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Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

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‘Look forward to meeting you at PBD 2011’

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the flagship event of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, brings together the overseas Indian community over a three-day period from 7-9 January every year.

The Ninth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention is being held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi in January 2011.

In the last PBD, the honorable prime minister had announced the intention of the government of India to give voting rights to non-resident Indians. In keeping with that promise, I am happy to inform you that the bill on voting rights for non-resident Indians has been approved by the Parliament.

As in the last year, we are holding two pre-conference seminars, on ‘health care’ and ‘education,’ both areas of great interest among overseas Indians. To engage the young overseas Indians, a special session on ‘India and its young overseas Indian’ is scheduled in PBD 2011.

A special feature in this PBD is the par-

ticipation of eight northeastern states of India as state partners, along with the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region. This will add a new dimension to the PBD and showcase a unique part of our great country.

Apart from this, there would be an opportunity to interact with Union ministers of the government of India, chief ministers of states and prominent Persons of Indian Origin from other countries.

The PBD provides you a platform to engage, interact and build mutually beneficial networks. I urge you to participate and discover areas of common interest and engagement. I especially call on our young overseas Indians to participate with enthusiasm.

I look forward to meeting you at the forthcoming PBD Convention at New Delhi from 7-9 January 2011.’

*Vayalar Ravi,
Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs*



‘In the last PBD, the honorable prime minister had announced the intention of the government of India to give voting rights to non-resident Indians. In keeping with that promise, I am happy to inform you that the bill on voting rights for non-resident Indians has been approved by the Parliament’



Voters at a polling station in Ramchandraghat village in Tripura, April 23, 2009



The schedule of programs

Pre-Convention Sessions

- Seminar on Education: Diaspora & Education — The emerging opportunities
- Seminar on Health: Health services — Connecting the Diaspora

Inaugural Session with the Prime Minister of India

Plenary Session I

- Chief ministers of north eastern Indian states and minister, Department of North East Region

Plenary Session II

- Opportunity India — Interaction with Group of Union Ministers

Parallel Sessions

- Industry Round Table
- Information Communication & Entertainment: Business Opportunities
- India and its Young Overseas Indians
- Celebrating the Global Indian

Plenary Session with Chief Ministers on 'Inclusive Growth'

C K Prahalad Memorial Lecture

Parallel State Sessions

Valedictory Session with the President of India

Conferment of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards by the President

Cultural Programs and Dinners

■ Other Attractions

A Trade and Industry exhibition with participation from corporations, financial institutions, state governments, non-governmental organizations and others will run concurrently at the Vigyan Bhawan,

New Delhi.

Focus Areas

- Northeast states
- Other states
- Handicrafts
- Technology
- Financial services
- Fashion, consumer goods
- Real estate
- Engineering
- Tourism
- Education
- Entertainment
- Investment
- Exhibition

OIFC Market Place at PBD

Convention: Focused Business Networking Forum

The Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre is a not-for-profit public-private initiative between the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Confederation of Indian Industry. The OIFC works towards enhancing the economic engagement of the Indian Diaspora overseas with India. The OIFC organizes a 'Market Place' at the annual PBD Convention.

The Market Place forum provides a business networking opportunity amongst the delegates attending the PBD Convention as well as with the OIFC's Knowledge partners and state government partners, who are all housed at the OIFC Market Place Pavilion. Business meetings are prescheduled between the delegates and the OIFC's partners, thereby facilitating their process of economic engagement with India. The OIFC has successfully conducted four such Market Place Forums in previous PBD Conventions and hosted more than 50 business meetings.



A Pravasi Bharatiya Samman winner greets then Indian President A P J Abdul Kalam at PBD 2006. This year too, India will honor illustrious sons and daughters of its diaspora



A cultural program at PBD 2010



Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dixit

Welcome! Join the celebrations!

It is with great pride and honour that I would like to welcome each and everyone to join in the celebration as the city readies itself to host the Prasar Bhartiya Divas. Delhi, your charming, gracious hostess, would like to welcome all with open arms, to come and enjoy the myriad splendours of this incredibly diverse, historic and yet contemporary city.

Our dream is to make Delhi a world class city through our 10-point agenda (See interview below), making the city an education hub, providing a clean environment and also showcasing the traditional heritage of Delhi. Our rural artists and handicrafts offer a depth of rare quality that can be taken to the world. Add to this Delhi's rich heritage of museums, forts, tombs, palaces and more make it a tourist delight throughout the year.

In recent years, Delhi has seen rapid growth and plans have to be revisited regularly to keep pace with the development of the city. The need of the hour is to be able to create new residential extension areas which are self-contained and provide a healthy and secure environment. A new Master Plan for Delhi is being drawn up to meet the projected population of 128 lakh by the end of this decade.

This is the time to bask in the glory of the various achievements of our country on the world map and reaffirm our commitment to go that extra mile at every level to take our country forward. Every drop matters and the way forward is inclusive, informed and innovative.



“Development with a human face!”

Three terms in office and still raring to go. Chief Minister Sheila Dixit highlights her plans for the state to India Abroad. Her initiatives - empowerment for women, clean, green city, youth activism, E-NGOs and more.

She is a woman of a few chosen words. Soft yet firm, rooted in tradition yet contemporary and an approach that is collaborative and inclusive. This is the tip of the iceberg to describe the persona of Delhi Chief Minister, Sheila Dixit who has dressed up the city of Delhi with many international awards through rapid development.

The chief minister began her historic third term as the chief minister of Delhi on December 17, 2008. She served her first term between 1998-2003 and the second term between 2003-2008. She represents New Delhi Constituency in the Legislative Assembly. Appointed President of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee in May 1998, she led her party to a sweeping victory in the Delhi Assembly elections for the first time in November that year. She repeated the performance in 2003 and 2008 Assembly Elections, and rode the victory waves of not so common pro-incumbency. After having served two full terms that witnessed development through her internationally acclaimed initiative ‘Bhagidari’ i.e. people’s participation in the process of governance, in her third term Dixit brings to the administration vast experience in citizen-centric and open administration and democratic decentralization.

The Bhagidari initiative preceded her other major initiative of Right to Information. She made Delhi one of the first states in India to enforce the Right to Information Act in its letter and spirit. It was as a result of this open and responsive system of administration that development-social and economic, took precedence over parochial, and sectarian issues. These path breaking initiatives brought laurels for Delhi by its winning the coveted United Nations Public Service Award 2005 for improving Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Public Service.

In a candid talk, she shares her vision for Delhi with **Indian Abroad** and her passion, commitment is inspirational.

What has been the most significant achievement of your government?

The biggest concrete achievements has been starting of Metro, CNG fuelled public transport system, numerous flyovers, cleaner environment, substantial increase in the Green cover (from 26 sq km in 1998 to over 300 sq km in 2008), reforms in the power sector, marked improvement in standard and results of government schools, an extended and quality public health infrastructure and various income

I firmly believe that if democracy is to truly survive in India, the basic norms of correct behaviour, rectitude and mutual respect for the opinions and beliefs of others have to form an integral part of public life.

generation schemes for the marginalized sections of the society. Our relentless efforts to give a clean environment to the citizens has led to Delhi’s winning the US Department of Energy’s first ‘Clean Cities Award’ in 2003. Through Bhagidari yojana we received active participation of citizens of Delhi, especially children, in all campaigns including ‘Say No to Plastic Bags’, ‘Anti-Crackers Campaign’, Plant more trees campaign’, ‘Khelo Holi naturally’, ‘Say no to shining wrapping paper’ etc.

Tell about your various initiatives for empowering women?

We have launched the innovative ‘Stree Shakti’ programme in Delhi which entails capacity building among women especially those belonging to weaker sections of the society by providing them frequent access to healthcare and medicine, training in different employment generation streams and financial aid for self-employment opportunity.

While the programme is carried out through regular camps across the city, Gender Resource Centres i.e. ‘Stree Kosh’ have also been set up in different localities of the Capital to enhance and encourage entrepreneurship among women. Recently the programme won the Silver Award for Citizen Engagement and

Service Delivery at the CAPAM Biennial Conference held in October 2006 in Australia.

Three terms in office with so many achievements. What is next on your agenda?

Democratic decentralization and people’s partnership in governance remain our major planks of administration and our aim will be to strengthen the system initiated by involving Citizen Groups through ‘Bhagidari’. Development with a human face will be the cornerstone of governance with infrastructure development in the core sectors power, transport and water being priority areas.

The problems of the slum-dwellers and the unauthorized colonies are foremost in the priorities of her government. A well-enunciated policy including low cost housing for their settlement is on the anvil. A cleaner Yamuna will be high on my agenda.

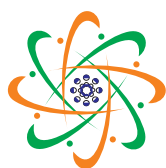
What has been the most significant and satisfying development of your government?

I firmly believe that if democracy is to truly survive in India, the basic norms of correct behaviour, rectitude and mutual respect for the opinions and beliefs of others have to form an integral part of public life.

Bhagidari started with 20 Citizen Groups and today has grown over 2,300. The best part being our ability to rope in the youth with Bhagidari. Today we have partnered with The Electronic Youth Media Group, youth engagement specialist company to launch www.youthportal.in. This is a socio-entrepreneurial venture where our aim is to connect young ideas for social change through the internet. The portal enables users to float their own ‘E-NGO’s’, ‘Action Groups’ and ‘Square Tables’. We have even built a ‘young citizens reporting network’ called YP Pulse. Through this we aim to promote e-democracy, entrepreneurship and activism.

The Action Groups with focus on our 10-point agency for the city. 1. Eradicating the use of plastic bags. 2. Promote use of solar power. 3. Harvest water. 4. Recycling water and paper. 5. Segregate wet and dry waste. 6. Create car pool network. 7. Stop sticking posters in public. 8. Stop wastage of energy and water. 9. Protect greens and trees. 10. Ensure road safety.

We want to make Delhi a truly global city that every Indian would be proud of. ♦



In its ninth consecutive year, the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, India's annual event for its diaspora, has become a brand. The importance of the event can be assessed from the fact that two senior Indian ministers briefed the media about the three-day event.

About 1,300 delegates from 38 countries are expected at the event, to be held January 7 to 9, 2011, in New Delhi's Vigyan Bhavan. The proceedings will be streamed live on the Internet and the PBD Web site www.pbdindia.org is aimed to give 25 million diaspora Indians an opportunity to participate in India's economic and social development.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will inaugurate the event January 8. Governor-General of New Zealand Sir Anand Satyanand, who is of Indian origin, will be the chief guest.

"Many countries have expressed interest in attending the event," said Vayalar Ravi, minister of overseas Indian affairs. "Some four ministers have confirmed their attendance from Malaysia alone. PBD has become very important for many Indian diaspora."

Themed 'Engaging the Global Indian', the main focus of PBD 2011 will be diaspora youth, Ravi said.

"The ninth edition of the PBD will focus on the young Indians born and brought up outside India. We don't want the Indian diaspora youth to lose their connectivity with India. This conference will be youth-centric," he said.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas this year is aimed at wooing diaspora youth, discovers **Sahim Salim**



PARESH GANDHI

The government is also highlighting voting rights for non-resident Indians as a symbol of India's welcoming attitude for its people across the globe.

"As promised by the prime minister in the last PBD, voting rights for NRIs have been approved by the Parliament," Ravi told *India Abroad*. "Now we are conducting discussions with the Election Commission to come up with a system to enroll them (*NRI voters*)."

Asked what the system will be, Ravi said there have been two rounds of discussions with the EC.

"The only thing left to do is how to enroll voting NRIs in the system," the minister explained. "There are millions of NRIs, which is an enormous work for the EC. We are conducting discussions with them so as to put in place a system so that there are no complaints. The bill has been cleared (*by the Indian Parliament*). Now it is up to the EC to come up with a system."

PBD 2011 will see a chief ministers' conference, which will allow a potential investor to interact with the head of the states the NRI is planning to invest in.

"We have coordinated with many of the country's chief ministers so that an investor can directly interact with them about investment opportunities," Ravi said. "Many states, especially the northeastern states, have confirmed their participation. We are in the process of roping in other chief ministers as well."

The compass points to the northeast

The Indian government wants to hard sell an oft-neglected region to potential investors

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2011 will have a special feature: The participation of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region and eight northeast Indian states as partners.

"When you look across the country, especially Delhi, you can find people from northeast region in plenty," B K Handique, minister of development of northeastern region, told *India Abroad*. "They have come out of their isolation. A hundred boys and girls have been chosen to represent the northeast during PBD 2011. We have been trying to build up their skills, so that, like Keralites, they can go abroad for employment opportunities."

The focus of such skill development is being concentrated on two areas — hospitality and health care.

"We had selected about 144 boys and girls and sent them to the Indian Tourism Development Corporation institute," Handique said. "Out of them, 112 have already found placement. They are doing well in the hospitality sector. Now we are working on the health-care sector."

The government also wants to hard sell the northeastern states — often found missing in the India story — to the Indian diaspora. At PBD 2011, potential investors

will have the opportunity to interact with the ministers and people of the northeast.

"We are planning to project and present northeast states and its potential for development on different sectors. This international forum will help attract investments," Vayalar Ravi, minister of overseas Indian affairs, told *India Abroad*.

"There is a wrong notion among the people that the states in the northeast are politically volatile," Handique explained. "This has to change. There is a huge virgin area in the northeast for investment. Silica dust and rare art are two areas which can be huge industries in the area."

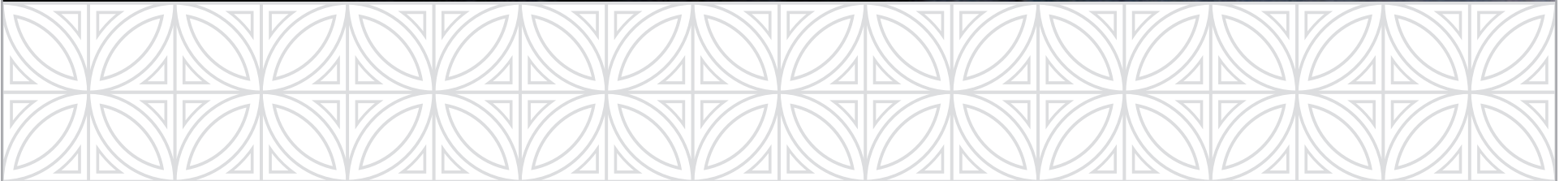
Dr Alywin Didar Singh, secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, elaborated further: "Our ministry and the Indian Council for Overseas Employment found that there is a lot of economic migration from across India, due to which people as well as the states benefit. The migration from northeast is very low; almost negligible. These young boys and girls have started migrating to other states in India. Now, these same skills, if put in a proper perspective, with right amount of standards and proper certification added to it, will enable these boys and girls to access employment overseas."

— Sahim Salim

A traditional Manipuri dance



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‘I am definitely going to take up the visa issue with the prime minister and the home minister’

In conversation with **Sheela Bhatt**, Vayalar Ravi, India’s diaspora minister, agrees there are issues creating heartburn for Indians overseas

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been trying to build better bridges with the Indian diaspora but Indian home ministry is putting spanners in the works, says Vayalar Ravi, minister of overseas Indian affairs, in an exclusive and candid interview with *India Abroad*. The home ministry, Ravi points out, looks at all proposals to simplify visa procedures through the prism of security concerns, creating heartburns for Indians abroad who want to stay connected to their root country.

