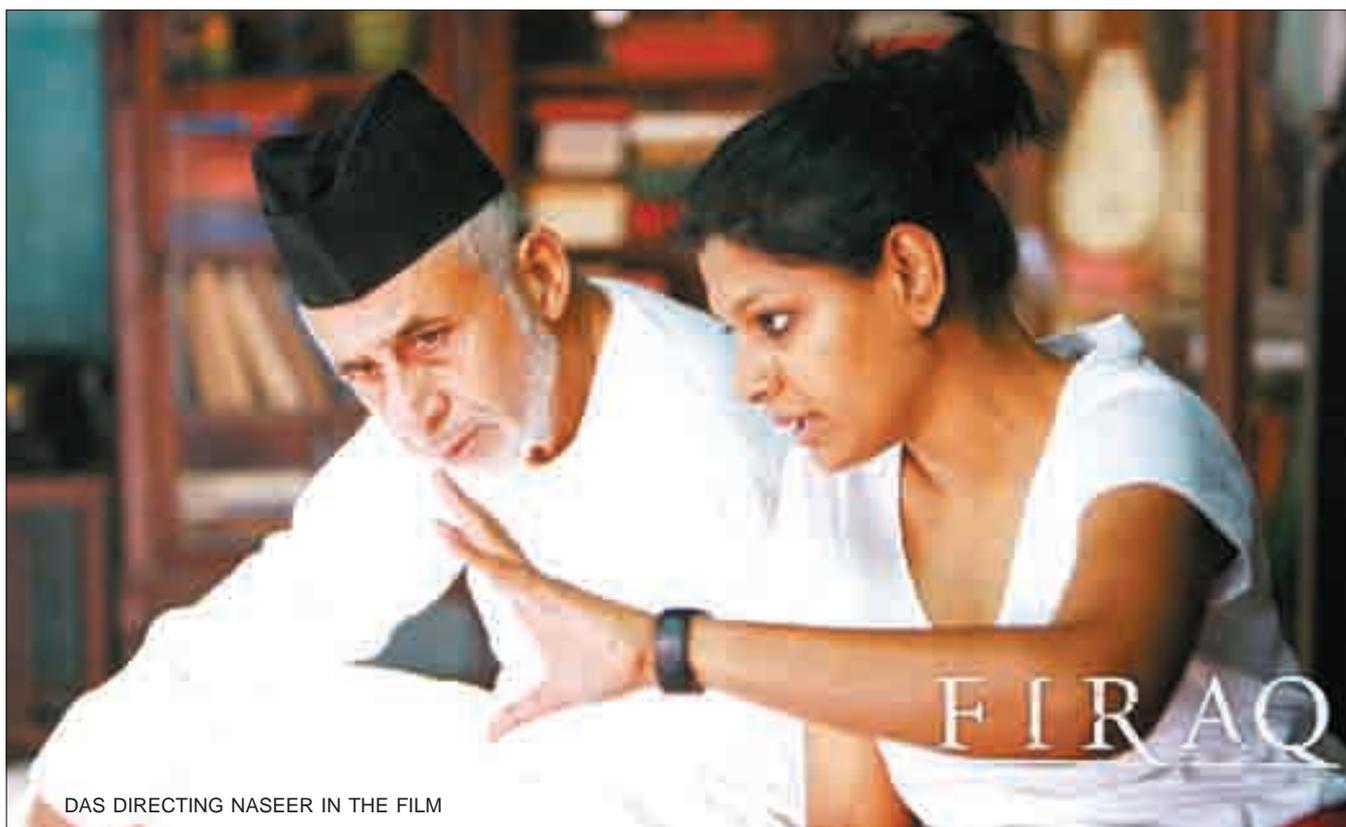
The tact and grace with which 'Firaaq' weaves through the communal tensions of unrelated characters all joined by their collective fear of a communal backlash are signs of a time when cinema and society at large need to do a serious rethink on their responsibilities.

'Firaaq' throws forward an assortment of unrelated characters zigzagging across a domain of doomed conscientiousness. Nandita Das's narrative doesn't attempt to unravel the enigma of a disaster-borne civilization. It looks at the people, even the lowest and scummiest of them (including Paresh Rawal who bravely plays a middle class businessman who happily looted a Muslim shop and shared in his brother's participative glee in a gang rape) with a kind of reined-in empathy that makes

The tact and grace with which 'Firaaq' weaves through the communal tensions of unrelated characters all joined by their collective fear of a communal backlash are signs of a time when cinema and society at large need to do a serious rethink on their responsibilities.



A STILL FROM THE FILM



DAS DIRECTING NASEER IN THE FILM

even the seeming perpetrators look like victims. The villains, if any, are the administrative personnel shown to be running around abetting the violence. If this is a simplification in storytelling then it can't be helped.

Celluloid depictions of troubled times have to somewhere find tangible figures to blame for the injustice. Otherwise we would come away from a certifiable masterpiece like 'Firaq' wondering if there's any sense of justice left in this chaotic world of self-serving brutality.

Das' narrative is propelled forward by powerful characters played by actors who not only know their job but also know how to make their jobs look like anything but professional hazard. It would be criminal to pick performances. Deepti Naval (looking like a ravaged guilt-ridden avatar of the nurturing foster-mom Sharmila Tagore in Shakti Samanta's 'Amar Prem'), Paresh Rawal (as a trashy unscrupulous bourgeois broker) and of course the redoubtable Naseeruddin Shah (as an aged classical singer caught in a sublime time-warp) deliver performances that glisten with glory and sensitivity. But there are dozens of other known and unknown actors furnishing Das' gripping drama with an inner voice that screams in protest without overstatement. The interactive drama bringing together people during crises never lapses into hysteria and homilies. The beauty of the drama of the disinherited is never diluted by clinging on to the inherent drama of any given situation.

Like life, Nandita Das' narrative moves on with confident steps creating for itself a kind of compelling circumstance when crises are a given, compromise a compulsion and surrender to fate the only means of survival. Haunting and powerful in its depiction of a time when humanity is frozen in anguish and terror, 'Firaq' draws its tremendous strength from the screenplay and characters which seem to observe life's keenest and meanest blows without flinching. Here's a film that must be seen not because it tells a story that touches every life. But because it touches our lives with such persuasiveness without resorting to overstatement.

SANJAY SURI IN THE FILM



TIDING OVER THE TURMOIL



I think the average person will look out for less value for markets. You'll stop reading about financial crisis in newspapers every single day. This will become less and less of an issue and you'll start to see normal functioning of rates and deposits and even the news will spend a lot less time on it...



Chief of JP Morgan Jamie Dimon is a person who many have called the superhero of this global financial crisis. Jamie Dimon has ensured that JP Morgan is not only the biggest bank in America with a market cap of about \$150 billion but is also one of the safest banks on planet today.

Dimon avoided JP Morgan taking on sub prime loans and all those derivatives. In fact, that is what makes it so much safer and different from all the other banks.

He has also acquired many major banks and firms recently to make JP Morgan the biggest bank in America. Jamie Dimon is also reported to be at the heart of negotiations with the US government and has been involved in many of the government's rescue plans. So there's no one else who knows about this crisis and what to do about it better than Dimon.

NDTV: How bad do you rate the current crisis? The worst in 100 years, 80 years? How bad is it?

JAMIE DIMON: Well you know as a student of history I think it's probably the worst since the Great Depression. We've had a lot of financial crisis. We have had them every 5 or 10 years. We have seen the internet bubble, the emerging markets, the Asian crisis of 1997..so I wouldn't take it as far as the Great Depression. I don't expect it to be that bad but that would be the worst.

NDTV: So worst in about 80 years. Now I'm not going to ask you when it's going to end. That's probably the most difficult thing to predict. But for investors, if you could tell us what key indicators, what signs should they look out for that

indicate that the crisis is coming to an end and recovery is on its way. What are the key things one should look out for?

JAMIE DIMON: I think one of the key things you have already seen and that is taking place is that the Central Banks and the governments in the world are taking very aggressive, bold and often creative never done before kind of actions. They are trying to mitigate the situation. So I think the fact that they can gauge the situation like that is a pretty positive sign. If you are optimistic, you could think that that will start to work over time and that you'll see lib rates come down. The real sign to look in markets will be that companies again will be able to borrow in the market place, they are going to pay more for money, people will demand less leverages in certain companies but they'll be able to raise finance in the balance sheets in the ordinary course of business.

Recapitalizing the banks, we know is going to work somehow because if some banks had a cut back on lending, there is lesser need to do that and other banks who didn't need the money can use it for more aggressive purposes. So we do not know exactly how it's going to work because it's kind of unprecedented but I do think that will be helpful. Those two things will play the most important steps that they have done.

NDTV: So for an average person, say one of our viewers, as an average investor what should he look out for? Is it difficult to know when companies start borrowing and lending again and the confidence comes back? What are the signs that an average person should look out for?