Indian Americans are quite upset with you. They allege they have become are not-required Indians.

I agree. There are a series of issues. Getting visas is a big problem. There is directive from New Delhi to produce the old passports. This has become an issue. Yesterday, I met (*Indian*) Foreign Minister S M Krishna to discuss the electoral role of Indian passport holders. I told him about this requirement of old passports or relevant documents that Indian consulates are asking for. He told me that these problems are not the making of the ministry of external affairs. The home ministry is creating all these problems for people of Indian origin and NRIs. The home ministry is not realistic. I think the home ministry does not understand. I think the home minister and officials should understand Indians living in America. They all love India. All of them want to come to India occasionally. The home ministry is putting restrictions on their travel plans and asking them for various kinds of payments. I think it’s time I take up the issue with the prime minister. Unfortunately, the issue is delayed. I am getting many complaints through e-mails from Houston, New York, etc. You can’t blame the consulate generals over there. This is all because of the home ministry’s insistence. True, David Headley (*a Pakistani American conspirator of the November 2008 Mumbai terror attacks*) landed in India easily so these restrictions (*are being put in place*). But, you can’t put so many restrictions in such a fashion that Indians are not able to come over here even to attend the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conference! I am definitely going to take up the visa issue with the prime minister and the home minister. We can address the issue and resolve it, eventually.

Recently some people went on a 24-hour fast in Houston, protesting the harassment in Indian consulates.

I know about it. But, the point is, the rule says they should surrender the old passport to get a fresh India visa.



They can’t ask for immunity from it. I know they are loving people but why can’t they surrender the passport? Why not abide by the law? I can’t justify some people’s attitude. There are only few people who are making these noises. I am requesting them to surrender their old Indian passport that they had before they took American citizenship and got the American passport. They should also follow Indian procedures. When I asked some of them, ‘Why can’t you even produce the document when you applied for American passport?’ They told me it will take eight to 10 months. They don’t complain against any delay by the United States government but they complain if the Indian government takes time. I can’t understand this kind of attitude. What I want to convey is that we want to provide maximum help to Indians living abroad, but they should abide by the laws of India. They (*the laws*) are not formed to harass them. People should understand India’s security concerns also. Meanwhile, I am trying to simplify the laws. We don’t want Indian Americans to be harassed. We want to make the procedure transparent and simple.

Many India visa seekers think that non-Indians get visa quicker.

In fact, the problem arises in case of asylum-seekers’ relatives. We are trying to help them too.

The problem with your ministry is that you don’t have much power.

I have *no* power! Even the MEA doesn’t have power. The power is resting with the home ministry; that’s the problem. The MEA is also facing this problem. The diplomats of the MEA have to be assertive. The home ministry may not understand these problems because they have not gone abroad to find out the issues. I don’t think they have any interactions with Indians abroad. I have to make all of them understand the issues. I can tell you these issues are there for the time being. Once we take it up these issues with the home ministry, they would be resolved.

During last year’s PBD event you had told *India Abroad* that you will attract philanthropic activities of NRIs to India. It seems the idea has not taken off.

We are on job. We have registered a society under the charitable act. We are doing it step by step. It’s a matter of money, so we are careful.

What has been the way forward for your ministry in 2010?

We have issued almost 600,000 OCI (*Overseas Citizen of India*) cards. It’s a major breakthrough. They can come to India, stay here. They don’t need a visa. Also, I have personally intervened in scores of cases where individuals have been unnecessarily harassed. I have made embassies act fast. I never publicize such cases but every day I get phone calls from people in the (*Persian*) Gulf (*countries*) and I try my best to attend to them. Whenever people have spoken to me from Malaysia, Fiji or America, I have extended my helping hand.

You have given voting rights to Indian passport holders living overseas. But the terms are not very attractive. For instance, it is mandatory to vote in your own constituency during the day of voting in India.

Of course! That’s decided by the Election Commission of India, not by me. There is no e-mail voting in India, so what to do? There is no question of voting abroad or in Indian embassies. They can’t find 40 boxes and all that logistics. In Gulf countries and in some other countries, the local government won’t allow such voting. Officially, I am talking to the MEA and the law ministry to improve the condition and modalities for such voting. We are getting them enrolled into the system of the Central Election Commission. People are jubilant to have the voting right. A friend in a Gulf country told me, ‘Today, I have become a full Indian citizen.’ There are millions of such Indian passport holders living abroad. Indian students in America and some 4 million plus people in and around the Gulf are very happy.

Coming back to the visa issue, this idea of a break of two months for foreigners between two visits to India...

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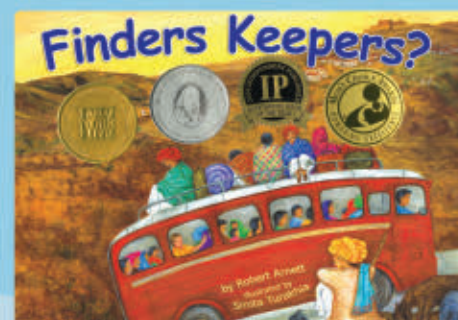
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What big companies are investing in...

Power, manufacturing and services emerge as attractive sectors

India is set to become a potential goldmine on the back of investment announcements in the 20 major states that surged during April to September 2010 to Rs 100,974.72 billion, roughly \$2020 billion.

The total capex — capital expenditures, or expenditures creating future benefits — outflow is 26.7 percent higher, when compared to the corresponding period of the previous year (2009-2010), according to the analysis of an Association of Indian Chambers of Commerce study on the corporate investment pattern.

As per the Assocham Investment Meter assessment report for corporate investments across states and sectors, India Inc's total investment plans increased significantly from Rs 79,714.64 billion (\$1,594 billion) in 2009 to Rs 100,974.72 billion (\$2,020 billion) during the period of April to September, 2010.

"The total investment intentions tracked in the AIM study reflects encouraging signs of pick up in investments and acceleration in the overall growth rate," said D S Rawat, secretary general, Assocham. "The factors such as delay in infrastructure expansion plans, hurdles in legal procedures and political instability have adversely affected the implementation of these investment projects across the states."

Among the industry sectors, manufacturing and power companies have received the major proportion of the investments. In terms of sectoral analysis, the Assocham study shows that with increasing energy requirements of the

rapidly growing Indian economy, power sector figures out as a nest egg to invest in. The sector witnessed bulk of the investments — worth Rs 36,438.83 billion (\$728 billion) — with a share of 35.4 percent in the overall investments plans across the country during April to September.

Industrialists have also been favoring the manufacturing sector for investment. The sector registered a growth of 26.3 percent while attracting total investments worth Rs 27,042.11 billion (\$540 billion).

The services sector emerged as the third priority sector, and attracted proposed investments of Rs 21,629.50 billion (\$432 billion), contributing 21.0 percent in overall investments made in the period.

Other sectors that recorded high-flowing corporate investments are: Real estate (Rs 11,72,8.23 billion or \$234 billion or 11.4 per cent), mining (Rs 3,087.16 billion or \$61 billion or 3 percent), and irrigation (Rs 3,013.50 billion or \$60 billion or 2.9 percent).



Employees at the manufacturing plant of the Tata Nano — the world's cheapest car — in Sanand, Gujarat, June 2

AMIT DAVE/REUTERS

And where...

Gujarat and Maharashtra led the pack in 2010

1. Gujarat

Among the top investment-attracting states, Gujarat bagged the highest share of 13.2 percent in domestic investment plans during April to September. The state witnessed 13,307.43 billion (\$266 billion) worth of capex plans, which are 17.3 percent higher than the total investment realized in the state during the past year. Also, the state attracted majority of investment plans in the power, manufacturing and services sectors.

2. Maharashtra

Maharashtra — another western Indian state — stood at second position, registering a growth of 19.3 percent year-on-year, and 13.2 percent share of the total investments made during April to September. The state attracted investments plans worth Rs 11,541.97 billion (\$230 billion) during this period. Services and real estate were prominent among the sectors that attracted majority share of the investments.

3. Orissa

Orissa was ranked third on the investment radar with total planned investments at Rs 11,347.16 billion (\$226 billion). The eastern Indian state — not generally considered a poster boy of investment or development — recorded a hike of about 20 percent in overall investments over the previous year. The availability of rich mineral resources like coal and iron ore, along with cheap availability of manpower ensured Orissa's position among the top three states in attracting corporate investments.

4. Karnataka

Karnataka, which attracted investment plans worth Rs 9,150.60 billion (\$183 billion), was ranked fourth. The overall investment contribution in Karnataka during the period stood at 9.1 percent. However, the state has seen a hike of 73.8 percent in the investments over the same period of the previous fiscal year. Manufacturing accounted as the prominent sector, and other investment-attracting sectors in the south Indian state were steel, real estate and textiles.

5. Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh stood at the fifth position with investments to the tune of Rs 8,667.76 billion (\$173 billion). In the current fiscal year during the same period, the state's share of total investment was 8.6 percent, with the top sectors being power, manufacturing and agriculture and allied services.

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“Development brings peace and prosperity”

Almost 10 years in office, Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi talks to *India Abroad* on how he brought about the ‘economic turnaround’ of the state



It was against a difficult time, May 2001, when Chief Minister of Assam, Tarun Gogoi took charge of the state. Insurgency was at its peak, development had almost ground to a halt, the state was witnessing unrest and strife, perpetual floods, over dependence on agriculture and wastage of natural resources. But the chief minister has proved his detractors wrong by turning Assam around onto the path of development and economic progress. The Congress, in coalition with the Bodoland People's Front (BPF), returned for another term under his artful leadership in 2006. Gogoi's economic turnaround, skillful manner of handling insurgency and the socio-political situation in the state has earned him respect and made him a key political figure in Indian politics.

Born on April 1, at Rangajan Tea Estate in Assam's Jorhat district, Gogoi graduated from J.B. College, Jorhat, and obtained his law degree from Gauhati University. This lawyer turned politician won his first election in 1971, when he was elected to the fifth Lok Sabha. Gogoi, now 77 years old, has been elected to the Lok Sabha six times. He served as Union Minister of Food (Independent Charge) in 1991-93 and held the portfolio of Food Processing Industry as the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) from 1993 to 1995.

The chief minister shares with *India Abroad* his mantra behind the state's success. As he puts it, “Development cannot wait for peace, it will follow”. Today the state's “economic turnaround” is easily his government's biggest achievement.

What has been the biggest achievement of your government that has been in office for two successive terms? What has been the biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge for our government has been to bring about a positive change in the mindset of the people and how Assam is perceived. The economic turnaround in Assam is our biggest achievement. When we came to power in 2001, Assam was passing through a tunnel of darkness – with a precarious law and order situation and a massive financial crunch to the extent that even government employees were not paid salaries on time. There was stagnation all around. Roads and bridges were in a dilapidated condition. We are now not just paying salaries on the Central government pay scale, but we have also undertaken massive development work in both urban and rural areas, which has changed the State scenario completely. The economic turnaround helped to dramatically improve the law and order situation. The biggest challenge was to change the mindset of the people. The massive flow of funds from the Central government by way of grants together with the mobilisation of the State's own revenues and has hastened development activities. All this has changed mindsets as people no longer see a bleak future ahead of them. People have started feeling confident about the future.

What were the key initiatives to spur growth?

The key thrust of our government was on developing infrastructure and improving communication. The major modes of transportation in Assam are roadways, railways, airways and inland waterways. At present, there are two road cum rail



We are confident of our people and getting their mandate again. People have experienced and benefited from the economic turnaround. If we are given the mandate again we will continue with the same mantra – development cannot wait for peace, and when development takes place it brings peace and prosperity.

bridges and one road bridge over the river Brahmaputra. Construction of a fourth bridge is about to start and feasibility report on a fifth bridge has been recently completed.

The construction of roads and bridges was taken up on a large scale. The improved road network and RCC [reinforced cement concrete] bridges replacing the weak timber bridges brought dynamism to the life of the common people. Farmers can now access the markets easily, while office-goers and [school-going] children move faster.

Another thrust of our growth strategy is the all-round development of rural areas with a special focus on agriculture and allied activities. Special emphasis has been laid on the adoption of farm mechanisation and improved technology for self-sufficiency in foodgrain production. The present telecommunication network in the state is growing fast. Assam has 269 telephone exchanges with approximately 1,20,000 working connections. The government's development activities created income-generating opportunities, and improved communication brought more livelihood opportunities. This growth strategy is inclusive as the benefits percolate to all sections.

What measures were taken for the socio-economic development of the different ethnic groups and minorities in the state? And how effective were these

measures?

Assam is the only State in the country to have an autonomous council for each and every community. We are committed to the all-round socio-economic development of different indigenous ethnic groups. The problem of unemployment is seen as one of the root causes of insurgency and social disturbances in Assam. We have focussed on generating gainful employment through the development of skills and on creating employment avenues outside the government sectors through the formation of self-help groups. Over the past 10 years, more than 20 lakh people have been provided self-employment through 2,09,122 self-help groups; more than 50 per cent of these groups are run by women. The scope of employment in the government sector will always be limited, and it cannot provide a solution to the unemployment problem. However, if we can impart skills through vocational education and special training, the unemployed youth can always get gainful employment. Hence we have undertaken a special employment-generation programme for creating gainful employment opportunities, and Rs.200 crore has been earmarked for it in the budget.

Most insurgent groups have come forward for dialogue. When can we expect the peace accords?

Most insurgent groups have realised that the problems they raised can be solved only through negotiation, and hence they have given up arms and come forward for talks. The ULFA [United Liberation Front of Asom] leaders, except its commander-in-chief Paresh Barua, have also come up with a positive response. We hope Paresh Barua, too, will come forward for talks. There are some legal hurdles as these leaders are in judicial custody and their bail application can be decided only by the court. We cannot dictate to the court. However, we have conveyed to the courts concerned that we have no objection to the granting of bail to jailed ULFA leaders. Let us have some patience to take the talks process to its logical conclusion.

What steps has been taken to promote industrial growth?

We have initiated various measures by setting up numerous parks and special zones to boost business. A Software Technology Park has been set up at Guwahati near the Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi airport. Assam Industrial Development Corporation has implemented an Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) at Amingaon near Guwahati in the district of Kamrup at an estimated cost of Rs. 14.62 crores. The Export Promotion Industrial Park has been developed to provide infrastructural facilities of high standard for export oriented units.

On what grounds do you plan to seek the people's mandate again?

We are confident of our people and getting their mandate again. People have experienced and benefited from the economic turnaround. If we are given the mandate again we will continue with the same mantra – development cannot wait for peace, and when development takes place it brings peace and prosperity. ♦

Charting Assam's economic uptrend

Under Assam CM Tarun Gogoi's deft leadership, the state writes new chapters in various sectors – education, health, power, communication and rural development

He has changed the face of Assam for the better. When Congress Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi took office in 2001, he was clear that development was the precondition for peace, rather than the other way around. In 2006, when Gogoi returned to office for another term, he continued this approach and the results are showing. With development gaining momentum, public pressure grew on insurgent groups to shun violence and come for negotiation. Support for insurgent groups eroded fast as counter-insurgency measures were undertaken along with development work. Most of the insurgent groups responded to repeated appeals by the government and the public: they signed ceasefire agreements, deposited arms and ammunition with the police, and their cadre moved out of jungles to designated camps to pave the way for dialogue.

Dawn of 'New Assam'

The country's leading industry captains said they were impressed by the emergence of a "new Assam" while attending the first meeting of the Assam Investment Advisory Board in Guwahati in March 2010. They also pledged their commitment to the State's industrial and overall development.



Addressing a press conference with Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi after the two-hour meeting, Tata Sons Chairman Ratan Tata said: "All of us run successful businesses in other parts of India. But I must say that there are tremendous opportunities in Assam, too, and that the potential of the State has not received attention for a long time. A new Assam is here. We are drawn by the opportunities and challenges here. We are here by choice." Among the others present at the meeting and the press conference were Unilever president M.S. Banga, Videocon chairman V.N. Dhoot, Eveready Industries chairman B.M. Khaitan, Tata Sons Director R.K. Krishna Kumar, HSBC CEO Naina Lal Kidwai, State Bank of India Chairman O.P. Bhatt, and former Ambassador

to the United States Ronen Sen. The industry captains' remarks highlighted the new image of Assam that has emerged in recent years, the development that has taken place in different sectors in the past decade, and the improvement in the security environment.

Peace gets a chance

The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was set up following the second Bodo Accord, which the Centre and the State government signed with the erstwhile Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) in 2003. Former militant leaders



of the disbanded BLT now controlled the BTC, an administrative set-up under a mended provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, and later shared power in Dispur. This marked the beginning of a gradual return to peace.

The United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) did not come back to the mainstream. Several top ULFA leaders, including its chairman, Arabinda Rajkhowa, were arrested in Bangladesh and handed over to the Indian authorities. Rajkhowa and other jailed leaders have expressed their willingness to talk to the government and have held several rounds of discussion with the Centre's interlocutor, P.C. Haldar.

Economic growth

In his speech at the 55th meeting of the National Development Council, the Chief Minister spoke of the State's growth: "The economy of our State is gradually showing an upward trend. During the Tenth Plan Period from 2002-2007, the annual average growth



rate of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at constant (1999-2000) prices has shown a growth of 5.33 per cent. This is a significant improvement over the 1.97 per cent GSDP growth rate of Assam during the Ninth Plan period. As per advanced estimates, the growth rate of Assam's GSDP in real terms at constant prices is 6.35 per cent during the year 2009-10 as per quick

estimate. The Net State Domestic Product (NSDP), also known as State income, at 1999-2000 prices, has increased by 6.30 per cent during 2009-10 in comparison to the growth rate of 6.16 per cent in 2008-09. The total tax collection during Gogoi's two consecutive terms is Rs.23,666.29 crore.

Education

The emphasis continues to be on education through various initiatives. Assam has five universities, four government engineering colleges and three government medical colleges. The CM



has pledged to give away 92,000 computers to meritorious students who secured first division in their 10th standard, all this is to keep them motivated and provide them with a sense of purpose. Under the CM's rule, the school dropout rate has gone down dramatically from 13 lakh to 50,000. The emphasis will continue to be on medical, engineering and technical colleges. In fact, the CM has plans to set up over 12 universities across Assam soon.

Improved connectivity

Connectivity is one of the priority areas. In the past 10 years, several projects to build roads and bridges were taken up with funds from the Centre, the World Bank, NABARD, the North Eastern Council (NEC), and the State's own coffers. Official figures show that from 1996 to 2001 only 545 kilometres of roads and 177 concrete bridges were constructed. Over the past 10 years, 13,710 km of roads were blacktopped and work on an additional 9,000 km was in progress. During this period, 1,396 timber bridges were converted into concrete bridges. The construction of 65,000 km of rural roads and 14,915 bridges has improved surface connectivity in rural and tea garden areas. This enables farmers to access markets in towns, suburbs and faraway places to sell agricultural and horticultural produce.

Industries

Investment proposals to the tune of Rs.34,000 crore have been received over the past 10 years. Construction work on the Rs.5,460-crore Assam Gas Cracker project at Lepetkata in Upper Assam's Dibrugarh district started in 2007 after a long delay and is now scheduled for commissioning in 2012.

Although the mega project will directly employ only 800 people, about 500 downstream industries are expected to come up and generate more than 1.5 lakh employment avenues.



Power sector

For nearly 35 years, beginning from the 1970s, no significant investment was made in the power sector in Assam, resulting in a deterioration in the distribution and transmission of power. The State's transmission and distribution capacity was only 550 megawatts during 1996-2001, and the total requirement was 480 MW. Over the past 10 years, the transmission and distribution capacity increased to 1,800 MW and power demand went up to 950 MW. The State government says this happened because of reforms in the power sector. The Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB) has been unbundled into three companies for generation, transmission and distribution. The State government provided the ASEB Rs.2,050 crore, in addition to budgetary support to clear its huge outstanding dues, and explored various sources of funding to support the reforms.

Rural development

Over the past 10 years, 2,09,122 self-help groups created self-employment opportunities for more



than 20 lakh people, more than 64 per cent of them women. Against only 1.77 lakh houses provided

under the Indira Awas Yojana during the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) regime, about 11 lakh houses were provided under the scheme over the past 10 years. About 21 lakh households having job-card holders were provided jobs under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. More than 35 lakh households were issued job cards. "It is not possible to wipe out the development deficit of past decades overnight. It requires persistent and steady efforts. Our dream is to see a fully developed Assam which will be as prosperous as any other State," says Gogoi. ♦



India has the world's fastest-growing telecommunications industry

B MATHUR/REUTERS

20 facts you must know about India

- The Indian economy is the world's eleventh-largest by nominal gross domestic product and the fourth-largest by purchasing power parity.
- India is poised to achieve 9 percent economic growth in the current financial year, driven by robust performance by the agriculture and industry sectors.
- The Indian economy grew by 8.9 percent in the second quarter of the current fiscal year.
- India has emerged as one of the world's top 10 countries in industrial production. This year, the nation's industrial production grew at the fastest pace in three months at 10.8 percent. Manufacturing grew 11.3 percent in October after a 4.6 percent gain in September.
- India is one of the fastest-growing automobile markets in the world, expanding at 35 percent on average in the first four months of the current fiscal year.
- In 2010, the Bombay Stock Exchange was rated as the world's best performing stock market. With a 13 percent gain, Sensex, the BSE's index, is among the world's 10 biggest markets, according to data collected by Bloomberg.
- Indian companies have become bigger and stronger in the last decade with the average revenue of a company on the Fortune India 500 list standing at Rs 76.32 billion (\$1.5 billion). The total revenue of the Fortune India 500 companies stands at Rs 3,8162.39 billion (\$763 billion).
- India is the world's largest recipient of overseas remittances. The remittances grew from \$49.6 billion in 2009 to \$55 billion in 2010. It is also the country with the second-largest number of emigrants after Mexico, according to the

World Bank.

- India owns over 18,000 tons of above-ground gold stocks worth approximately \$800 billion and representing at least 11 percent of global stock, according to World Gold Council estimates. India ranks 11th in the world with 557.7 tons of gold reserves.
- India is among the top 10 nations in terms of foreign exchange reserves. In 2010, the country's foreign exchange reserves breached the \$300-billion mark for the first time since 2008 with an addition of \$2.2 billion on the back of a healthy rise in foreign currency. The nation's forex reserves stand at \$296.40 billion.
- India's services sector, backed by the information-technology revolution, remains the biggest contributor to the country's GDP, with a contribution of 58.4 percent. The industry sector contributed 24.1 percent and the agriculture sector contributed 17.5 percent to the GDP.
- India's civil aviation sector will be among the top five in the world in the next five years. Indian domestic air traffic is expected to reach 160 to 180 million passengers per year, while international traffic will exceed 80 million.
- India's exports during November 2010 jumped by 26.8 percent to \$18.9 billion year-on-year. India's exports during April-September 2010 aggregated to \$103.65 billion, a year-on-year growth of 28 percent.
- India, China and Brazil are the top three target countries for foreign direct investment until the end of 2012 with the United States, for years number one, in fourth place, according to the United Nations trade and development

agency UNCTAD.

- The Indian telecommunications industry is the world's fastest growing, with 723.28 million telephone (landlines and mobile) subscribers and 687.71 million mobile phone connections as of September 30, 2010.
- The number of Internet users in India is estimated at 81 million. In August 2010, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India pegged the number of broadband subscribers at 10.08 million.
- The Indian IT-business process outsourcing industry is expected to exceed \$70 billion in the fiscal year 2011. Indian IT-BPO exports are projected to grow by 13 percent to 15 percent while domestic IT-BPO will grow slightly more by 15 percent to 17 percent during fiscal year 2010-2011.
- India has the largest number of post offices in the world. The world's highest post office, Hikkim, is located at 15,500 feet above sea level in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti district.
- The largest employer in India is Indian Railways, employing over 1.6 million people. Indian Railways started operations April 16, 1853.
- India ranks second in farm output globally. India is one of the largest producers in the world of milk, cashew nuts, coconuts, tea, ginger, turmeric and black pepper.
- Tourism is the largest service industry in India, with a contribution of 6.23 percent to the national GDP. About 369,000 foreign tourists came to India in September 2010, as compared to 328,000 during the same month in 2009.

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India's power hubs

ARKO DATTA/REUTERS

The City Competitiveness Report unveiled by the Institute for Competitiveness — an international think tank — is a comprehensive study of India's major cities. The report's competitiveness ranking is based on the Porter's Diamond Model, a benchmark model based on the seminal work on strategy and competitiveness by Michael E Porter, Bishop William Lawrence University Professor based at Harvard Business School, and used widely by leading academic institutions across the world.

The model proposes that four interlinked advanced factors — demand conditions, factor conditions, context for firm strategy and rivalry and supporting and related industries — are instrumental in determining competitiveness for a particular region or country.

A city would need to improve along all these factors to increase its competitiveness. Each of these factors is further divided into sub-indices, which in turn are measured through indicators.

The India City Competitiveness Report 2010 uses hard data published by the government through reports disseminated by the ministries, government-funded research bodies and other credible organizations to eliminate the possibility of personal bias or sampling errors. Over 800

indicators were used to measure the competitiveness of Indian cities.

1. Delhi

According to the City Competitiveness Report, Delhi was the most competitive city in India in 2010 with an overall competitive score of 82.55, and an infrastructure score of 75.71. India's national capital was the most competitive city to do business in the country, as per the report, which based its findings on the metropolitan's infrastructure and business environment. The national capital has the second highest gross domestic product in the country. It contributes 4.94 percent to all-India GDP.

2. Chennai

Chennai has been benefited by a steady performance across all the sub-indices used in this report, and particularly by its educated work force and logistics infrastructure. Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu and the fourth largest metropolitan city in India, has an estimated population of 7.5 million. With an overall competitive score of 77.87, and an infrastructure score of 72.32, Chennai is the second-most competitive city in India. The city's economy is supported by industries like automobile, technology, hardware manufacturing, and health care.

3. Mumbai

With an overall competitive score of 77.58 and an infrastructure score of 72.19, Mumbai ranks third, down from second place in 2009 — primarily owing to a decline in its physical infrastructure. But India's commercial capital is not only the city with the highest GDP in India, it also ranks among the world's top 10 trade centers. The city contributes 25 percent of industrial output and 70 percent of capital transactions to India's economy. The city accounts for about 1 percent of the total population in India but has a per capita income almost three times that of the country. Mumbai accounts for 14 percent of India's income tax collections and 37 percent of corporate tax collections.

4. Bengaluru

What was known as the pensioners' paradise some years back, has grown 10-fold today and a study reveals that the rupee millionaire club in Karnataka's capital is the most crowded in India. Bengaluru also boasts of having the largest number of households with an annual income of Rs 1 million (\$20,000) or more. Bengaluru had an overall competitive score of 69.35, and an infrastructure score of 64.78. With an estimated population of 6.5 million, it is also one of India's most populous cities. Its

main business activity is information technology and information technology-enabled services. Often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India, it houses the headquarters of software majors Infosys and Wipro.

5. Kolkata

West Bengal's capital Kolkata has a population of over 15 million. Like many other metropolitan cousins, the City of Joy suffered from economic stagnation in post-Independence India. However, since 2000, the city has witnessed an economic rejuvenation, thanks to the development of IT industry in Rajarhat in Greater Kolkata. The city's IT sector is growing at 70 percent yearly — twice the national average. It had an overall competitive score of 64.94, and an infrastructure score of 63.03. The city has seen a surge of investments in the housing infrastructure sector. Several new projects have come up in recent times.

6. Hyderabad

The financial capital of Andhra Pradesh, also known as the City of Pearls, had an overall competitive score of 61.47, and an infrastructure score of 59.72. With an estimated population of 7 million, the city is

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the biggest contributor to Andhra Pradesh's GDP, state tax and excise revenues. Hyderabad, which used to be primarily a service city, is now the seat of many businesses, including trade, transport, commerce, storage, communication and, lately, IT. Major pharmaceutical companies like Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Matrix Laboratories, Aurobindo Pharma Limited and Vimta Labs are located here.

7. Ahmedabad

Gujarat's largest inland industrial center has been an important base of commerce, trade and industry. Ahmedabad has seen great prosperity because of its proximity to Surat and its access to the hinterland of Gujarat. Though dusty roads and bungalows used to dot the city once, Ahmedabad is witnessing a major construction boom and an increase in population. In recent years, the city has seen a significant rise in IT and scientific industries. Apart from these, chemicals and pharmaceutical industries contribute to the state's economic growth, with two of the biggest pharmaceutical companies of India, Zydus Cadila and Torrent Pharmaceuticals, based here. It had an overall competitive score of 59.57, and an infrastructure score of 64.25. It is performing well in administrative efficiency and governance.

8. Pune

The growth of this major industrial city, located roughly 100 miles east of Mumbai, has become the topic of discussion these days. Starting from automobile majors like Tata Motors and DaimlerChrysler, Pune will soon house units of global biggies like General Motors, Volkswagen, Fiat, etc. A number of important engineering goods industries like Cummins Engines Co Ltd and Bharat Forge Ltd, electronic goods companies like LG and Whirlpool, and food companies like Frito Lay and Coca-Cola are also located here. Of late, Pune's software industry has grown by leaps and bounds. IT parks like Rajiv Gandhi IT Park at Hinjewadi, Magarpatta Cybercity, MIDC Software Technology Park at Talawade, Marisoft IT Park at Kalyani Nagar are seats of technology that the city can boast of. The city scored overall competitive score of 59.18, and an infrastructure score of 57.63. Pune's ranking is benefited by good physical attributes and strong institutional support for industry.

9. Nagpur

Nagpur, the City of Oranges and the second capital of Maharashtra, boasts of superb infrastructure, excellent educational institutions, and a booming services hub. It is one of the fastest-growing Indian cities with a strong trading community. It is also the biggest center of commerce in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region. It had an overall competitive score of 54.87, and an infrastructure score of 55.28. The real game-changer for India's overall performance, as per the report, are the tier 2 and tier 3 cities, some of which are outperforming the metros along certain sub-indices. Nagpur jumped four places in its competitive rank in 2010.

10. Jaipur

The Pink City, famous for gems and jewelry, food products and garments, had an overall competitive score of 54.63, and an infrastructure score of 55.13.