JAMIE DIMON: I think the average person will look out for less value for markets. You'll stop reading about financial crisis in newspapers every single day. This will become less and less of an issue and you'll start to see normal functioning of rates and deposits and even the news will spend a lot less time on it.

NDTV: We are looking forward to that actually! Now we've seen this unprecedented package from the US government and many other governments. You've seen it in different varieties, in different parts of the world. Which policies do you think are actually going to have an impact and which ones are little less impactful than we had hoped?

JAMIE DIMON: Guaranteeing deposits which a lot of companies have done is very impactful because it really means that any one who invests in a bank knows that they are going to get their money back. Recapitalizing the banks, we know is going to work somehow because if some banks had a cut back on lending, there is lesser need to do that and other banks who didn't need the money can use it for more aggressive purposes. So we do not know exactly how it's going to work because it's kind of unprecedented but I do think that will be helpful. Those two things will play the most important steps that they have done.

NDTV: The US government has given a



lot of money to the nine top banks. J P Morgan is safe, it has got adequate capital, capital adequacy is absolutely fine. Why did you take the money if you didn't really need it? Did they force you?

JAMIE DIMON: No they didn't force us. I would say that they had a strong opinion about it. What they wanted to do was to inject capital into 9 companies. So it wasn't the stigma to take the money so that a lot of other banks would take the money and it would allow more capital into the banks and reduce the burden on the balance sheet which will make them start to grow again. I actually believe that their argument is a fair argument, they enforced it upon you but they said that if any one bank doesn't do it then the other banks may not do it. We merely spoke to our board afterwards. We did not need the money, we probably needed it less than any one in the room. It's quite clear to me that this is of asymmetric benefit to companies, the weaker you are a company the more you benefit. On the other hand it was good for the system. It was good for J P Morgan but we didn't think that J P Morgan for self assure procure reasons should stand in the way of treasury to do something good for the system. We wanted to be supportive and we thought it was a pretty obvious thing to do.

NDTV: You know in a crisis like this US banks tend to look inwards, solve a lot of their own problems obviously introspective and kind of withdrawn from the emerging markets. Is that happening?

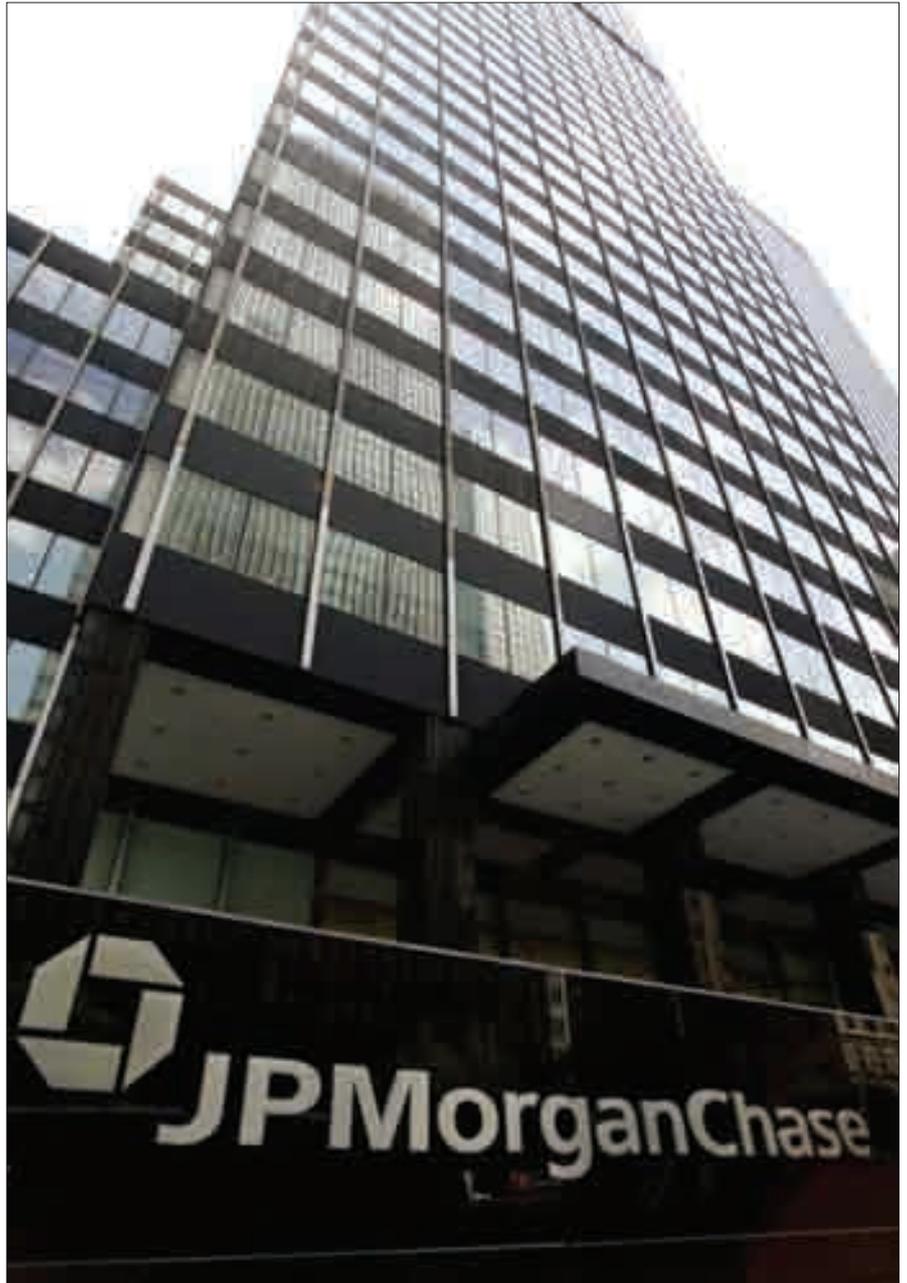
JAMIE DIMON: Most likely not to happen with J P Morgan because we are devoted to growing our businesses overseas. I think you may see some banks do that, not because they want to do it but because they don't have the capital to do it at this point. It is possible that you see some banks put back a little bit.

NDTV: Watching all the rescue plans across the world, what do you think the Indian authorities should do for India ?

JAMIE DIMON: Well India is doing far better than most of the countries. I think India may slow down a little bit but it is poised to have pretty good growth. So I don't think India should do anything that has been done elsewhere.

NDTV: Yes but say for emerging market countries, what should the authorities do?

JAMIE DIMON: In general for emerging market countries I think they have to be prepared for the slowdown in the States, Europe and Japan. Three major economies in the world are on a slowdown



and so it will have an effect on them. So if I was in an emerging market country, I would be prepared for some form of stimulus package that includes infrastructure and also make sure that orphanage institutions were sound and that they have the borrowing capability and also check in case they needed some help.

NDTV: J P Morgan came out of this whole terrible crisis relatively unscathed. Actually it is amazing that you didn't get caught in all that subprime stuff. How much of it was luck, how much did you see coming?

JAMIE DIMON: If you make a whole long list of problems, then we were engaged in lot less of them. And the ones we were engaged in were in a smaller way. And a lot of that was the risk management of the

company. We get very nervous by the subprime early on and cut way back on exposures. We minimized on our exposure levels and lending. We still make plenty of mistakes. We don't travel around and say that we were flawless we make plenty of mistakes. We have a lot to learn so we make sure that we become a stronger company.

NDTV: There is widespread anger or unhappiness among ordinary people on the streets on the amount of money, bonuses and perks that Wall Street and bankers get. Is that anger justified?

JAMIE DIMON: I'm a believer that people have complaints; I was really trying to think through whether its right or wrong. There is no question that there was compensation paid in certain cases that was-

n't due or shouldn't have been paid. We know that in hindsight. But it is wrong to blanket everyone and to say that everyone did it in exactly the same wrong way. I understand the anger but I think people should be very careful about what are the answers, about how to fix that and what should be done about that.

NDTV: So, what should be done? Do you feel that if you cut back, you won't get the best talent. Let the market decide or should there be more checks and balances in the remuneration of the top management of banks?

JAMIE DIMON: That's a good question. I do think there is a free market out there. Forget the CEO for a second, you have it in sports, you have it in arts, you have it in business where if you want to get the best talent you have to pay for it. If you restrict companies from doing that it will damage the future of the companies. Some CEOs may get what they deserve and some of them don't. I'm not against people paying more. In States there is a big debate about whether people who make a lot of money should pay more in taxes. I have been in complete support of that. People who make a lot of money have been beneficiaries of the country. It is fine for them to spread the wealth in the country. You see the Republicans in United States may help a lot of us to spread the wealth. We have had a progressive tax system since World War I and we should think about society in an equitable manner and taxes are a way of doing that. Boards should be a lot more conscious about how they pay executives. If they do pay executives pay them for the performance for an extended period of time and not based upon the year they won't pay them

on excessive risk.

NDTV: You said we're distributing wealth. That's a kind of bad word in these elections and socialism in India is a terrific word. Rightly or wrongly in America it's an awful word. But what the government of America is doing is buying stocks in banks. Does that smack of socialism?