11. Chandigarh

The capital of the states of Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh is one of the best planned cities in India. It is ranked third in purchasing power, fourth in housing options, eighth in economic environment, ninth in education and 10th in health care. It falls in terms of safety — at 29th position. It had an overall competitive score of 54.53,



Nagpur, Maharashtra, is one of the fastest-growing Indian cities with a strong trading community

ARKO DATTA/REUTERS

and an infrastructure score of 57.37.

12. Surat

Gujarat's second-largest city with a population of 4 million is the fastest-growing Indian city in terms of economic prosperity. The city has registered an annualized GDP growth rate of 11.5 percent over the past seven fiscal years, according to the data compiled by economic research firm Indicus Analytics. Known for its thriving diamond and textile industry, Surat had an overall competitive score of 54.38, and an infrastructure score of 55.03.

13. Gurgaon

Gurgaon is one of the most-preferred cities in India for entrepreneurs. It has in the last few years received huge amounts of foreign direct investment, especially in the IT enabled services sector. It was ranked as the best city in India to set up a software unit or a BPO centre. It had an overall competitive score of 53.91, and an infrastructure score of 53.29.

14. Indore

The fast-growing Madhya Pradesh city had an overall competitive score of 53.86, and an infrastructure score of 53.65. The central Indian business center also jumped three places in the competitive index from last year.

15. Coimbatore

Coimbatore houses a large number of small and medium textile mills, and is a major center for auto components, pump manufacturing and also ITes firms. The Tamil Nadu city had an overall competitive score of 53.34, and an infrastructure score of 55.97.

16. Kochi

The Queen of the Arabian seas, Kochi, is Kerala's second-largest city, the state's commercial hub and also has one of the major seaports. The city is ranked third in education and health facilities. However, it falls in safety, housing options and economic environment. It had an overall competitive score of 53.21, and an infrastructure score of 51.95.

17. Noida

With an overall competitive score of 53.20, and an infrastructure score of 53.18, the New Okhla Industrial Development Authority, or Noida, Uttar Pradesh, is a thriving business center for multinationals in the IT services sector.

18. Goa

India's tourism hotspot Goa is among the top ten livable places in India. It is ranked fourth in terms of socio-cultur-

al political environment and purchasing power, seventh for health-care facilities and 13th in education. It scores low on safety and economic environment. It had an overall competitive score of 53.10, and an infrastructure score of 55.40.

19. Shimla

The capital of Himachal Pradesh is a favorite tourist destination. It is rated as the fifth best in education, economic environment and health care. The city, ranked 10th in housing options, had an overall competitive score of 52.63, and an infrastructure score of 52.19.

20. Kanpur

Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh is a major center of leather products and textiles. The city also has booming steel, chemicals, two-wheelers, engineering, and fertilizer industries and numerous small- and medium-scale enterprises. It also boasts of the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology. It had an overall competitive score of 52.61, and an infrastructure score of 54.14.

21. Dhanbad

Dhanbad, Jharkhand, is famous for coal mining. Many major firms like Tata Steel, BCCL, IISCO, etc, have coal mining operations here. It had an overall competitive score of 52.37, and an infrastructure score of 52.52.

22. Ludhiana

Ludhiana is one of India's richest cities. Last year, the World Bank ranked the Punjab city as the best Indian city for business environment. It had an overall competitive score of 52.30, and an infrastructure score of 52.85.

23. Varanasi

Varanasi has many small-scale industries and is famous for silk. The Indian Railways also has a huge locomotive factory here. It had an overall competitive score of 52.21, and an infrastructure score of 52.85.

24. Vadodara

Vadodara is a big center for pharmaceuticals, chemicals, cotton textiles and machine tools in Gujarat. It had an overall competitive score of 52.13, and an infrastructure score of 53.46.

25. Madurai

Madurai has many large business houses engaged in the production of tires, industrial rubber products, machinery, textiles, conveyor belts, chemicals, etc. Even the city's IT industry has been booming over the last few years. The Tamil Nadu city had an overall competitive score of 52.04, and an infrastructure score of 52.11.

He Speaks From The Heart

*Cardiologist **Samin Sharma**'s career evolved from calculated risks and self-confidence*

As the director of the Cardiac Cath Lab and Intervention at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, Dr Samin Sharma is a cardiologist who performs nearly 1800 interventions each year, the highest in the country. In practice for 18 years, he has the highest angioplasty success rate in New York state. That, indeed, is no mean achievement.

According to New York State Department of Health reports, Dr Sharma has the highest angioplasty success rate for an interventional cardiologist in the state from 1994 -2004 with lowest mortality of less than 0.2 percent in all cases.

Under Dr Sharma's leadership, Mount Sinai Heart Center has become the leading cardiac interventional center in the country, providing excellent care for all types of patients including those considered high-risk heart patients.

In such an "intervention," Dr Sharma inserts a catheter into a patient's body - usually through the groin - moves it to areas in the heart vessels where there's significant blockage, drills away the plaque, and often inserts medicated stents to prevent restenosis, or recurrence of blockages.

Such "procedures," as they are called, typically cost \$20,000, and rarely involve more than an overnight stay at the hospital. Heart bypass surgery, on the other hand, can cost more than double, and usually requires a patient to be hospitalized for a week. Dr Sharma's unit last year reportedly contributed more than \$200 million in revenues to Mount Sinai's overall budget of more than \$1 billion.

"Tackling complicated heart cases can be a double-edged sword and extremely risky," he explains. "But if you expect to be the best in your field, you should be able to successfully handle such cases consistently."

Dr Sharma grew up in a hot and dusty village in Rajasthan where he spent most of his time studying, sometimes starting at 5 a.m.; he balanced the study hours with a little time for cricket and field hockey. His future specialization in interventional cardiology, which requires working with intricate devices, may have been foreshadowed by his childhood interest in taking apart and reassembling watches.

Dr Sharma received his medical degree at S.M.S. Medical College in Jaipur, where he was ranked the top student in his Medical School, having received six gold medals and three honors.

He came to the US alone in 1982 with \$500. After his arrival, he followed a path of hard work, calculated risks and, maybe, a bit of luck.

One acquaintance in Manhattan was an Indian merchant who suffered from headaches and incontinence. Other doctors told the merchant not to worry; Dr Sharma suspected a brain tumor. Thanks to Dr Sharma's intervention, the tumor was caught in time. In return, the merchant gave Dr Sharma a place to stay and a stipend while he studied for his state medical boards.

Dr Sharma then took an unconventional approach to secure a fellowship under Dr Valentin Fuster. Since Fuster was not hiring, Sharma offered to work for free for one



Dr Samin Sharma annually performs more angioplasties than any other cardiologist in the US. The Cardiac Cath Lab at Mount Sinai in NY, below, that he heads, is the leading center in the country.



year with the understanding that if Fuster was pleased with the first year, Sharma would have a fellowship the following year. It was a calculated risk that the self-confident physician from Jaipur knew would pay off; and it did. It indeed, has.

"Heart disease continues to rise in America," Dr Sharma says, noting that last year more than 13 million Americans had cardiac problems.

Some 700,000 of them died, making heart disease second only to cancer in annual fatalities. More than 1 million angioplasties are performed in America each year, three

times the number of bypass operations.

And as America continues to attract immigrants, particularly from Asia, medical studies - including a seminal one conducted by Dr Sharma - show that South Asian men, in particular, are most vulnerable to heart disease. Of more than 5 million immigrants of Asian origin since 1970, 1 million are from South Asia, including India.

"They are getting heart disease at younger and younger ages," Dr Sharma said. "Why is this so? It's the change in lifestyle when they come to America. They don't check their cholesterol regularly. Many don't exercise regularly. And many cannot cope with the increased stress of trying to make it in America."

Dr Sharma acknowledged that even though he takes on "very high-risk cases," angioplasty is often not advisable for patients whose left main artery is severely blocked. "But overall, angioplasty is safe, causes much less trauma than bypass surgery, and these coated stents block the stimulation of muscle cells - that is, they help prevent blockages from recurring," he says.

His technique has been so effective that physicians from across the country attend his regular "live" seminars on angioplasty. In these seminars, Dr Sharma explains his method while a video camera in the operating theater transmits the scene to dozens of locations.

One of those locations is in his native Jaipur, where Dr Sharma contributed \$1 million of his own money to open a heart center late last year. Some 15 percent of patients are given free care through Dr Sharma's philanthropy. He travels frequently to lecture on angioplasty.

Dr Sharma serves on the Cardiac Advisory Board of the New York State for coronary interventions that advises the health department and the Governor on issues of health policies and supervision, safety and appropriateness of heart care by various hospitals in New York.

In 2006, Dr Sharma received the Governor's Award of Excellence for his outstanding contributions to medicine.

He has endowed in honor of his father, a monthly Anandi Sharma Visiting Professors' Program, hosting renowned medical experts. He travels to India four-to-six times a year to teach angioplasty to Indian cardiologists. Since 1996, Dr Sharma brings 1-2 cardiologists from India each year for interventional cardiology training at Mount Sinai.

Dr Sharma also has a passion for teaching physicians, nurses and fellows. In recognition of his excellence in teaching and mentoring, he was awarded the Simon Dack Teacher of the Year in Cardiology in 2000 and Cardiology Fellows' Advocate award in 2009. For his professional dedication, leadership and helping nature, Dr Sharma received the coveted 'Physician of the year' award by Mount Sinai nurses in 2007 and 'Jacobi Medallion best physician' award by the doctors of Mount Sinai in 2007.

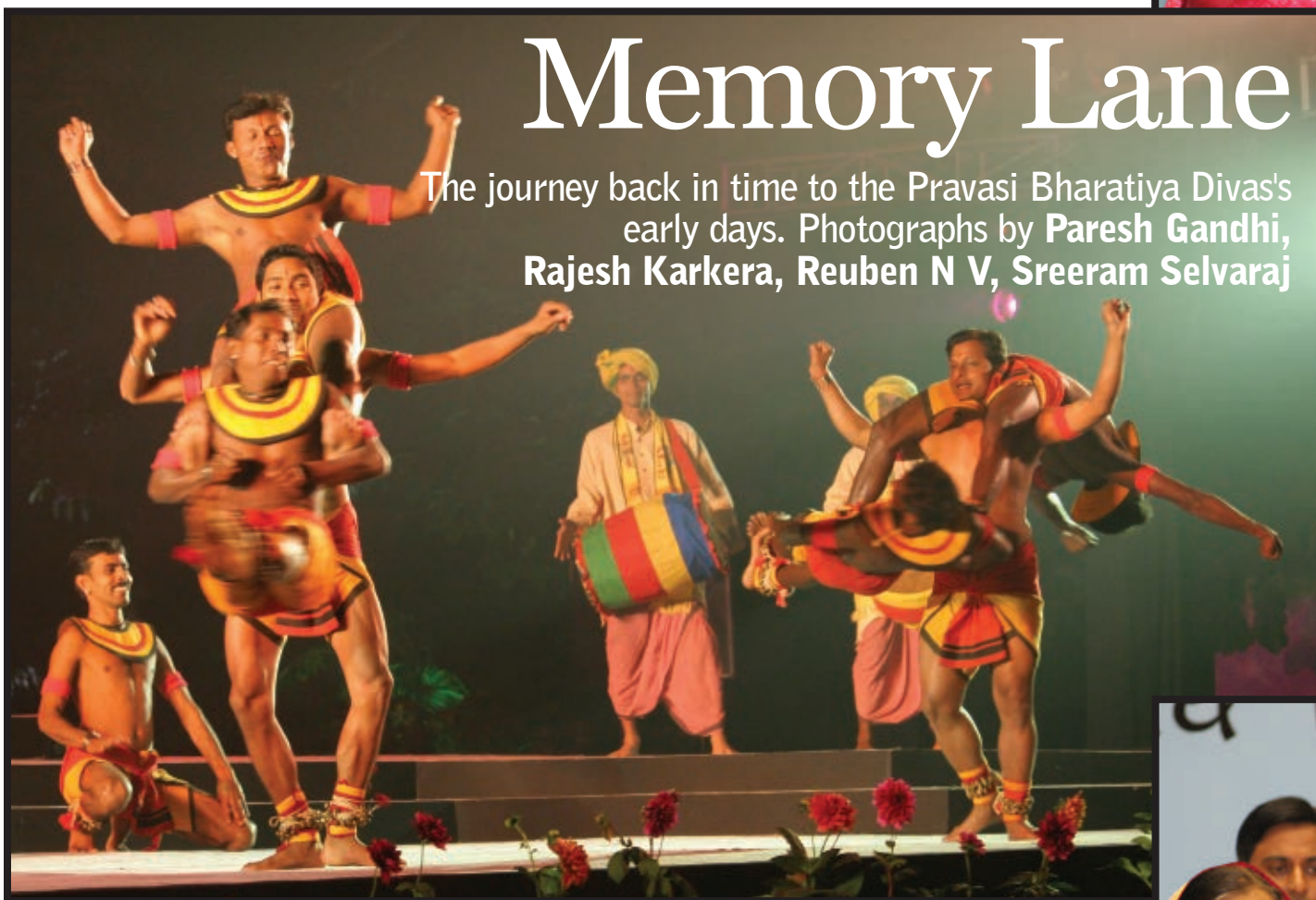
Despite all of his accolades and achievements, Dr Sharma remains a warm, compassionate physician providing individualized treatment to all of his patients. ■



From left, Indian ministers Veerappa Moily, Vayalar Ravi, Pranab Mukherjee and Kamal Nath at PBD 2010



Dr Ruby Umesh Pawankar , right, president-elect of the World Allergy Organization, receives the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman from Indian President Pratibha Patil



Left, a cultural program at PBD 2010

South African Finance Minister Pravin Jamnadas Gordhan, right, receives the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman at PBD 2010



A women's panel at PBD 2010

Growing In The Downturn

*Hotelier **Sant Singh Chatwal** has projects worth more than \$500 million under development*

At a time when other developers are contracting, hotelier Sant Singh Chatwal is expanding his hotel-management company by opening trendy hotels in New York City, as well as in Miami and abroad, including India.

The initial step in Chatwal's grand expansion came in October last year with the debut of the luxury Chatwal Hotel, an 83-room, \$100 million-plus project in a landmark building in Manhattan's Theater District. Now, Chatwal is scheduled to open hotels in Chelsea, NoHo and Miami's South Beach, modeled after two of his Times Square boutique hotels - the Dream and the Night.

The Dream South Beach, expected to open in Feb 2011, offers 108 guestrooms, including nine spacious and design-driven Junior Suites, two Duplex Sun Suites, and the resplendent Sun House Duplex Penthouse. The hotel's décor elements evoke a feeling of the late '70s with a hint of modern Morocco. An ayurvedic spa is also among the attractions at Dream South Beach.

The Dream Downtown in New York, also scheduled to open in early 2011, is a \$250 million project with 316 rooms, sporting a distinctive porthole-dotted façade.

Another Chatwal is under construction in England's Hertfordshire and a search is under way for a location close to Mumbai in India. "Ours is a unique product," says Chatwal. "First of all, we don't have 300 or 400 keys. We are a very small product, very niche. I feel strongly that with this type of product we don't have any competition. We are marketing it at a very high level, with heads of state etc; people who need powerful security and those who are extremely rich. They are looking for luxury and don't care about money. There is always a market for that."

Chatwal's survival through one of the worst markets in decades stems from major changes he says he made to his strategy after the real-estate crisis of the 1990s. Like some other developers who got crushed back then, he since has taken on less risk by adding equity partners, insulating himself from the woes facing some of his more independent competitors.

That he is able to evolve and learn with the changing times, is because Chatwal has constantly challenged himself to do better in everything he has been doing. And the man has hardly ever failed.

At the age of 18 when he had a reasonably comfortable life in Faridkot, Punjab, where his father Makhan Singh Chatwal was a small trader, Chatwal decided to leave the comfort zone for a better future and joined the Indian military where he soon became a fighter pilot.

By his own admission, life was full of thrills and excitement, but only for a few years. A man in love with constant challenges, Chatwal says he wanted to get more out of life and left his career as a fighter pilot to head for Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to join the airline of Emperor Haile Selassie. Once in Addis Ababa, he learned he could not keep his beard and turban, both Sikh religious symbols, if he wanted to join the airline.

An uncompromising man when it comes to religion,



Above, President Bill Clinton with Sant Singh Chatwal at the opening of Chatwal New York. Below, guest rooms in Dream South Beach feature intricately carved French-Moroccan doors, back-lit by cool blue mood light to create a mystifying jewel box effect.



Chatwal spurned the offer, and, instead, took up a clerical job for a paltry monthly salary. It was a tough time for young Chatwal, but he did not stop dreaming of a better life. A few years later he saved enough to buy a restaurant and began serving Indian food. Business was picking up and Chatwal bought a second restaurant. It looked as if his hopes would finally bear fruit.

But political unrest came to Ethiopia and after leaving Ethiopia and spending some time in Montreal where he started two restaurants serving a mixture of French and Indian food, Chatwal landed in New York in 1979 and has since not looked back. A born entrepreneur, Chatwal, who is the chairman and chief executive officers of Hampshire Hotels and Resorts, LLC, has built a global business in some of the finest hotels and restaurants.

Hampshire Hotels and Resorts owns hotels in the US, Canada, the United Kingdom, India and Thailand, with over 3,000 rooms in Manhattan alone. His Bombay Palace chain of internationally renowned gourmet restaurants popularized Indian cuisine around the world major metropolitan cities including London, Montreal, Toronto, New York, Washington, DC, Beverly Hills, and Kuala Lumpur.

With his insight and vision, Hampshire Hotels and Resorts is expanding at a fast pace, with several new international projects on the anvil. The chain's trophy property is the Manhattan Chatwal Hotel, which cost roughly \$1.2 million per room to build. The Thierry Despont-designed hotel occupies the former site of the Lamb's Club, the 105-year-old social club once frequented by actors such as John Barrymore. Nightly rates will range from \$600 to \$800.

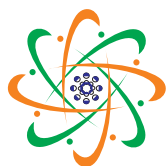
Additionally, Hampshire Hotels and Resorts has begun large-scale expansion throughout India, with multiple outposts of the Dream brand set to open in Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Jaipur, Delhi, and Mumbai in 2011 - more than 2,000 keys to India's ultra-luxury market. Dream Cochin opened in Cochin in Spring 2009.

"I currently have projects worth \$500 million under development of which roughly \$200 million is being invested in India," says Chatwal.

Doing business in India is not easy, quips Chatwal, thanks to the bureaucracy and various rules and regulation. But being a man of patience he knows that, ultimately, his efforts to set up shop in India will be rewarding.

In April last year, Indian President Pratibha Patil presented Chatwal with the Padma Bhushan, among the highest civilian awards for Indians, for his role in rallying US politicians to support the civil nuclear pact between the US and India, clinched in 2008.

Chatwal wears many other hats, too. He is the trustee of the William J Clinton Foundation, a charitable foundation led by former President Bill Clinton to focus on global issues of health, security and economic empowerment. This includes active involvement in initiatives pertaining to the HIV/AIDS initiative; Clinton Global Initiative, Urban Enterprise Initiative and Healthier Generation Initiative among others. In 2001, Sant Chatwal became a founder trustee of the American India Foundation and accompanied President Bill Clinton on his first humanitarian tour of India in the aftermath of the Gujarat earthquake. ■



Memory Lane



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, right, with Vayalar Ravi, minister for overseas Indian affairs, at PBD 2009



New Jersey Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula, second from left, at PBD 2009



India's acrobatic heritage, on display at PBD 2009



Delegates at PBD 2009



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, fifth from right, sitting, with his cabinet ministers Pranab Mukherjee, third from left, sitting, and Vayalar Ravi, third from right, sitting, special adviser Sam Pitroda, second from left, sitting, and Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award winners and dignitaries at PBD 2009

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PBD 2008 award winners and special guests with the Indian prime minister and senior Indian federal and state ministers

Memory Lane



Vayalar Ravi, India's minister for its diaspora, lights the ceremonial lamp at PBD 2008



Indian President Pratibha Patil with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman winners



Above, a stall at PBD 2008

Left, an exhibition of international postage stamps celebrating Mahatma Gandhi



Eliminating Avoidable Blindness in Children Worldwide

Childhood blindness is a pressing issue worldwide, primarily in developing countries where access to health care often is limited. The Eye Foundation of America (EFA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving vision and eliminating avoidable blindness by delivering eye care to those who need it most.

Visually impaired or blind children grow up without the same advantages as sighted children. Unable to read and write, they often cannot support themselves as adults and become a burden on their families and communities. According to the World Health Organization, there are as many as 1.4 million blind children worldwide. Every minute, one child goes blind. Additionally, "Combating childhood blindness" has been identified by the World Bank as the most cost-effective of health interventions. (Orbis International)



Eye Foundation of America was established in 1979 by Rotarian and Ophthalmologist V.K. Raju, MD.



EFA has been working with Rotary Clubs in India since 1980.

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Where Excellence Meets Opportunity

The American University of Antigua College of Medicine is preparing physicians for tomorrow

When New York attorney Neal Simon founded American University of Antigua (AUA) in the Caribbean, the decision was driven by the projected shortage of physicians in the US. That was 2004 and the severity of shortfall has only worsened; the United States now faces a potential deficit of about 91,000 physicians in 10 years.

In six short years, Simon's vision has blossomed into the first and the only hospital-integrated US-modeled medical university in the Caribbean, where clinical experience starts in the first semester. First and fourth semester AUA students attend rounds at the most modern hospital in the Caribbean, Mount St. John Medical Centre. Students are exposed to patients of all age groups. Additionally, students practice history taking and physical examinations with patients at the university's lab on campus. Third and fourth semester students also attend autopsies at the hospital as part of their pathology course.

AUA strives to offer qualified individuals an opportunity to attain the highest quality US-modeled healthcare education to help realize their dream of becoming medical doctors, veterinarians in the United States.

That realization was hard to imagine when the school first opened its doors with 9 students in 2004. Today, AUA is a growing and vibrant university with over 1,700 students, a college of veterinary medicine, a brand new multi-million dollar campus, among the most modern in the Caribbean.

"We are dedicated to providing our students with quality education by ensuring that our faculty-to-student ratio remains low," says Simon. "All classes are kept to a level that will optimize our students' learning experience."

So, what makes AUA so unique among other medical schools. There are only a few states in the US that require approval for international medical schools.

Although only six years old, the AUA program is one of a handful approved for clinical clerkships and residency training by New York state, giving its students the option to complete their clinical training and residencies at NY State-approved hospitals.

"This is very important because it allows our students the opportunity to access approximately one-fifth (20%) of the residency spots in the United States," says Par Prem Kumar, the school's associate director for International Admissions.

"All AUA programs are designed to ensure that students meet the necessary requirements of licensure in the United States," explains Kumar. "Additionally, the curriculum ensures that students receive education similar to the finest medical and veterinary schools in the US."

The AUA College of Medicine also helps prepare students to achieve passing scores on the US Medical Licensing Examinations, providing clinical clerkship opportunities in some of the best teaching hospitals in the US. That is made possible because of AUA's affiliations with over 20 teaching hospitals, where students can complete their clinical training. These hospitals are located throughout the US and Puerto Rico.



The new multi-million campus of American University of Antigua is among the most modern in the Caribbean.



From right, Neal Simon, founder of AUA, with Par Prem Kumar, AUA's associate director of international admissions and Hemant Patel, chairman of AAPI Charitable Foundation, at an event announcing the AUA scholarship for Indian students.

The AUA has a large, diverse student community. Over 25 percent of its students are of Indian American descent. "Our students and the staff operate like a family and engage in hand-holding as required in testing moments," explains Kumar, who sits in AUA's New York

office on Wall Street.

While primarily dedicated to teaching medicine, the university also feels a responsibility to direct resources to educating the deserving and to continuing research in areas that will directly impact human health.

In concert with the Ministry of Health of Antigua and Barbuda, faculty and students have conducted research to help the local population improve their standard of health and living conditions. During the past three years, the Center for Tropical Diseases has conducted numerous research projects that contributed to improving the health of the local citizens and the Caribbean region in general.

Earlier this year, the AUA and the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) Charitable Foundation of New York/New Jersey, a foundation working under the national AAPI organization, announced a joint scholarship covering tuition and fees until the fifth semester for qualified students of Indian descent, who attend AUA or AUA's partner institution Kasturba Medical College International Center (KMCI) in Manipal, India.

The AUA put the scholarship together to give qualified candidates, who could not necessarily afford a medical education an opportunity to attend the school. "To ignore talented applicants because they do not have the funds to attend a medical school is egregious," quips Kumar.

More information about AUA can be found at www.auamed.org

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Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh inaugurates PBD 2007 as Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dixit, second from left, and Vayalar Ravi, with the name tag around his neck, look on



Rajendra Kumar Pachauri, right, chief of the Nobel-winning Inter Governmental Panel on Climate Change, with business honchos at a panel at PBD 2007



Columbia Journalism School
Dean Sreenath Sreenivasan



Indian-American activist
Swadesh Chatterjee



Asia Society President
Vishakha Desai

Memory Lane



A kite festival held in Gujarat in conjunction with PBD 2007



Delegates get into the desi mood

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Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gives the first Overseas Citizen of India card at PBD 2006



Above, Congress party leaders Vilasrao Deshmukh, left, and Ghulam Nabi Azad at PBD 2006.
Left, a flame-thrower



Memory Lane

The late Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Chandrashekhara Reddy, center, with Congress party veteran Oscar Fernandes, right



Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi, left, in deep discussion with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, center, and Montek Singh Ahluwalia, special adviser to the Indian prime minister





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Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, flanked by two Indian classical music legends: S P Balamurali Krishna, left, and Bhimsen Joshi, right, at PBD 2005



Full house at PBD 2005.

Memory Lane

Sam Pitroda, the father of the Indian telecom revolution



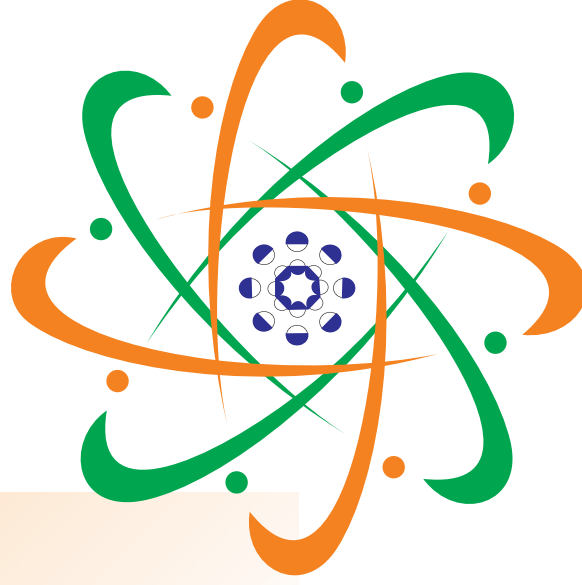
Constant delays, and even a derailment, have begun to mar its usually acceptable record. In October, over 2,000 passengers had to be evacuated after a southbound train was derailed during peak hours. There have also been recurring issues with new air-conditioned coaches.



Delegates get a taste of India



Registration at PBD 2005



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Pravasi Bharatiya Samman winners at PBD 2004



Then Indian President A P J Abdul Kalam speaks, delegates listen

Memory Lane



Then Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, right, with his deputy Lal Kishenchand Advani



Delegates get into the groove



Violin mastero L Subrahmaniam performs

A Man Of Few Words

Neurologist **Vithal Dhaduk** says he owes his success to organizational skills

Dr Vithal Dhaduk's low-profile demeanor can be misleading at best. He is not written about much and usually shuns media interviews. However, his resolute entrepreneurial spirit, other than being a successful neurologist, more than makes up for the limelight he deliberately avoids in his public life.

Dhaduk is the president-chairman of Newton-PA-based Synerx Pharmaceutical. He also has his busy private practice in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

For a man of few words, what is striking about Dr Dhaduk is his organization skills. For about a year now, he has worked tirelessly on organizing a Police Unity Tour of officers from the US and India, which aims to raise awareness and honor police officers, who died in the line of duty. Under his leadership, the Sardar Patel World Police Unity Tour will unite 50 members of the American Police Unity Tour with 50 senior police officers from Gujarat, on a bicycle ride from Ahmedabad to Karamsar, and then onto Sardar Sarovar Dam by bus. The tour, scheduled to arrive in India on Jan 7, 2011, is unprecedented given the logistics involved, and was improbable without Dhaduk's organization and inter-personal skills.

"I had my personal reputation at stake to ensure the tour happened," says Dhaduk. "Because, the tour was for a noble cause, everything eventually fell in place, but things weren't smooth initially."

While Dhaduk has achieved everything that one could aspire for in life, he does rue the sudden death of his mother, who suffered a stroke in 1984 in Nakra village in Gujarat.

At that time Dr Dhaduk was in the United States and could not be at his mother's bedside. He feels something could have been done to prevent her death had he been present although he admits there was no effective medicine for stroke at that time.

Decades later, Dhaduk is still troubled by the memory, and out of that has born a strong desire to find an answer to strokes.

"My dream is to find someday a cure, a medicine for stroke and Alzheimer's disease," he says. "If I can I would like to develop drugs that can prevent these diseases."

He is not just dreaming about it. In his pharmaceutical business, where a lot of research and development are conducted, he is actively looking to develop such drugs. The passion for finding an answer to stroke led him to present an academic paper, 'CT Scan, EEG, and Brain Mapping in Acute Stroke' at the American Academy of Neurology in 1987.

But if a passion for medicine and research fills half of his heart, the other half is filled with an entrepreneurial spirit that has led to his successfully founding many businesses that, he says, he had started more as a hobby.



Dr Vithal Dhaduk; below, Dr Dhaduk with Harry Phillips, executive director of the Police Unity Tour.



His involvement with business is not limited to medical and research related ventures, but also in the hospitality industry and real estate.

Dhaduk, one of the directors of the Dubai-based Kensington real estate group, is working on mega projects in Dubai and Kampala, Uganda, where the group has built some 150 two-five bedroom bungalows. "No matter where, I love entrepreneurial challenges," he says. He has also worked on hotel and land development projects in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as in Virginia.

Dhaduk, whose father was a farmer and worked hard to see him through medical school in India, points out what motivates him to do what he has been doing for decades, is the desire to create something that not many people can achieve.

"It was just not money, not just finance, but something that is permanent. Of course, I also wished to ensure that my kids grow up and get into the best careers and find appropriate life partners without having to worry too much about money," he adds.