JAMIE DIMON: I didn't use the word socialism. I never believed that we've had free markets since I have been in business so what we need are better regulations. When we talk about spreading the wealth then most countries have progressive tax system and that is what I mean. Buying stakes in banks is not really socialism as the US did it earlier also in 1932. It could become socialism if the state actually controls the company as opposed to assisting the company. So it really depends on who you are in the spectrum.

NDTV: Another media report which is probably a little truer. You are in the running for Treasury Secretary. Right?

JAMIE DIMON: I honestly don't know.

But it's not what I would expect to be.

NDTV: Would that position attract you?

JAMIE DIMON: Honestly, I've never thought of myself suited for a government type of job. I love my job and my intent would be to make JPMorgan a great company. We've tried very hard to help our country and I think it's reasonable enough to ask people to help them. J P Morgan has been a fabulous corporate citizen in the United States, in fact wherever we do business.

NDTV: Your answer was not quite a no. If you were actually asked to be the Treasury Secretary, you may accept it the way you accepted \$25 million





even though you really don't need either.

JAMIE DIMON: Well, I don't expect to be asked but if so, I'll consider it based on what they say to me.

NDTV: Why did you support Obama in these elections over McCain ?

JAMIE DIMON: I'm not allowed to support or endorse any one and it is known that I'm a Democrat so there is an assumption that I'm a Obama supporter.

NDTV: We won't go down that road since you are under certain restrictions there. Just coming back to India, how is this crisis going to affect your plans for India?

JAMIE DIMON: I don't think the crisis affects our plans at all. We are a major investment bank in India and we have expanded our cover to 160 banks now. We will be here and build investment banking, commercial banking and asset management. We are very optimistic about the future of India and I think the country is going to do well over a period of time. We are planning strategy to do things in a bigger and better way. I think when you invest

in a country then you do it relentlessly and we want people in India to look at J P Morgan and say you have helped in every way you can.

NDTV: Indians are worried about outsourcing in America and there may be punitive measures for firms that outsource in America. Are you in favour of that?

JAMIE DIMON: There is a lot of anti-trade sentiment around the world and it comes from both the left and the right. Personally I think the trade has been a great thing for the world. Most economies' estimate is lifting 2 billion people out of poverty. There are some negatives but for the most part America has been a major beneficiary of the trade. Indians buy a lot of stuff from America which in some effect means you outsource jobs to America. I think we should continue trade and make the world come closer. It is also important that the governments make sure that they have policies in place that will help anybody who is displaced by trade. We've got 12000 people here in the global service centre in addition to the 500 in invest-

ment banking, asset management and commercial banking. They do everything from call centre operations, complicated computer programming, risk management to research. It's been great for people here and for J P Morgan and we plan to do more of it and not less.

NDTV: How are you positioning yourself over the next two years?

JAMIE DIMON: We've done two acquisitions and if there is a great opportunity well do more. Our troops are tired and you have to make sure you have the capability for it. There may be an opportunity to distract us from all other jobs and we may look at doing it. We want to do something big in Asia and hope to see that opportunity.

NDTV: Thank you Jamie Dimon for being so candid. Great to have you on the show. And congratulations for what you've done so far.

JAMIE DIMON: Thank you for having me on the show.

Courtesy NDTV.com

USIBC calls for US-India investment pact

Ron Somers, president of the US-India Business Council, has said that the top priority on his organization's wish list for the Obama Administration is that "we are intent on seeing a bilateral investment treaty executed between our countries."

In his welcoming remarks to nearly 500 guests attending a luncheon discussion on the Asia Society's Task Force Report on 'Delivering on the Promise: Advancing US Relations with India,' hosted by the USIBC, Somers also said that the USIBC "strongly endorses the appointment of an Indian American to a prominent post in the US Commerce Department – one who could champion US-India trade and commerce – recognizing the new global economic order."

"After all, by 2050, the three strongest economies will be China, United States, and India," he added.

Several Indian American organisations had been hoping and lobbying for Indra



Wisner also said that a year from now would be the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference, and this too, now that India had been free from three decades of isolation with the signing of the US-India civilian nuclear deal, could not have any legitimacy without the participation of India.

As far as India goes, the erstwhile envoy said, it would be "impossible," for New Delhi to "achieve stability in its relationship with Pakistan without a relationship with the United States."



SOMERS (ABOVE) AND OBAMA

Nooyi, chairman of CEO of PepsiCo and current chairman of USIBC, to be appointed by President Obama as his Commerce Secretary. During the campaign and after Obama's election as President, Nooyi, was among some top Fortune 500 company CEOs who had met with Obama for an interaction and brainstorming session.

Obama's first choice for Commerce Secretary however, was New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, but he had to withdraw in the wake of a grand jury investigation into one of his top campaign contributors.

The President then reached across the aisle and nominated Republican Senator Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, but he too withdrew after having differences with the Obama Administration's stimulus package, and more importantly over the new Administration decision to move the Census Bureau from the Commerce Department to the White House.

Obama ultimately nominated former Washington State Governor Gary Locke, a Chinese American, to the post, and he is currently waiting to be invited to testify before the US Senate as a prelude to his confirmation.

Somers announced at the luncheon that Nooyi had asked him to share the news that "we would welcome the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as our chief guest to address the USIBC on the occasion of the USIBC's 34th anniversary on June 15 in Washington DC."

"One-fifth of the world's population will be watching in anticipation," he said, and added, "After all, India matters!"

Somers also said high up on the USIBC's wish list was the hope that President Obama "will visit India during his first term – so he can see and experience the world's largest, free-market democracy in action."

"We are confident President Obama will be moved – as we all have been – by the generosity of heart and spirit of the Indian people," he said, and predicted: "This first-hand experience will allow President Obama to place the Indo-US relationship in the proper context with due priority."

Former US Ambassador to India, Frank

Wisner asserted that the US-India relationship was extremely important for both India and the United States, and argued that "neither India nor the United States can possibly achieve the principle objectives we have on the world stage today without the cooperation of the other."



Wisner, considered the 'godfather' of the USIBC, who led the luncheon discussion, said, "The question before all of us, as we face the changing of the guard in Delhi as well as the one that is occurring in Washington, is how do we make this relationship strong in the future."

"How do we overcome the temptation to get on with the urgent and overlook the important."

Wisner asserted that the US-India relationship was extremely important for both India and the United States, and argued that "neither India nor the United States can possibly achieve the principle objectives we have on the world stage today without the cooperation of the other."

He said for the US, from the successful completion of the Doha Round of Trade negotiations to planning for the Climate Change conference in Copenhagen with the attendant policy and legislative changes could not take place "without an understanding with India."

Wisner also said that a year from now would be the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference, and this too, now that India had been free from three decades of isolation with the signing of the US-India civilian nuclear deal, could not have any legitimacy without the participation of India.

As far as India goes, the erstwhile envoy said, it would be "impossible," for New Delhi to "achieve stability in its relationship with Pakistan without a relationship with the United States."

Wisner said India would not find it difficult to sustain economic growth and attract the level of investment "without American tie-ups."

"It's impossible to access global markets and impossible to overcome the threats of protectionism without a strong cooperative relationship with the United States," he said.

Wisner said, "When I think of this generation of India's ambition to put India on the main stage of world affairs and have India count, is it possible to find India's way into the OECD, into the G-8 and APEC and one day even into the (United Nations) Security Council without a relationship with the United States."



Career diplomat to hold sway in **BIG APPLE**

Amidst high election fever in India, there is a change of guard of Indian ambassador in US, Ronen Sen is retiring, to be succeeded by Meera Shankar. Shankar, an Indian Foreign Service officer of the 1973 batch was posted in Washington from 1991 to 1995.

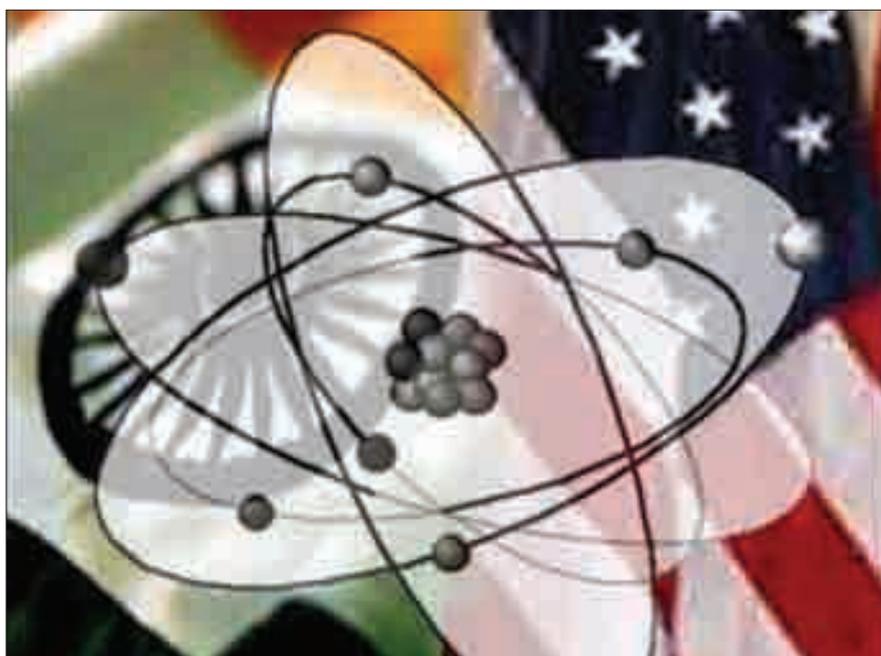
Key representatives of US and Indian business and industry – and the Indian-American community – have hailed Meera Shankar's appointment as India's new ambassador to the United States. Shankar is currently India's ambassador to Germany. The community fondly remembers her tenure as minister, commerce, in Washington, DC, in the 1990s under then ambassador Siddhartha Shankar Ray.

Ironically, when Sen put in his retirement papers last March – at a time when the nuclear deal was still in limbo following deep differences between Washington and New Delhi over the provisions in the 123 Agreement – Shankar's name was among those being thrown up as possible successors to the veteran diplomat.

Others in contention were former foreign secretary Shyam Saran and Satyabrata Pal, currently India's high commissioner to Pakistan, who also retires this month and will be replaced by Sharat Sabharwal.

Shankar will be the first serving diplomat to be posted in Washington in more than two decades after K Shankar Bajpai. After Vijayalaxmi Pandit who served as envoy between 1949 and 1951, she will be India's second lady ambassador to the US.

During her stint as minister, commerce



in the 1990s, she was part of a dream team of woman diplomats serving under Ray, comprising Nirupama Rao, currently India's ambassador to Beijing (and strongly tipped to be the next foreign secretary when Shiv Shankar Menon's term ends) who was then minister, press and information, and Chitra Narayanan, now

India's ambassador to Sweden, who took care of cultural affairs and also stepped in whenever there was political work to be done up on Capitol Hill.

The deputy chief of mission at the time was the mercurial Kanwal Sibal, who later went on to become India's foreign secretary punctuated by stints as ambassador in Paris and Moscow.

Interestingly, at the time, Ray's assistant was Vikas Swarup, now the deputy chief of mission at the Indian embassy in South Africa, and author of *Q & A*, which was made into the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*.

Shankar had worked in the Prime Minister's Office during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure and was considered one of the late premier's "favorite bureaucrats." And, most importantly, Sonia Gandhi likes her.

WAITING FOR REVIVAL

A weak demand and pricing environment will make it difficult for Indian IT companies to sustain growth and margins

The worsening economic climate in the US indicates that the challenges will only increase for Indian IT companies, which derive half of their revenues from the region. The resultant fallout of a slowdown has been a drop in IT spends by US companies, forcing Indian IT companies to offer bigger discounts to potential customers and re-price existing contracts at lower rates. Plans by the US and other governments to discourage outsourcing will only make things worse. A sector that was once known to weather all storms returning robust numbers quarter after quarter is losing its sought after status.

Though the BSE IT index has performed relatively better than the BSE Sensex (down 45 per cent against Sensex's 49 per cent decline) over the last one year, it is largely due to Infosys (down only 15 per cent), which has a 70 per cent weightage in the IT index. Even since December 1, 2008 till date, Infosys' stock has been relatively flat, while the Sensex was down 6 per cent and the BSE IT index by about 18 per cent.

Among the few positives is the appreciation of dollar against the Indian rupee. Also, there are opportunities for Indian IT companies to cut down on their excesses, streamline their costs and venture into new segments and geographies. To know more on the road ahead for Indian IT companies, read on.

THE BAD NEWS

As per a World Bank forecast, the world economy is set to grow at a modest 0.9 per cent in 2009, wherein the US, Euro region and Japan are said to contract by 0.5 per cent, 0.6 per cent and 0.1 per cent, respectively. This indicates a tough business outlook for Indian IT companies, which derive about 85-90 per cent of business from these three regions. As per Forrester Research, the global IT purchases in currency adjusted terms would grow at 3 per cent in 2009 compared to 8 per cent in 2006. The Central and Western European zones and the US are said to grow at 1 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively compared to 7 per cent in 2006.

CLIENT ISSUES

Most clients have been busy restructuring and pursuing activities like acquisitions to combat the slowdown. This is having a negative impact on the big four Indian IT companies, which get 90 per

cent of their business from existing clients. Says V Balakrishnan, CFO, Infosys Technologies, "We are seeing a delay in client spending - even from sanctioned budgets, as they are on a wait and watch mode. This has led to a lower velocity of business and is also contributing to the general slowdown."

On an average, repeat business has been lower by around 200 basis points (bps) q-o-q to 91-97 per cent for the top four IT companies. Thus, overall revenue growth rates in Q3 FY09 have nearly halved q-o-q. Going ahead, expect some curtailment in the discretionary spends (around 30 per cent of revenues) by cus-



CONCERNS



The proportion of fixed-price contracts (FPP) amongst the overall contracts has increased for Wipro (by 4.4 per cent), TCS and Infosys (over one per cent for both) on a q-o-q basis in the last two quarters. Both,

was down by 120 bps. For HCL Technologies though, it is up marginally.

The concerns over ramp-downs have also slowed the hiring plans of IT companies, which are hoping to improve utilisation levels. Says Manish Dugar, CFO, Wipro Technologies, "We have launched a series of initiatives to improve our cost-structure by increasing off-shoring, enhancing productivity, improving utilisation and cutting down expenses like travel etc."

Down, but for how long?

In the last 13 months, US has lost 3.6 million jobs and unemployment rate is standing at a 25-year high of 8.1 per cent. This has led to calls from the US government to protect native jobs.

The increasing noise to curb outsourcing is not a good sign; the top four IT play-

tomers. Analysts say that the compulsory spending in areas such as maintenance and processing will not experience major IT cuts as compared to new projects or initiatives such as software development.

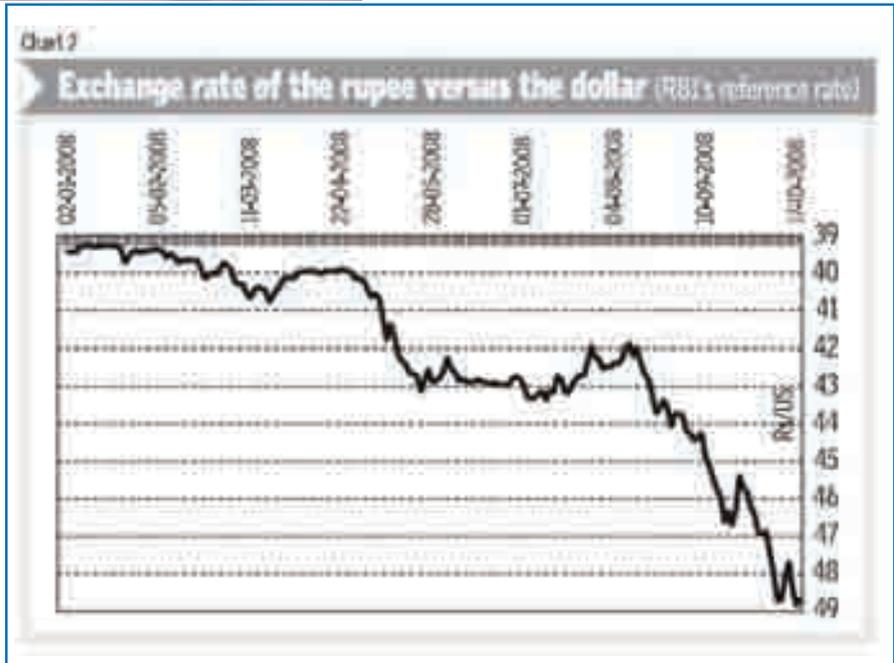
Volume and pricing pressures

In addition to subdued repeat business, things have not been any better in terms of the number of new clients added, which dropped between 10-37 per cent y-o-y in Q3 FY09 for the top companies. What this also indicates that unlike the high growth rates seen in FY08, volume growth (on a declining curve and stood at 2-3 per cent in the latest quarter) will continue to be under pressure.

Nitin Padmanabhan, analyst, Centrum Broking expects the volume growth for Infosys to slip from 27.6 per cent in FY08 to 14.6 per cent in FY09E and further to 6 per cent in FY10E.

Going ahead, although clients have always wanted greater value for money, calls for pricing cut will become sharper when contracts are up for renewals. On cue, IT companies are also cutting rates to boost volumes or retain clients. Says Chirag Sanghani, analyst, Twenty First Century, "Pricing pressure could be in the range of 2-5 per cent. A third of the contacts come for renewal each year, so any decline in prices will be visible in the coming quarters with pricing pressure in CY09 and CY10."