Dhaduk's early talent was recognized by a group of visiting doctors from the US when he was about to complete his MD at the BJ Medical College in Gujarat. That meeting proved fortunate; he was invited to the US to work as an assistant physician in 1983. That is how his American journey began.

Maybe because of his modest background, Dhaduk has a strong philanthropic streak, donating money to health and educational initiatives in India, mainly in his native Gujarat. He feels that while creating wealth is important, it is of little value if one cannot give back to the society that nurtured him or her.

Inspired by this ideal, Dhaduk has rebuilt a primary school and a high school in Nakra. "I am focusing on health and education, mostly in Gujarat where I grew up, where I have my origins and where I know most people. Education is something where most investment should be made so that a child from a poor family who is otherwise talented and intelligent can fulfill his or her dream and become a productive member of the society. But for that to happen we need to give them opportunities for education," he says.

Although he has so far donated or spent money through non-formal channels, he is in the process of founding the Dhaduk Charitable Trust so money could be utilized more efficiently.

Dhaduk is a member-fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, the Pennsylvania Medical Society, the American Medical Association, the Parkinson's Support Group, the National Headache Foundation and the Alzheimer's Support Group, among others.

He lives with his wife Ranjan and children Darpan, Amar and Payal in Dalton, PA. ■

Technology For Smart Urban Living

*The founders of **MyCityWay** quit a successful career on Wall Street to start their venture*

How many lifetime residents can honestly say they take advantage of all the benefits and resources provided by their cities?

From the cleanest bathrooms to the best places to enjoy a BYOB special, a summer sale, or a spontaneous dinner for 6, you don't need much to know just about everything about where you're standing right now.

According to three ex-Wall Streeters and a handful of NYC heavyweights - all you need is your smartphone and one city app from MyCityWay.

MyCityWay apps on the mobile device are meant to provide a one-stop discovery and action-ability platform for over 50 resource categories in the city - including restaurants, nightlife, hotels, traffic, public transport, events, safety, green efforts and much more.

Tailored for use by local residents and visitors alike, the mobile application was the winner of NYC Big Apps Competition for Popular Choice and Investor's Choice, hosted by the City of New York and Mayor Michael Bloomberg in June 2010.

MyCityWay was the first company to gain a seed capital from the NYC Entrepreneurial Fund: the first ever city-sponsored seed fund located outside of Silicon Valley.

The founders of MyCityWay, Archana Patchirajan, Puneet Mehta and Sonpreet Bhatia, soon became the most-talked about entrepreneurs in the city. A rare honor followed when they were invited to ring the ceremonial closing bell at the Nasdaq in July, an unusual event for a startup that was just six months old.

It's easy to see why Mayor Bloomberg's administration was so excited about investing with this founding team, who believe they can make your life better and your city smarter.

Finally the Bloomberg administration has a platform that enables citizens to access all the resources and services provided by the city, such as recycling, emergency facilities and free concerts/events.

Additionally, like most New Yorkers, the Mayor takes the subway. MyCityWay users receive transit alerts, so when their train is running late, they can stop for an iced coffee before heading down to the congested, overheated platform.

"The MyCityWay team is being looked at as agents of change - a change that is giving technology entrepreneurship a new



From left, the founders of MyCityWay, Sonpreet Bhatia, Archana Patchirajan and Puneet Mehta, outside the Nasdaq in New York on July 12, the day they were invited to ring the exchange's closing bell.

direction on the East Coast," says Patchirajan, who was a senior consultant with Citigroup before co-founding MyCityWay.

Since the initial launch of its New York City-specific application NYCWay, MyCityWay has gained presence in 40 cities, including Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, DC and London, and plans to be in over 60 cities in the next four months, the founders said. Internationally in 2011, they would be launching in Europe, the UAE, Australia and India, regions where it is currently exploring content and telecom partnerships.

As the business continues to grow, the team is working toward revolutionizing information access within all major cities. "As a startup company, we are delighted to be building a product that will enable the creation of smarter cities - cities that allow active interaction with residents and visitors through our apps," added Patchirajan.

MyCityWay began with an idea by the 3 founders, all former Wall Street executives, who grew frustrated at the inability to find a comprehensive local resource for information. So the three collaborated on MyCityWay and entered it a year ago in the NYC Big Apps Competition, where it won three awards.

The trio received a \$1 million round of funding from FirstMark Capital, The Economic Development Corporation and IA Ventures in August 2010 after getting seed funding from New York's Entrepreneurial Fund.

A reason for the team's success is in leveraging their Wall Street experience in wrestling financial data, and turning that knowledge into an engine that could crunch and organize all kinds of information.

What also worked for the founding team was that they knew each other and had worked together on Citigroup projects. While Patchirajan came to the US in 2004, Mehta has been here since 2000 and Bhatia since 1999. Patchirajan comes from a family of serial entrepreneurs and has proven expertise in building great teams. She inspired the team to believe that innovation was the key factor in facilitating large transformations. While Mehta has had experience running innovative technology initiatives, it was his urge for smart urban living and the role technology could play on that front that

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made him co-found MyCityWay. For Bhatia, perfection in what she pursued was very important, something that is evident in MyCityWay applications.

MyCityWay, which is available free on iOS, Android, and the Blackberry Torch, turns to government data for only about 20 percent of the information in its different city apps, which are a collection of dozens of mini-apps.

From that often data, the company is able to mine for important things like transit alerts, safety and recycling information, and traffic cameras feeds while also creating government resource mini-apps.

One of the most popular features has been the restaurant inspection reports. The municipal data is packaged with content filled out by partners such as Booking.com, Movietickets.com and OpenTable in some cities and firsthand work by MyCityWay, which has built its own databases of information about restaurants, bars, nightlife and other categories.

The NYC Way app features street food carts and a listing for the changing color patterns on the Empire State Building. By marrying interesting data with government information, MyCityWay has built a guide for locals and visitors that tell people what they want and what they need.

A web-version of the application is expected soon. Much of the application

is resident on the mobile phone or the smart device, meaning it will not consume data bandwidth and users can access it in offline mode.

"You can easily plan your vacation in New York City using the application on a flight in offline mode," said Mehta, who was a senior vice president with Citigroup before co-founding MyCityWay.

Currently with less than 10 employees, plus an offshore team from India pitching in, MyCityWay is now on something of a tear, applying this model to other cities. It recently added 17 new localized apps - including MyCityWay's first international city, London - and it's poised to release MyCityWay USA app that lets users download multiple cities in one app.

For each new app, MyCityWay approaches the government to see what kind of information they can use. It can be unrefined data spread out over various city departments, which can complicate the process, but more cities are learning the benefits of releasing data and being more transparent, something advocates of Government 2.0 have pushed for.

Hawaii, for example, released a lot of tourism information that proved very helpful for the Hawaii Way app. But there's still a lot of work to be done in many cities, even New York, one of the most open.

Getting at helpful information like street cleaning days and local parking restriction information is tough to extract. And crime stats - at the top of many con-



Above, the founders of MyCityWay with New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg at the NYC Big Apps Competition, where they won three awards. Below left, the app is currently available for the Apple as well as Android mobile platforms.



sumers' wish list - are also hard to come by in most cities.

The lesson from MyCityWay is that diving into data, especially government information, can pay dividends if packaged in the right way.

Given the appeal of the applications it has developed, the startup has become a darling of city officials. "We are being contacted by different cities to build similar one-stop apps to help locals and tourists alike," says Bhatia, also a former Wall Street executive. "Police departments from a couple of cities are seeking our help to include relevant safety tips from them within our city based apps."

The founders have resolved to keep

the applications cost-free for consumers and plan to generate revenue through mobile-ad delivery and partnerships. The application recently hit a major milestone when it logged a million downloads.

The three co-founders of MyCityWay decided to leave their jobs, start this venture, creating new jobs for the city and ultimately helping the economy.

"There is nothing more satisfying than building a product that will work well for everyone - not just residents and tourists, but for the cities and this world as a whole. Every city needs MyCityWay," quips Patchirajan.

A Passion For The Motherland

*Entrepreneur **Piyush Patel** now shifts focus to India, generating revenues for needy social causes*

Piyush Patel, the chemical researcher, who turned a \$200 million entrepreneur, has a new passion these days, of doing projects in India that combine business with philanthropy.

His latest one is near Ahmedabad, that he calls Piyush Palace. The 100,000 square feet, \$10 million resort facility, modeled on ancient palatial architecture, on nine acres of farmland, will cater to tourists, business travelers and foreign medical tourists. The four-storey facility, expected to open in February 2011, will feature 27 boutique-style hotel rooms, a banquet hall, a night club, an open terrace garden and a lounge, a full-service restaurant, a modern theater and state-of-the-art video conferencing facilities.

To many, the above resort features might just sound routine. But, Patel always has a few secrets up his sleeves. The heritage property, in construction since 2005, has a green theme: it has solar as well as LED lighting and an onsite water-recycling plant that uses reverse osmosis. The entire campus has been landscaped keeping the green theme in mind, with the planting of more than 500 mango trees and plants.

"This project is a culmination of my dreams in trying to help my motherland," says Patel. "The entire profit from this project will go to charity to help various nonprofits in India that are striving hard to survive. A trust will operate the resort and utilize the profits for needy social causes."

Patel also plans to eventually add a by-invitation country club to the resort, featuring an Olympic-size swimming pool, yoga and naturopathy treatments, to name a few.

For those who know Patel, they say he is not your usual entrepreneur, nor is his business acumen dictated by chance or just the promise of profits. A self-styled turnaround specialist for dying businesses, Patel has had no formal education in management, yet he has built a business empire with industries spanning the globe, and that too, in these challenging times.

Growing up in India, Patel had envisioned a research career in the chemical industry.

A gold medalist from South Gujarat University, Surat-born Patel landed in England in 1960 to pursue a degree in chemical engineering at the University of Leeds.

Over the next two years, Patel realized the potential of polymers and plastics as the industry was booming



New Jersey-based Piyush Patel sits over a \$200 million empire that spans the globe. He is currently focusing on projects in India, whose profits will be utilized for needy social causes.

in the United States at the time. The next stop was New York, where Patel pursued graduate degrees in applied sciences from Columbia University in 1962. At the insistence of his professor, Patel enrolled in the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey, for a degree in plastic engineering. He graduated at the top of his class in 1964.

Armed with three degrees and several research papers in industrial chemistry, Patel worked with US chemical corporations over the next 12 years, in New Jersey and Ohio, making his way up as the lead researcher. There, he learned a trick or two about managing large teams and profit centers within companies.

"That experience was invaluable and I knew I could branch off on my own as an entrepreneur," says Patel, now chief executive officer of Summit Research Labs, a New Jersey-based holding company that makes chemicals for water treatment, the paper and antiperspirant industries.

Intriguingly, Patel's first break did not come about in the chemical industry, but in real estate.

"I felt real estate was a safe investment, where I could park my money for the future," says Patel, who set up his company in 1986 to buy and turnaround run-down properties in New Jersey. His real-estate portfolio grew several-folds over the next few years to include residential apartment complexes and motels. Patel targeted owners of properties accused of serious city violations and who could not find the money to rescue or renovate apartments.

"The strategy worked well for me. I was able to find several such properties and made money turning them around," Patel says, adding, "it was very risky, but it was very calculated."

With interests ranging from real estate, restaurant and catering to software development besides chemicals, textile printing and personal care, Patel, 71, says his combined revenues exceed \$200 million. His several companies employ about 500 people and have operations in the US, India and Bangkok.

Other than the palatial resort in Ahmedabad, Patel's recent projects include a 15,000-square-foot fusion restaurant and bar in Manhattan and a Broadway-style theater and performing arts center in Rhode Island.

An example of his daring entrepreneurial spirit is taking on the renovation and restoration project of the Park Theatre in Rolfe Square in Cranston, Rhode Island, that closed its doors in 2002 after eight decades.

Thanks to his enterprise and investment, the theater has now been restored and rechristened Rhode Island Center for Performing Arts. Patel says he did not know much about theaters. Yet he took up the challenge and

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helped revive it.

So, where does he get his daring entrepreneurial spirit from? Patel said that although his family was in the textile business in Surat, he was not grounded in business, because he lost his father at a young age and was raised by his grandmother who emphasized education in his growing years. "I never had a clue about business. Maybe it runs in my blood and so I wanted to do something on my own even though I had the best of degrees and education from both England and the US. The map of my life is drawn as I go," says Patel in a philosophical vein.

Despite turning around businesses for over 28 years, Patel's passion still burns bright. "I like challenges. I like to prove the critics wrong. I like to defy conventional wisdom," is Patel's reply when told that people his age would usually retire and enjoy their wealth.

Age has clearly not dampened his spirit. He plans to start projects to build schools in Gujarat. Patel, who was recently appointed a member of the advisory board of the Gujarat state government on clean energy, is launching a project in the state that combines wind and solar energy.

Patel's business method is simple, involving an "upside down" approach.

"I would not invest in a successful business because, for me, it has hit a level of saturation and already has a model that has worked. There is not much for me to contribute," he explains.

"On the other hand, in a dying or unsuccessful business not only can I invest but bring in a radically different model that could do the trick."

Patel also says that the fruits of reviving a dying company are just more satisfying, notwithstanding the serious risk factor it might entail. "Everyone invests in successful companies, I like to do it the other way," he declares emphatically.

Patel insists there is indeed method to his madness. Fortune has favored him in several risky investments, but his biggest strength is his pleasing demeanor - and his implacable logic.

"I once convinced my former boss to work for me," Patel says with a smile.

Although he is a highly successful businessman, Patel remains true to his roots. He still lives in the same house in New Jersey that he brought in the 1980s with his wife Lorraine, who he met while studying at Steven's Institute of Technology.

Patel's two daughters, Avantika and Gitanjali, are settled and have branched out on their own.

Patel maintains a simple lifestyle and devotes much time these days helping Indian organizations working with the needy. Patel wants to translate his success into something useful for the Indian American community.

Now, besides building a senior's center in New Jersey, he wants to bring senior associations across the country under one umbrella. "They are the most neglected part of our community and I wish we all could think about them a little more," he says.

Above right, the \$10-million Piyush Palace that Piyush Patel is building near Ahmedabad. The palatial-style resort is unique in several aspects. The landscaping, below right, as well as the entire property has a green theme. Below, more than 300 artisans worked for over five years to give the structure its distinctive palatial look.



He Gives Hope To The Hopeless

Dr Pankaj Naram has helped patients with arthritis, heart blockage, diabetes and high-blood pressure

Within seconds of putting his fingers on your pulse, Dr Pankaj Naram can tell you what is happening within your body, mind and emotions.

"It also goes deeper into the organs, and gives you the whole picture like an X-Ray." Says Dr Naram, who travels the world treating patients in the US, Europe and Australia.

Dr Naram is a world-renowned master of Siddha Veda, which is considered the most ancient form of healing. Previously its secrets were only revealed to a select few, yet beneficial to millions of people throughout the centuries.

Now Dr Naram has been given permission to share some of the lineages' most powerful secrets for living to 100-plus years of age, full of unlimited energy, vibrant health, and peace of mind. Through acquiring the ancient scriptures of his lineage, he is now able to share never-before-revealed secrets about health and well-being.