COST-CUTTING MEASURES



client and IT vendors have found preference for FPPs as it offers greater cost clarity and control (for clients) and ensuring revenue visibility (IT vendors). In addition to FPP, off-shoring is being preferred as it is relatively cheaper (costs are about a third) as compared to onsite. Little wonder that the share of off-shoring revenues has increased by 2-3 per cent in Q3 y-o-y.

When the rupee was appreciating in FY08, IT companies had started tightening sales, general and administrative (SG&A) expenditure, and this continues to show an improvement. In Q3, SG&A expenses as a percentage of revenue has decreased by 160 bps for Infosys and TCS as compared to Q2; on y-o-y basis it

ers derive between 50-65 per cent of their revenues from the US. However, in terms of the impact of these restrictions on the IT sector, an analyst from India Infoline says, "The recent proposals to limit tax breaks and block new H1B-based hiring for TARP (a government support initiative) receiving entities will have no material impact on Indian IT vendors; we are more worried about UK where calls are made to increase the bar on skilled immigrants." Balakrishnan further adds on how things would pan out on the outsourcing front. "Outsourcing has enhanced the competitiveness of US corporations and has created more jobs within the US. The US is a strong proponent of free trade globally. We are confident that it will not take any

measures, which might hurt its competitiveness."

SAVING GRACE?

The silver lining in an otherwise gloomy demand outlook has been the depreciation of the rupee against the dollar. "The 11 per cent (average) rupee depreciation over the last two quarters vis-a-vis the dollar has aided the topline of the Indian IT vendors, which partially negated the pricing decline.

However, the depreciation of the British pound (16 per cent) and Euro (12 per cent) against dollar is a bane as it impacted the dollar term revenue growth," says an IT analyst of Reliance Money. The revenues for IT companies in non-dollar currencies have been under pressure with a relative appreciation of dollar against most of the currencies.

The positive rub-off on the earnings front due to rupee's depreciation is partially offset by hedging losses. The rupee's appreciation during CY07 and early part of CY08 forced IT companies taking higher hedge positions to protect their revenue growth. The hedge positions were the highest in Q4 FY08 over the last many quarters. Because of large hedges (TCS's total hedge position is around \$1.25 billion as on December 2008) companies could not take advantage of the depreciation in the rupee, leading to forex losses. For example, TCS's forex losses have been around 18-21 per cent of net profits in Q2 and Q3.

Nevertheless, the depreciating rupee is a positive and with hedge positions decreasing (apart from Infosys which has a lower hedge position, hedges are down by around 40 per cent for the other three top companies) in the last three quarters, expect forex losses to be lower in Q4 FY09.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Analysts expect the next few quarters to be challenging, especially in verticals such as BFSI, manufacturing and tele-



com. Around 25-40 per cent of revenues come from the BFSI; the segment which has been most affected (due to global majors reporting losses and write-offs). However, pharma, media and retail have done well in Q3 FY09 and, could offer some respite. While in the applications development and maintenance segment, the Indian IT sector has a market share of around 30 per cent, other segments like consulting and BPO (market share of 2.5-4 per cent) provide good opportunities for companies to scale up.

Newer markets such as West Asia, Latin and South America provide greater geographical diversification apart from the existing geographies. Several IT companies having cash in their books, would look at inorganic opportunities. And notably, the cost advantage enjoyed by the Indian IT industry should place them better in tapping new opportunities while helping fend off from competition in ex-

isting areas.

To sum up, while the decreasing IT spends, drop in volumes and margin pressures will mean trouble for several small and mid-tier IT companies, the bigger IT companies with diverse services, quality control and strong balance sheets are better placed to weather the current headwinds.

Notably, a majority of these concerns are reflecting in stock valuations of IT companies, which have dropped significantly-PE multiples on a one-year forward earnings basis have slipped to single-digits as compared to 15-25 earlier. Among the bigger companies, analysts say Infosys, with one of the best in the industry operating margins, return ratios and corporate governance records and which is trading (its 11.67x its FY10E) at a premium compared to its peers, is a decent buy on dips.

Source: Business Standard



Economic Nationalism in China targets Coca-Cola

Global meltdown pushing countries to do what is perceived as irrational behavior, new China has picked a strange time to lay down a marker in defense of economic nationalism - and an even stranger industry in which to do it. Amid a global recession, with Beijing's state-owned companies fanning out across the globe trying to invest in or buy foreign producers of minerals, precious metals, oil and gas, China's Ministry of Commerce on March 18 formally blocked what would have been the largest acquisition by a foreign company in China, a \$2.4 billion deal.

The denied suitor: Coca-Cola, the iconic American brand that has 35 beverage factories in China, producing everything from soft drinks to milk tea. The industry in question: the fruit-juice business, heretofore never thought of as strategically vital in China or anywhere else.

Coke on Sept. 3 announced a deal to buy Beijing-based Huiyuan Juice Group, a privately owned company started by a Chinese entrepreneur 17 years ago. Huiyuan, whose stock is traded on the Hong Kong exchange, is the largest producer of pure orange juice in the country, with over 40% of the market. Although Huiyuan's founders and major shareholders endorsed the sale, the government blocked it on antitrust grounds, arguing that the acquisition would have

hurt small orange-juice producers in China and led to higher prices for consumers.

The deal was widely seen as the first big test of an antitrust law that Beijing enacted last August. In the eyes of for-

eign investors, that test is now officially a failure. Together, Coke and Huiyuan's combined share of the orange-juice market - itself just a sliver of the overall non-alcoholic-beverage market - would have been around 20%. The segment Huiyuan



dominates - undiluted OJ - is for pricier products and is relatively small. Coca-Cola's Minute Maid brand plays in the less expensive, larger segment of the market.)

Anti-trust lawyers in Beijing were befuddled by the Ministry of Commerce's ruling. "From a purely competitive point of view, this would not have affected the [nonalcoholic-beverage] market," says Michael Gu, a lawyer at Allen & Overy in Beijing. Before the ruling, a source close to the deal from the Coca-Cola side said, "There is just not a competition issue, no matter how you look at it." He called the proposed acquisition a "marriage made in heaven."

But Beijing was plainly taking into account considerations other than market share. Huiyuan is a high-profile national brand, and its sale to Coke had become a hobbyhorse for nationalists who often dominate popular Internet chat rooms in China. Zhu Xingli, founder and CEO of Huiyuan, famously said that he had "raised the company like a son" but was "selling it like a pig" - that is, at the market, for the highest price available. Blogger Zhang Xianfeng retorted, "The problem with selling to a multinational company is that it's no longer Chinese deciding which part of the pig you get to eat." A survey by Xinhua, China's state-

That perceived disingenuousness may come back to bite Beijing, in two ways. "If they're seen as just inventing reasons to prevent big Chinese companies from being acquired, that's going to have a chilling effect on foreign investment," says a senior Hong Kong investment banker. It will also hurt China's own economic interests abroad.

owned news agency, found that more than 80% of Internet commentary on the deal was negative.

China's new antitrust law contains provisions allowing the government to protect national brands. And it's true that Beijing is hardly the first government to kill a foreign acquisition for political reasons, even in defense of less-than-strategic industries. The French rescued

yogurt company Danone from the clutches of PepsiCo a few years ago. But Beijing didn't justify its decision on "national economic development" grounds, the part of the law that allows protection of popular brands. It cited the need to protect consumers, an unconvincing reason to some legal experts.

That perceived disingenuousness may come back to bite Beijing, in two ways. "If they're seen as just inventing reasons to prevent big Chinese companies from being acquired, that's going to have a chilling effect on foreign investment," says a senior Hong Kong investment banker. It will also hurt China's own economic interests abroad. The Australian government is reviewing the proposed \$19.5 billion investment from Chinalco - China's huge state-owned aluminum company - in Rio Tinto, the world's second largest mining company, as well as a couple of other, smaller deals in the mining sector. But opposition in Australia has been increasing. There are TV ads now running that in effect say, "China will not allow us to buy one of their mines, so why should they be allowed to buy ours?"

It's a reasonable question, and now it becomes even more pointed: Why should Chinese state-owned companies be permitted to go on a buying spree abroad, when a foreign company - indeed, perhaps the world's most famous foreign company - can't even buy a fruit-juice maker in China, one owned and run not by the government but by an old-fashioned entrepreneur who wanted to do the deal? Beijing's explanation aside, there's really no good answer to that question. In a world now beset with more than enough economic problems, including diminished international flows of both goods and money, China just added to the list.

Lawyers and investment bankers said China's rejection of Coca-Cola Co.'s \$2.4 billion bid for China Huiyuan Juice Group Ltd. could prompt a backlash against Chinese investing abroad as it risks chilling investment within the country.

China's Commerce Ministry said Wednesday that the combined company's market power could "narrow the room for survival" of smaller players in China's beverage industry and lead to higher prices for consumers. Coke might use its dominant position in the carbonated-beverage market to restrict competition in the juice business, the ministry said.

Inputs Courtesy TIME

Enjoy

Business in crisis!! Best places..

The economic downturn that's swept the globe has crushed financial markets, exploded unemployment and shaken confidence in the banking system.