To further that goal, Dr Naram is planning to initiate early next year an Ancient Secrets Academy (www.ancientsecretsacademy.com), something that has never been attempted before. The academy aims to educate and inspire people in the ancient secrets of the Siddha Veda masters, creating a learning, living, nurturing, achieving community - that Dr Naram believes will change the world.

"There is a reason why over a million people from more than 108 countries have come to see me. It is a silent healing revolution that began 2,500 years ago," Dr Naram says, "I am now one of the conveyor belts of these ancient secrets that can change your life forever."

Medical doctors around the world are gaining interest in ancient secrets of Siddha Veda. Recently, after Dr Hartmut Schroeder discovered the power and effectiveness of Dr Naram's approach, he invited him to lead a course on ancient secrets for medical doctors at one of the most progressive universities in Germany, Europa University.

Dr Naram, apart from centers in India, has 63 centers in Italy, 3 in Germany, plus centers in France, Switzerland, Holland, Australia, New Zealand, and America. He treats about 500 patients a day while he is in India and about a 100 when he is traveling in the US, Europe and Australia.

In the US, Dr. Naram works directly with Serving Those Who Serve (www.stws.org), a non-profit organization in New York dedicated to the health and well being of workers and volunteers who served at Ground Zero and related sites in New York. Thousands of people exposed to toxins following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 are being treated with the most incredible results. The herbal project was entirely funded by Dr Naram as a gift to the brave men and women who risked their lives to save the lives of others.

A recent study has revealed that Dr Naram's herbal formulas were very effective in helping people heal from exposure to the toxins present at Ground Zero and related sites.

The survey was conducted by Dr Jim Dahl and Dr Kathy Falk. In response to 9/11 symptoms, survey participants



scored their conventional treatments with a 2.57 average. Satisfaction with Dr Naram's herbal program averaged 3.76, a significant 32 percent improvement. Overall, 96 percent of the survey respondents said they were either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the herbal program.

Impressive statistics, however, can't capture the essence of a human story. Dr Naram's tale is one of giving hope to the hopeless. More than 30,000 couples have been cured of infertility. Heart patients, suffering from total arterial blockage and consigned to dotage, have stepped out of his clinic as limber as athletes. Victims of rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, blood pressure and spondylitis have been almost totally cured. Dr Naram has even stabilized the condition of some AIDS patients. Epilepsy patients and the mentally deficient have found relief with him.

In pulse diagnosis, the Dr Naram places his index finger, middle finger and ring finger below the radial bone of the wrist. The index finger identifies vata, the middle finger pitta and the ring finger kapha. "Based on the dominant dosha and the direction in which the pulse moves-its degree of heat, cold, humidity and dryness-it is possible to identify 350 different body situations," says Dr Naram.

Dr Naram learned pulse diagnosis from his guru Baba Ramdas, a Himalayan master who consented to initiate him into the art only after breaking down his ego by having him clean the toilet and do other menial tasks.

Also, central to ayurveda is the concept of aam-impurity generated by tridosha imbalance. With herbal extracts, diet and panchkarma, an ayurvedic physician can eliminate aam to restore balance.

The evolution of Siddha Veda is ancient as well as fascinating. About 2,500 years ago a healer named Vaidya Jivaka, the personal physician to

Lord Buddha, created a secret society called Siddha Veda by discreetly choosing apprentices eager to learn the art and science of this most amazing and miraculously effective form of healing.

To become initiated into this lineage, there are many precise rituals, ceremonies and difficult exams, which are still practiced and observed. One can compare it to the position of Knighthood, a title earned by enduring many hardships and following absolute discipline to a non-negotiable code of honor.

The healers belonging to this lineage were all travelers passing through cities and villages, staying long enough to learn about the people and the diseases that affected them. They would discover how various climates, nutrients, habits, gender, race and body types manifest differ-

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Dr Pankaj Naram, above, treats more than a 100 patients a day in the US, Europe and Australia and over 500 in India, using ancient techniques. Left, a fire-fighter in New York with herbs that Dr Naram uses to treat volunteers exposed to toxins in the World Trade Center terrorist attacks. The herbal project is entirely funded by Dr Naram.

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ent diseases and most importantly how to treat and cure them. Living a nomadic life, as difficult and inconvenient as it could have been as also extremely necessary for gaining knowledge and access to different cultures, as well as to add to the collective wisdom that was to be passed on to the next generation.

Although Vaidya Jivaka was a physician to the elite, he found himself drawn to the cause of caring for the health and wellbeing of people from all backgrounds. The vastness of his knowledge and wisdom was a direct result of treating various illnesses affecting all different races: The rich and the poor, the young and the old.

Vaidya Jivaka and thereafter, every head of the lineage was expected to keep a detailed account of all ailments which effected the mind, body and emotions of his patients. Meticulously noting his observations of the root cause of each disease and condition, this information was then gathered and brought back to India and kept safely in ashrams and monasteries.

During the sudden invasion by the Mogul Empire, cities, villages and monasteries in India were attacked and burned to the ground. Students risked their lives to save the scriptures and secretly transported them to Nepal, then on to Tibet where they were hidden and kept safe from harm for centuries. The hiding places were only known to a few, the knowledge being accessible exclusively to those who were to pass the legacy onward.

Dr Naram started his journey 31 years ago by being accepted as an apprentice under the guidance of Baba Ramdas, his beloved guru. After a 1000 days of intensive training by his guru's side, he was brought in front of the committee of elders of Siddha Veda lineage. The committee chose Dr Naram to become the next head of the lineage, giving him the immense responsibility of transporting the scriptures back to India and translating them to make them accessible to the people of the world.

Dr Naram's journey is filled with stories of wisdom and insight, tales which transport the listener to a mystical realm. He tells the story of his humble beginnings and his life as an ordinary man, destined to bring the extraordinary into everyone's life. He describes his awakening and times when his guru put him through life altering experiences and hardships in order to teach him the valuable lessons which would carry him through his journey in life.

In keeping with the nomadic traditions, Dr Naram travels the world to spread the healing powers of Siddha Veda and his lineage. He has no country which he belongs to. When asked, he modestly calls himself a citizen of the world. He believes himself to be the humble messenger, to deliver the message that was entrusted to him by his much cherished guru, Baba Ramdas.

The animal and plant world, too, benefits from ayurveda and Siddha Veda. Dr Naram's album is full of photographs of him checking the pulse of baby leopards, snakes, bun-



nies and dogs. He has been treating a blind lioness at a nearby national park in Mumbai for the last six months. Now, its caretakers believe that the lioness has begun to see.

Hundreds of thousands of people from around the world have claimed results they have experienced from Dr Naram helping their chronic diabetes, blood pressure, arthritis, skin challenges, obesity, autism, chronic back pain, asthma, eczema, cholesterol, and more.

As mentioned earlier in this article, many thousands of couples have also experienced spectacular results with infertility cases. So, what's the secret?

Says Dr Naram: "Eighty percent of today's population has pitta dosha because of our stressful lifestyle and pollution. Pitta increases body heat. Semen, on the other hand, is cold. This is why cases of low sperm count have increased. Since only ayurveda thinks in terms of hot and cold, we alone can cure this problem by prescribing cooling herbs and diet."

Dr. Naram assesses his success rate at 70 to 80 percent. He has himself benefited from Siddha Veda - he lost weight and lost glasses, gained hair and gained energy, and his blood sugar count dropped from 420 to 95. With a smile on his face he says, "I used to have no hair and lots of time. Now I have lots of hair and no time." Dr Naram says, "The purpose of my life is to be happy and to create an opportunity for others to be happy."

Dr Naram with the Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama. Below, Dr Naram has been translating and restoring more than 450,000 pages of precious, ancient Siddha Veda scriptures that have been handed down to him through elders in his lineage.



Sleepless Advocate of Justice

Attorney Ravi Batra's legal dexterity meets good old fashioned hard work

Ravi Batra does not come across as a typical top-billing New York City lawyer. Interestingly for his stature and profession, he is amiable, humble, philosophical, spiritual and treats wealth as the means to secure a full measure of justice. Batra works *pro bono* to serve the public or the needy, traits that elevate the legal profession in the eyes of the public.

His most famous *pro bono* case was when he served as counsel in the New York City Term Limits litigation in 2003. Batra also handled a hotly contested child custody case in Family Court, from 1990 to 1993, on a \$200 a month retainer, and "forgave" well over \$100,000 in legal fees owed by Hispanic father, after winning custody of his two young children, and proved to them that the "system" works.

Batra is one of the most respected lawyers and a potent force in New York courts. Since the early 1990's, he has played a role in picking State Supreme Court judges and served on House of Delegates of the New York State Bar Association. Recently, New York Governor David Patterson appointed him to the coveted Board of Trustees of the New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund (IOLA), which provides additional financial support to civil legal service organizations that had been decimated by federal budget cuts. To date, IOLA has provided more than \$228 million in grants for providers of civil legal services to low-income New Yorkers, furthering the goal of equal access to justice for all.

"I am grateful for the trust reposed in me by the Governor and the Senate majority and look forward to my service on IOLA's Board of Trustees. We all seek to protect and strengthen the safety-net provided by not-for-profit civil legal service providers to hard-pressed New Yorkers while causing a better balance of the scales of justice and a more tranquil society," Batra says of his appointment.

Earlier in 2010, Batra was jointly appointed to the Governor's Judicial Screening Committee, Second Department by the Democratic Majority in the state senate and Republican minority in the state assembly, on recommendation of senate Leader John Sampson and assembly Leader Brian Kolb, with a primary reference of District Attorney Bob Morgenthau. The state Committee selects candidates for judges and covers 10 counties: Richmond, Kings, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Dutchess and Putnam. The Committee covers the busiest appellate court in the country, the state appellate division of the Supreme Court, the state supreme court, the state court of claims, the county court, the state family court, and the state surrogate's court. Only candidates approved by the Committee can be considered for appointment by the governor or for promotion.

"We have every expectation that you will serve our state well in your service on this committee," Senator Smith said in his letter to Batra. "I'm grateful to the trust reposed in me by the Senate Majority Democrats, and the Assembly Republicans," Batra said. "I will work to ensure that every-day New Yorkers' interest in the finest judiciary is my singular goal, to promote merit-based dispute resolution."

New Delhi-born Batra's genial and relaxed demeanor summarizes the travels of his upbringing and the decisions his family made while in India. His parents moved to New



Ravi Batra and Ranju Batra, left, with Reps Carolyn Maloney and Gary Ackerman; Amb. Prabhu Dayal, Chandini Dayal and Neal Batra.

Delhi during the Great Partition of 1947. They endured extreme pain and desolation and in one instance, his mother was shot in her foot, while on a refugee train, by a Pakistani soldier. His late father, whose teachings are the epicenter of Batra's life, started off as a processor and exporter of animal casings in New Delhi, eventually accumulating wealth and political power, which he used to help the needy.

Batra's father worked with many political figures at the time of nation building, including, the first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. However, Batra's father was a deeply spiritual man whose main concern was good character building of his children. Batra, when 7 years old, accidentally hurt his schoolmate while playing, and the mother of the hurt child pleaded with Batra's father not to punish Batra as she and her family were repeat beneficiary of Batra's father's financial assistance. This event caused Batra's father to decide to leave India, as his own good deeds were preventing proper discipline of his children. He gave his business to his best friend, a Moslem, as a gift and in 1963 moved the family to Hong Kong to embrace poverty, as "poverty builds character."

Although the senior Batra had no formal training as a businessman, his penchant for honoring his word resulted in his rebuilding wealth again. The family expanded the business to Japan and eventually moved to the US in 1967, when Batra was 12.

"In those days I was working in the family business of importing textiles and gaining invaluable experience as a

negotiator and buyer in various countries," recalls Batra. By the time Batra was 18, he had already circled the globe on several business trips. However, Batra was always destined for the legal profession as that is where his passion lay from an early age.

While Batra was studying to be a lawyer, Batra's father retired and moved back to India. There, he became a Hindu Swami, lived in an ashram in Haridwar and helped those in need. "That was a life-changing moment for the family," says Batra. "My father voluntarily gave up his worldly possessions again, but this time to serve humanity, and that is something, I remember every moment of the day." Rounding out Batra, and he has girth, is his family. Batra says, "we are blessed to be parents of our children, especially, our daughter who was born 1 pound 13 ounces and is a living miracle." His son, Neal, is a law student, and his wife, Ranju, is very involved in the community.

Thanks to his upbringing, and what his daughter has taught him, Batra learned not to be enamored by power and wealth. His legal success has been fashioned in part from long hours and legal dexterity. His peers and contemporaries have often lauded his keen mind and out-of-box thinking.

Among the landmark cases Batra has handled, includes blocking a bank from foreclosing on a credit-worthy reservist soldier's mortgage due to the discriminatory sale of a sub-prime mortgage, and winning a dis-

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missal of a \$30 million libel suit filed by Justice Larry D. Martin against New York Daily News, columnist Errol Louis, and Batra, despite being the "source."

He is currently handling the first Twitter arrest case in the world, defending Scooter Braun, the founder and manager of popstar Justin Bieber, while working on a case dealing with Facebook's privacy rights protocol for the estate of Caroline Wimmer, whose mutilated body's picture was illegally taken by a NYC EMT and uploaded on Facebook.

Batra's most famous case to date pitted him against NBC Network. The award-winning producer and several Law & Order colleagues had been trying for years to dismiss the 2004 lawsuit from Batra, wherein he claimed that a crooked character in a 2003 episode libeled him. The episode, entitled "Floater," involved a character named Ravi Patel, a bald Indian lawyer who bribes a Brooklyn judge and gets busted for it. Batra first filed his \$15 million libel claim in 2004 against the show's writers, producers and broadcaster NBC. The network and Law & Order producer Dick Wolf tried to get the suit dismissed, but Justice Marilyn Shafer ruled against them in 2008, allowing the suit to move forward. Batra's suit claimed that for a show that famously boasts of dramatizing stories "ripped from the headlines," the decision to depict real life admitted-crooked lawyer, Paul Siminovsky, as a bald, Indian American lawyer named Ravi Patel, cast with an actor who was a "look-alike" of Ravi Batra was targeted malicious libel, and not fiction. Also, when the episode aired there were only six lawyers in New York City named Ravi, Batra was the only middle-aged bald one, and well known in Brooklyn. The most recent ruling in the case, by Justice Lucy Billings, allows Batra, whose law firm is serving as his attorney, to depose Wolf and three other producers for up to three hours each. In addition, Batra beat the claimed attorney-client privilege and won a court order that produced the "smoking gun" document, signed by the writer, Overmyer, that the episode is based "upon actual events."

Batra has been involved in politics, state and federal since the early 1980's. He was a member of Speaker Tip



From left, Ravi Batra; Khalid Abdalrazaq Al Nafisee, Saudi Permanent Representative to the UN; Rep. Eliot Engel; Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Amb. Lakshmi Puri; Ranju Batra at India's UN party on November 4, 2010, celebrating the country's historic electoral win at the UNGA in the UN Delegates Lounge.

O'Neil's club of the US House of Representatives, and served during Presidents Reagan and Bush I on National Advisory Council on South Asian Affairs, a foreign policy think tank, which he now chairs.

From left, Ranju Batra; Senator Hillary Clinton; Angela Batra-Munjali; Ravi Batra; Neal Batra and Tarun Munjal in a 2005 file photo.