The disaster isn't shared equally, though. Some countries are in a much better position than others to rebound from the current malaise by attracting entrepreneurs, investors and workers.

Who are they? Our fourth annual Best Countries for Business ranking looks at business conditions in 127 economies. Topping the list for 2009: Denmark, for a second straight year, takes the No. 1 spot. The U.S. is up two spots to No. 2, Canada is up four spots to No. 3, Singapore is up four to No. 4 and New Zealand is up seven to No. 5.

Big movers included New Zealand (No. 5, up seven spots), followed by Jordan (No. 33, up 28), Australia (No. 8, up five), United Arab Emirates (No. 46, up 28) and Malaysia (No. 25, up 13).

This is not a tally of economies with high gross domestic product growth, or low unemployment. The goal is to quantify for entrepreneurs and investors the often-qualified information about dynamic economies and what they would consider desirable conditions for business.

Personal freedoms play a big part—it's hard to start a company or find talented employees under totalitarian regimes and military juntas. So we include measures of the right to participate in free and fair elections, freedom of expression and organization.

Taking care of investors, with laws assuring recourse for minority shareholders

ers in cases of corporate misdeeds, is also important. As a barometer for corruption, Transparency International examines the number and frequency of incidents where corporate assets are misused for personal gain.

Amid the financial turmoil this year, we added stock market performance to reflect the extent of disrepair in countries' banking systems, as well as investor confidence in a recovery. Intellectual property rights, the promotion of free trade and low inflation, combined with low taxes on income and investment, give a snapshot of the conditions for business in each.

All was not lost in a tough year for believers in low taxes, free trade and limited bureaucracy. Despite swelling budget deficits, at least 50 countries recently cut or passed plans to cut taxes on individuals and businesses, including eight of the top 10, with individuals and investors in the U.S. and Norway left in the lurch.

The United Arab Emirates, in particular, has made strides in protecting intellectual property rights through initiatives like educational seminars for thousands of students, with support from corporations like Procter & Gamble, Estee Lauder and General Motors.

New Zealand improved its free-trade ranking by pursuing talks with India, Korea and Hong Kong, while securing the first (for a developed nation) free-trade deal with China late last year. Infrastructure improvements to the Jordanian stock market are improving enforcement of investment laws and compliance by broker members.

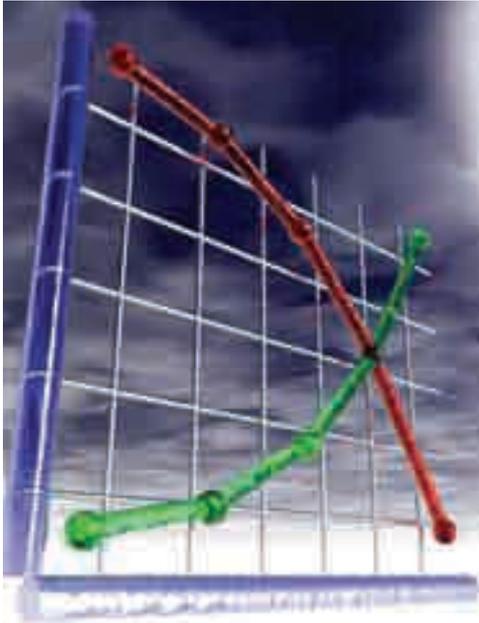
Sliding the most this year was Ireland (No. 14, down 12), which even saw plans for a Guinness mega-brewery shelved by parent Diageo as exports slowed. Uruguay (No. 66, down 22), Armenia (No. 94, down 31), Paraguay (No. 99, down 29) and Latvia (No. 45, down 13) rounded out this year's losers.

Expertise, research and published reports—from the Heritage Foundation, World Economic Forum, World Bank, Transparency International, Freedom House, Deloitte Tax, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Central Intelligence Agency—all contributed vital analyses of various socioeconomic indicators on the countries included.

— Jack Gage



100,000 Indians will return from US in next 3-5 years



Washington: As many as 100,000 Indians and an equal number of Chinese will return to their native countries in the next three to five years, a move that will greatly boost their economies and undermine technological innovation in America, a new US study warns.

The study on immigration by a team at Duke, Harvard and Berkeley universities led by Vivek Wadhwa, an Indian-American technology entrepreneur turned academic, says "America's loss is the world's gain". There are no hard numbers available on how many have returned, but anecdotal evidence shows that this is in the tens of thousands, says Wadhwa, executive-in-residence for the Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University and fellow at the Labour and Worklife Programme at Harvard Law School.

"With the economic downturn, my guess is that we'll have over 100,000 Indians and as many Chinese return home over the next three-five years," says Wadhwa. "This flood of western educated and skilled talent will greatly boost the economies of India and China and strengthen their competitiveness. "India is already becoming a global hub for R&D. This will allow it to branch into many new areas and will accelerate the trend," he says.

"The US has always had the luxury of being arrogant about immigration because it has been the strongest magnet for the world's best and brightest," but as the study shows "there are other strong magnets now". "We are effectively exporting our economic stimulus. Policies like those which the US just enacted which prevents some banks from hiring foreign workers will have the opposite effect from what they intended - they will



send jobs abroad and scare away top talent," Wadhwa said.

The study released Monday Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, based in Kansas City, Montana, indicates placing limits on foreign workers in the US is not the answer to America's rising unemployment rate and may undermine efforts to spur technological innovation. "A substantial number of highly skilled immigrants have started returning to their home countries in recent years, draining a key source of brain power and innovation," said Robert E. Litan, vice president of Research and Policy at the Kauffman Foundation.

"We wanted to know what is encouraging this much-needed economic growth engine to leave our country, thereby sending entrepreneurship and economic stimulus to places like Bangalore and Beijing."

The report builds on an earlier Kauffman Foundation report by Wadhwa documenting a queue of one million H-1B holders and their families anxiously awaiting longer-term work visas and growing frustrated with the immigration process.

Until recently, America has been the prime destination for the world's best and brightest immigrants. "Immigrants have made tremendous personal sacrifices," said Wadhwa. "They would leave behind relatives and friends and accept second-tier status in American society.

"Now countries like India and China are providing equal career opportunities and a better quality of life. So the most highly educated and skilled are often returning home." The two-year study covered 1,203 Indian and Chinese subjects who had studied or worked in the US for a year or more before returning home.

FASHION FIESTA



DIVA'S WALK:
DEEPIKA PADUKONE AT
INDIA'S FASHION WEEK
IN NEW DELHI



'Wills Lifestyle India Fashion Week' saw a glimpse of Bollywood. Model turned actress, Mughda Godse walked the ramp for designer Satya Paul, wearing a shimmery saree with a signature Satya Paul play of pattern. Mughda looked very much at home while on the ramp. (Above right) Slumdog Millionaire child stars walk the ramp



AGARWAL



MITTAL



NADAR



NILEKANI

Four Indians have been listed among Forbes' "48 Heroes of Philanthropy" who opened their cheque books for a cause even as the global financial crisis is hammering fortunes all over Asia.

Indian telecom czar Sunil Mittal, NRI businessman Anil Agarwal, HCL Technologies chairman Shiv Nadar and Rohini Nilekani, wife of Infosys Technologies Co-founder Nandan Nilekani, made it to the list compiled by the US business publication.

The list features 48 individuals, four each from India, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, besides another four from Australia and New Zealand.

"The global financial crisis is hammering fortunes all over Asia, but the past year was still a good one for philanthropy as tycoons and more modest donors tried to maintain their charity commitments, Forbes said announcing its third annual 'Heroes of Philanthropy' list.

"Many opened up their chequebooks to help the victims of the Sichuan earthquake and the Myanmar cyclone in May. Many more donated to health, education, cultural and other causes," it noted.

Anil Agarwal, 55, chairman of mining outfit Vedanta Resources, Forbes noted pledged \$1 billion to build a new university in the eastern state of Orissa.

Apart from arts and sciences, medicine and engineering, it plans research centres for bio- and nanotechnology, crop genetics and alternative energy.

Sunil Mittal, 51, chairman and group

chief executive of Bharti Enterprises, set up the Bharti Foundation in 2000 and contributed \$22 million.

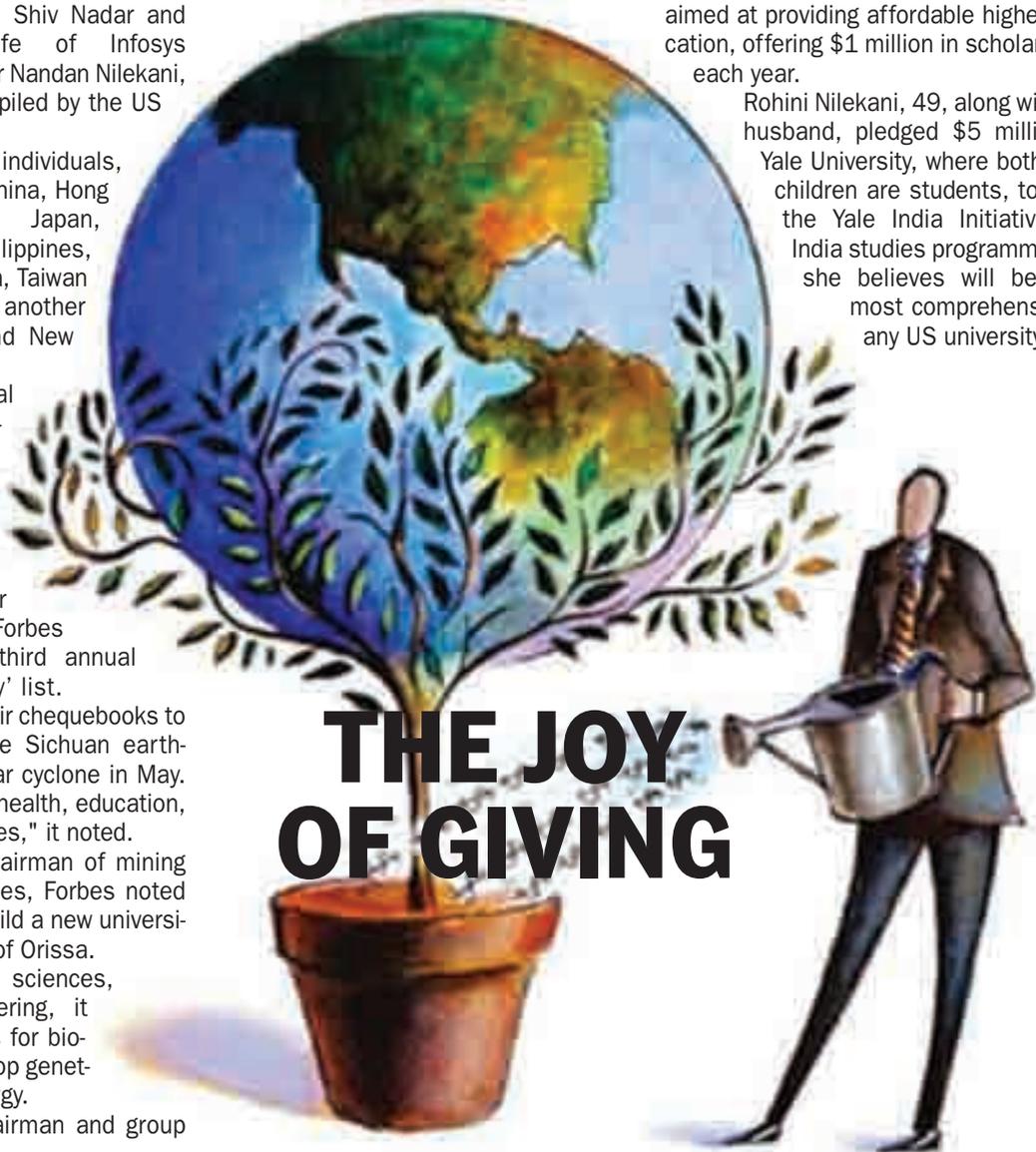
It also set up telecom-technology colleges on the campuses of the Indian Institutes of Technology in New Delhi and Mumbai, and has funded 26 computer

centres and more than 100 libraries aimed at poor children, especially girls.

Shiv Nadar, 63, Chairman and chief strategy officer, HCL Technologies, started the SSN Trust, named after his late father, in 1994.

Its \$30 million endowment is used mainly to fund SSN Institutions, which are aimed at providing affordable higher education, offering \$1 million in scholarships each year.

Rohini Nilekani, 49, along with her husband, pledged \$5 million to Yale University, where both their children are students, to start the Yale India Initiative, an India studies programme that she believes will be "the most comprehensive in any US university."



THE JOY OF GIVING

INVESTING IN INDIA

Investment in Indian market

India, among the European investors, is believed to be a good investment despite political uncertainty, bureaucratic hassles, shortages of power and infrastructural deficiencies. India presents a vast potential for overseas investment and is actively encouraging the entrance of foreign players into the market. No company, of any size, aspiring to be a global player can, for long ignore this country which is expected to become one of the top three emerging economies.

Success in India

Success in India will depend on the correct estimation of the country's potential, underestimation of its complexity or overestimation of its possibilities can lead to failure. While calcu-

lating, due consideration should be given to the factor of the inherent difficulties and uncertainties of functioning in the Indian system. Entering India's marketplace requires a well-designed plan backed by serious thought and careful research. For those who take the time and look to India as an opportunity for long-term growth, not short-term profit- the trip will be well worth the effort.

Market potential

India is the fifth largest economy in the world (ranking above France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Russia) and has the third largest GDP in the entire continent of Asia. It is also the second largest among emerging nations. (These indicators are based on purchasing power parity.) India is also one of the few



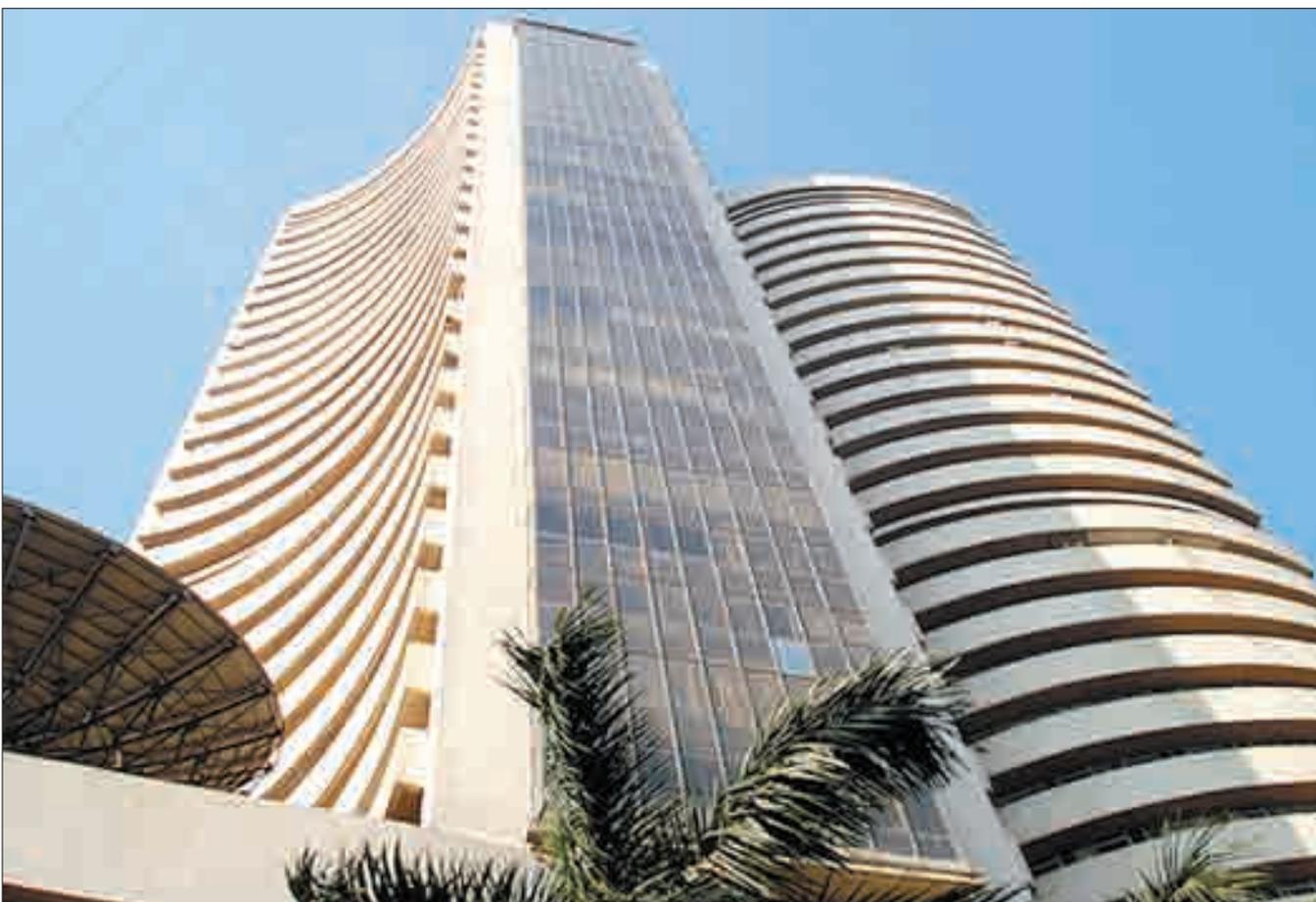


markets in the world which offers high prospects for growth and earning potential in practically all areas of business. Yet, despite the practically unlimited possibilities in India for overseas businesses, the world's most populous democracy has, until fairly recently, failed to get the kind of enthusiastic attention generated by other emerging economies such as China.

Lack of enthusiasm among investors

The reason being, after independence from Britain 50 years ago, India developed a highly protected, semi-socialist autarkic economy. Structural and bureaucratic impediments were vigorously fostered, along with a distrust of foreign business. Even as today the climate in India has seen a sea change, smashing barriers and actively seeking foreign investment, many companies still see it as a difficult market. India is rightfully quoted to be an incomparable country and is both frustrating and challenging at the same time. Foreign investors should be prepared to take India as it is with all of its difficulties, contradictions and challenges.

Developing a basic understanding or potential of the Indian market, envisaging and developing a Market Entry Strategy and implementing these strategies when actually entering the market are three basic steps to make a successful entry into India.



Great potential for business between India and France

Mr. Philippe Leroy, President of Moselle Department Council

"India and France have great potential for economic and commercial opportunities, specially the small and medium enterprises. We are here with a high level delegation to promote Moselle region which is very close to Luxembourg, Germany and Belgium and is a logistic hub of Europe. The main sectors operating out of Moselle region are Automotive, aerospace, education, ship-building, transport, environment and energy. The top 100 hightech companies operate out of Moselle are Arcelor Mittal, Total, Lafarge, Alcatel, Ikea logistic, Alstom, Danone, Peugeot, Hermes, L'Oreal. It is the best destination for doing business and investment in France/Europe, said Mr. Philippe Leroy, President of Moselle Department Council at a meeting organized by the All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and the World Trade Centre (WTC)..

Mr. Francois Pujolas, Consul General of France said we have to facilitate trade between India and France which is presently Euro 6 bn. and is expected to be Euro 12 bn. by 2012. The visit of Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France has given impetus to Indo-French economic relations and strengthened political ties. France was one of the first supporters of Nuclear power and energy committed to work in this area which is most needed by India.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries, in his welcome address said that France is the sixth largest economy of the world and an important member of the G-8. We should gain from its technological strengths and make it the leader in sectors such as aviation, space, food processing, transport, railways and agriculture research. France is the eighth largest foreign investor in the period from August 1991 to March 2007. Foreign Direct Investment approved from France during this period is of the order of \$1.76 bn. However, the actual inflow is of the order of \$ 900 million. The number of technical and financial collaborations approved with France is 915. Indian investments in France have also been growing. Indian companies are active in IT, pharmaceuticals and plastic industry in France.

Mr. Kalantri further added, we could have close relations with France specially in sectors of energy, innovation and technology upgradation to make it more competitive in global world.

On this occasion, Memorandum of Understanding was signed between All India Association of Industries and Moselle Department Council for promoting bilateral trade, technology transfer, joint ventures and collaborations between India and France.

Mr. Y.R. Warkerkar, Executive Director, World Trade Centre proposed the vote of thanks



Mr. Vijay Kalantri
A Fact File
QUALIFICATIONS: GCD & Textile Diploma
OCCUPATION: Industrialist

PRESIDENT

- All India Association of Industries (AIAI)
- Indian Council of Foreign Trade (ICOFT)
- Indo-Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industries
- Indo-Polish Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Indo-Mauritius Chamber of Commerce

VICE PRESIDENT

- MVIRDC World Trade Centre
- Bowling Alley Association

CHAIRMAN

- India-UNIDO Industries Council
- Armed Forces Flag Day, Greater Mumbai

- National Foundation for Teachers Welfare, Greater Mumbai
- Chairman of SME Committee of FICCI

MANAGING COMMITTEE MEMBER

- Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA COMMITTEES ON:

- Standing Committee on Small-Scale Industry
- Standing Committee on Foreign Exchange Control
- Standing Committee on All-India Export Advisory Committee
- Steel Users' Council of India
- Central Council on Customs & Excise
- Member of Dr. P.R. Nayak Committee on SSI
- Member of various State & Central Government Advisory Committees
- Standing Committee on Power

MEMBER - CENTRAL GOVT. COMMITTEES

- National Integration Council
- Advisory Board on Foreign Investment
- Indian Labour Conference (ILC)
- Standing Committee on Labour
- Advisory Board Primary Market of SEBI
- Advisory Board of Corporate Governance Committee
- Central Council on Apprenticeship
- Committee on Equal Remuneration
- Small-Scale Standing Committee on Exports and Upgradation
- Apex Committee on Defence Industry
- Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committee (ZRUCC)
- Labour Advisory Committee

Mr. Kalantri also had the privilege of being invited as a learned speaker at various international conferences. He also participated in Indian Labour Conference, World Economic Forum meetings, Euro-money conferences, Power India, Economic Reforms and Structuring Meetings, National Conference on Structural Reforms.

BRITISH QUEEN HONORS BRITISH INDIANS



Indarjit Singh, who heads the London-based Network of Sikh Organizations, and Tarun Kapur, executive headteacher, Ashton-on-Mersey and Broadoak Schools, Trafford, were both awarded the CBE, one of the highest honors in British Queen's New Year's Honors annual list.

Singh, a regular voice on BBC radio, was given the award for services to religion and community, while Kapur was honored for services to education.

Other Indian-origin people who were honored with various other awards include Anita Kumari Bhalla, editor of Public Space Broadcasting, BBC; Kuldip Kaur Bharj, senior lecturer in midwifery, Leeds University; Uday Kumar Dholakia for services to business in Leicestershire; Lakhbir Kaur and Lucky Dhillon for services to the Asian media; Asha Khemka, principal of the West Nottinghamshire College; Chitra Bharucha for services to the animal feed industry; Parvin Bhatia, a general practitioner in Richmond, London; Pradip Kumar Datta, founder, Wick Surgical Courses; Jagdish Dave for services to education and to Asian people; and Shiv Pabary, a dentist at Newcastle and Gateshead.



RARE HONOR FOR LOS ANGELES SCIENTIST DR ML BHAUMIK

Indian-American physicist Dr. Mani Bhaumik has been chosen as the sole patron for the International Year of Astronomy (IYA) 2009; A rare honor for an India born, Los Angeles resident. The International Astronomical Union (IAU), in their announcement, said, "It is proud to have Dr. Mani Bhaumik as dedicated supporter of IYA2009's global activities."

The IAU and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are observing 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Galileo Galilei's astronomical telescope.

The announcement further said, "Dr. Mani Bhaumik is a physicist, internationally best-selling author, celebrated lecturer, entrepreneur, and a philanthropist. He is a laser physicist who announced the successful demonstration of the world's first efficient excimer laser at the Denver, Colorado meeting of the Optical Society of America in May 1973.



"This is the class of laser that would eventually eliminate the need for glasses or contact lenses in many cases requiring vision correction. The procedure popularly known as Lasik takes less than a minute and has helped over fifteen million people worldwide."

Bhaumik was the first person in India to receive a PhD from the IIT system in 1958 which secured him a Sloan Foundation fellowship to the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA). He went on to become a multi-millionaire through his invention of the Excimer laser for eyesight correction and hundreds of other patents.

Bhaumik, best-selling book 'The Cosmic Detective' has also been chosen as the official book for the year-long celebrations. The book was released by MOIA Minister Vayalar Ravi at the GOPIO Awards banquet on Jan 6, 2009 in Chennai. Dr. Bhaumik is a life member of GOPIO Int'l.

NRI group to set up 15 schools in India

Global Indian International School, which has its branches in seven countries and imparts education with an Indian spirit, is all set to open 15 more schools in India by 2010. Of these, the first five will come up by 2009 end.

The Global Indian Foundation, a Singapore-based non-profit organization which established the first Global Indian International School six years back in Singapore, has now grown into a healthy network of 15 schools in seven countries with more than 17,000 students.

While most students

are Indians, the school also gets students from 30 other countries. Four schools are in India and the rest in Malaysia, Japan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Thailand and Singapore. This expansion will lead to an increase in their presence in India.

The first five schools will be opened in Hyderabad, Nagpur, Jodhpur, Indore and Thane.

Atul Temurnikar, co-founder and chairman of GIF said it was not only quality education, but affordable education with global standards that is important in today's scenario. He said though in India, the standard of val-

ue education is remarkable but GIIS has its own role to play as they serve and nurture Indian students to become global players who can be placed in any part of the world with the increase in trade and culture relations in Asian economies.

Some of the 'Indianness' that GIF tries to inculcate in its students through their curriculum are through compulsory Sanskrit classes - so every student, no matter how his pronunciation is, recites Sanskrit shlokas - and a Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Values and Thoughts, which has a library of books on Gandhi.



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- » Web & Software Development, SEO Optimizations
- » Document Imaging, Digitizing Records & Management
- » Digital Surveillance, BioMetrics, Access Control, Parking Solutions
- » Education Consulting, Education & Learning Management Systems

Corporate Headquarters
& USA Office:

XONOVIA TECHNOLOGIES LLC.
6024, 19200 Von Karman Avenue,
4th Floor, Irvine, CA 92612
Telephone: +1-(877)-XONOVIA
Fax: +1-(949)-878-4884

Call or Visit Us:

Toll Free: +1-[877]-XONOVIA
sales@xonoviatechnologies.com