Batra is very supportive of Amb. Prabhu Dayal, India's Consul General in New York, whom he credits for making the Consulate "the people's house," and Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Permanent Representative at the UN in New York, in furthering US-India relations.

"As an unhyphenated American, of Indian ancestry, I see America stronger with India by our side. This is the case, since India is now a recognized leader on the global stage and will sit on the United Nations Security Council, while being a fiduciary of other nations' needs, and bring its maturity to help make a more perfect world," Batra says. "The United States and India have established a "special relationship." Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama, and Prime Ministers of India since the 1990's, including, the universally respected Dr. Manmohan Singh deserve all the credit for this. Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri's historic win for the SC reflects India's standing and efforts, and his unique talents that made India soar in the UNGA and have a second 'tryst with destiny.'"

Batra says his favorite pastime is knocking out fraud, waste and abuse, and has the highest regard for over-worked and underpaid prosecutors and independent judiciary that guarantee us all the freedoms we take for granted. "I'm only trying to have you understand why I'm different; different enough to fight terror everywhere, and replace the rule of law in its place. My life will always be a life of struggle for what I seek is for society to keep its promise of meritocracy and equal under law. I see the law as the very nectar of civilization: Greco-Roman, Judea-Christian, and a curiosity-filled helping of eastern faiths, be it Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. Finally, why I agree with Thomas Jefferson that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." After 9/11 and 26/11 we must all sleep with our eyes wide open," Batra quips ■

Drs Asha and Arun Seth

Dr. Asha Seth receives the highest recognition from Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons - 2010 - for being an outstanding Ontario physician 'who has demonstrated excellence and come closest to meeting society's vision of an 'ideal physician.'

She couldn't have been more happier in her professional career than to get this recognition from her professional regulatory body. 'IDEAL PHYSICIAN' - WHAT A SATISFACTION!

An Obstetrics and Gynecologist, Asha works with St. Joseph's Health Center and during over 35 years she must have delivered hundreds and hundreds of healthy babies, many of whom have now grown up and themselves working in the medical field.

Medical practice yes, but she spends lot of her time raising money for charities in which she has active support and participation of her husband, Dr Arun Seth, also a medical

Foundation, for helping people with all kinds of cardiac problems, diabetes, cholesterol, persons with physical disabilities, causes for which, with the support of Arun, Asha has successfully raised hundreds of thousands of dollars.

From one fund raiser under brand name of NIMDAC (North Indian medical doctors Association of Canada), Arun and Asha raised over \$100,000 and that check was presented to the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons before a Blue Ribbon Valentine Gala last year.

She raised another \$100,000 last year for Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. It was to support their research and persistence to raise awareness about heart diseases which afflict South Asians the most.

"I am here to celebrate the heart," Asha said while recently presenting a check for \$50,000 to the Heart and Stroke Foundation President: "Our future depends on this consis-

National Institute for the Blinds) Skills Academy for Grades 1-2, thereby working with children and their parents to encourage learning and playing in a group setting, with a focus on integration into the public school system."

"Our Foundation also supports a number of charitable organizations and funds that we raise also assist vulnerable population, support research, treat diseases, ensures medical and dental training, enhances health care and support services and offer disaster relief," explains Asha.

Arun says he has equally "devoted thousands of volunteer hours to various charities and organizations." He works closely with his wife Asha raising money for dozens of charities.

He was appointed as Co-chairperson for the Fundraising Committee for the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation in 2008. He was also honored by St. Joseph's Health 'center for 30 years of dedicated service.

Even though he's a family physician, Arun is deeply concerned about the exploding cost on treating diabetic patients, which's over \$8-billion now and in the coming years, if the current trend continues, could explode several folds: He's troubled as people as young as 30-40 years are becoming diabetic: "Take into account the loss in productivity in the country as more and more people start becoming diabetic, get heart attacks, and get incapacitated for months on? The cost on them could be tons of billions of dollars in loss productivity," says Arun.

Arun and Asha joined hands in raising funds for a new Center for the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario, for the Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization, the Wall of Peace Initiative, the fund raiser where Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty accepted the invitation as the keynote speaker, as also Mississauga City Mayor, legendry Hazel McCallion.

"The Wall of Peace honors peacemakers from around the globe who have collectively stood for human rights, equality, justice and non-violence. And it also embraces the participation of Canadian schools, educators and community leaders with the view that education is the strongest force to shape the change required to bring about the world peace."



From left:
Dr. Arun Seth,
Dr Asha Seth,
HH the Dalai Lama

Charitable Causes - Their First Love

doctor: She's called 'an embodiment of hope' through her involvement in innumerable charities serving Canadians and the international communities as her hands reach out first in her and families' deep pockets and then far and wide: No wonder, Asha is called 'Physician-Philanthropist', who carries the Maple leaf 'with élan.' That, she explains, as "length of the Canadian national flag is twice as its width, my philanthropic activities have grown twice as large as my medical practice' and she likes it that way. One charitable project after another - her mind is always active thinking how to raise funds for Heart and Stroke

tent rhythmic beat."

She's chair of the Continued Medical Education under whose auspices she has organized seminars on medical subjects. Attending these seminars is essential for medical doctors for them to get their medical license renewed. "As its Founding President (of NIMDAC Foundation), Asha has organized seminars/forums where hundreds of physicians and dentists in Ontario could reconnect and learn," she says.

Asha doesn't stop: In 2010, through the NIMDAC Foundation, She raised money to for CNIB (the Canadian

Each day as she gets up, Asha says her first thought is how to help people in need. Before she reaches others, she and Arun dig into their pockets. That's the only way others would respond: 'How much are you committing Asha,' Asha says other donors and philanthropists ask her and rightly so. "You have to do good yourself before you reach out to others to do likewise."

Asha and Arun are two sides of the same coin. So, they can't be separated when it comes to raising funds for charitable causes.

They are constantly reminded of what Mahatma Gandhi used to exhort the millions in India: 'Observe fast just one time in one week and you will help feed millions starving people in the country.' "If you have extra cash, please use for people who are in need," Asha and Arun go round suggesting to their friends, neighbors and others.

Dr. Arun Garg

Currently a senior partner in the medical group partnership of Dr CJ Coady Associates, Dr. Arun Garg serves as the medical director for the Lab Medicine and pathology program in Fraser Health, one of the largest networks of integrated acute and community health services in British Columbia. This area, where Fraser Health is located, is also home to one of the largest South Asian population (some 300,000 people) in Canada.

He holds an MD and PhD in Biochemistry. Garg says currently he also directs endocrine work group at the BC Biomedical Laboratories, a community based Lab Medicine group, which has been voted by its employees as 50 top places to work in Canada.

Garg is also Clinical Professor of Pathology and Lab Medicine at the University of British Columbia.

"I strive to build strong organizations and have passion for building very strong links between Canada and India," says Garg.

His life long achievements and accomplishments have been many in many areas. He has fellowship from the Royal College of Physician and Surgeons of Canada and College of American Pathologists. Garg says he's dedicated to building a very strong integrated net work of Lab Medicine service serving some 1.5 million people of Fraser Valley.

Garg has deep interest in technology application at bedside, especially for point of care testing and Lab medical programs.

Canada India Network Society was established to organize 2010 Canada India Cardiovascular Health Conference, result of his discussions with Dr. Mukesh Kumar of Indian Council of Medical research. "I never thought that this would have the kind of support and potential as the conference, held in Surrey in May, ended up having," he

His First Love Cardiovascular Health

said.

Garg talks with lot of passions how this idea resulted in the major international conference under whose umbrella came over 200 participants - academics, researchers, clinicians, community and industry leaders as well. They joined hands to suggest that all efforts should be made to lower the burden of cardiovascular disease amongst Indians both in Canada and India, as they suffer the highest tolls due to cardiovascular and related diseases.

The major recommendations that emerged from the conference related to health promotion and emphasis on social behaviors modification of diets and physical activity. Excessive intake of soluble sugars and salt are the main areas for diet modification. It also recommended enhanced research, preventive programs, educational training, collaborations between Canadian and Indian groups

As founding chair of the group, Garg has the task of building follow up

projects from the conference especially in the area of prevention, enhancing role of yoga in Cardiac health and biomarkers by collaborating with Medwin Foundation,

Patnajali University in India.

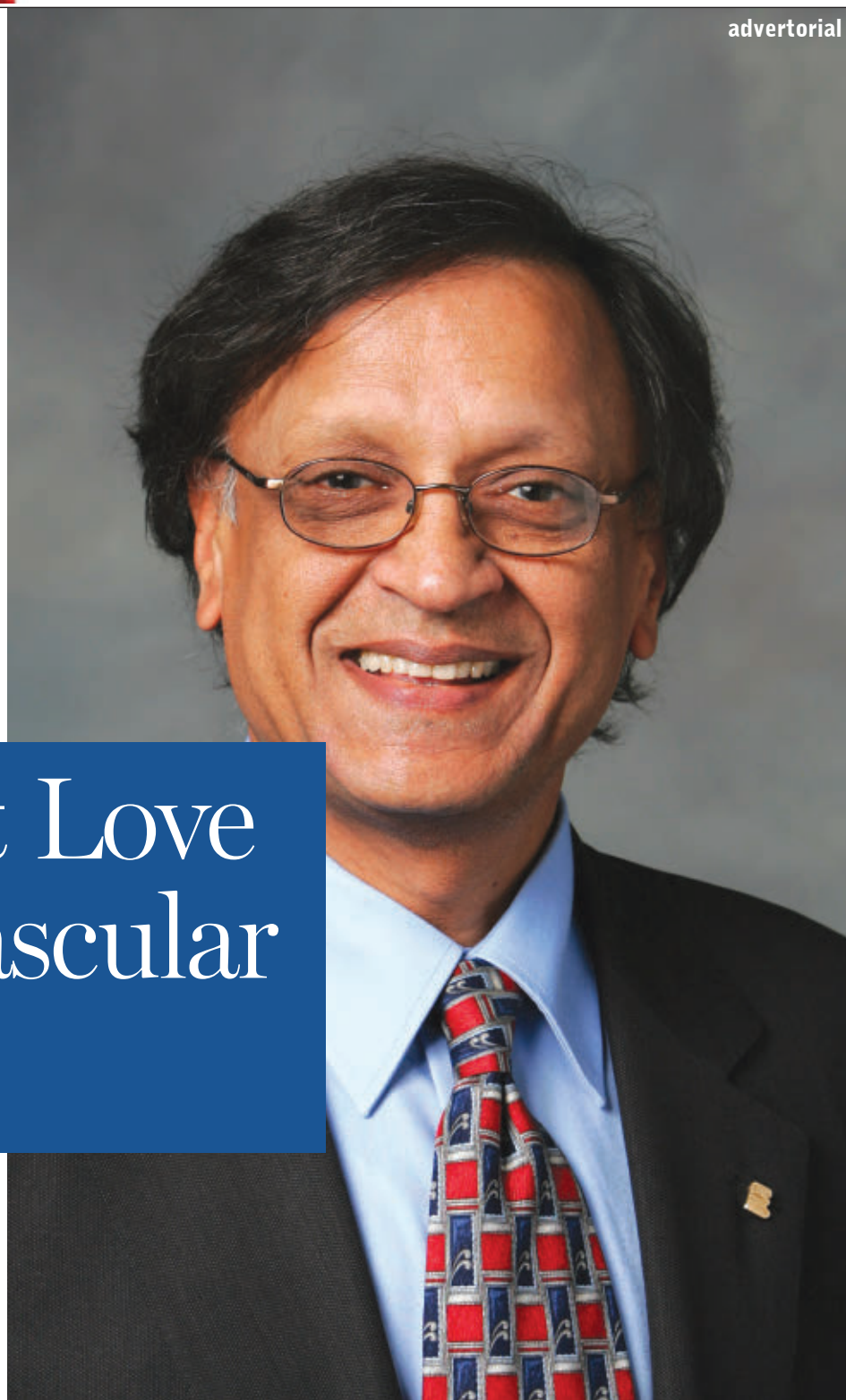
"I have dedicated all my energy to building strong community and professional organizations such as being president of the British Columbia Medical Association, Chairing blue print of policy paper "Turning the Tide" Medicare Solutions for British Columbia, Chairing the Canadian Medical Association's task force for Canadian Commission on Sustainability of Medicare," says Garg.

His contribution goes beyond the medical field, including advanced education and BC-India trade and investments. Garg was Chair of the Board of Governors of the provincial premier institute for technology training, BC Institute of technology and a member of the Board of governors of the

University of British Columbia. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Institute of Health System Sustainability of BC.

A report on building BC and India links India market advisory committee, of the Asia Pacific Trade Council, under his Chairmanship has been guiding BC Government to open and support programs between India and the province of BC.

All these professional and outside professional activities have resulted in his getting box full of awards and recognitions, including Honorary Doctor of Technology from the BC Institute of technology; Silver medal of service by BC Medical Association; Wallace Wilson Medical leadership award of the Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia.



Vasu Chanchlani

Philanthropist Par Excellence

A serial entrepreneur and a philanthropist, Vasu Chanchlani firmly believes in supporting projects having transformational impact.

His professional career began with the Tata Consultancy Services, followed by senior roles at Nortel Networks before starting his own high tech ventures, with flagship being the Sigma Group of Companies.

Chanchlani is actively engaged with philanthropic projects where he ensures that his support is planned, sustainable and impactful. He co-founded Canada-India Foundation for deepening engagement between Canada and India.

To achieve his goal in giving India and the Indians a global recognition for their achievements, Chanchlani donated a million dollar to establish the 'CIF Chanchlani Global Indian Award' that gives \$50,000 every year to the award recipient. The main objective behind this initiative is to recognize global leadership, professional excellence and exemplary achievements of leaders who have done the Indian Diaspora proud.

Chanchlani is a realist and so he has no hesitation in conceding \$50,000 is not a huge amount to "attract credible people, people of international repute" and so he's aiming high to one day take this award to the level of the Ramon Magsaysay Award. He muses, "Why not even Nobel Prize"

as he believes "It's all doable and there's the commitment and you put your heart and soul into it, for that matter in any project."

Chanchlani has donated a million dollar each to create two other ten million dollar funds - one of which is 'Chanchlani India Public Policy Center' at the University of Waterloo, which's focused on Canada India corridor and its contemporary politics, society and economics.

The other is the 'Chanchlani Research Center' at McMaster University to support in understanding the role of genetic and environmental causes of common chronic diseases of heart and diabetes among South Asians.

This philanthropist is like the copper tone battery that goes on and on and never stops. So in the series comes his additional commitment for \$250,000 for a \$25,000 annual 'Chanchlani Global Health research Award', also at McMaster University.

In passing Chanchlani discusses dozens of other projects to which he's devoting his philanthropic resources, the global research award endowment for research in area of vision and causes of blindness; a memorial built in Toronto to honor the Canadian soldiers who lost their lives in peace-keeping efforts the world over, etc. The UNICEF has also benefitted at Chanchlani's generous hands, as also some religious institutions.

Through such initiatives, Chanchlani is creating an ecosystem that nurtures and promotes philanthropy for transformational causes.

Besides co-founding the Sigma Group of Companies, Chanchlani also co-founded and has successfully exited from six other technology ventures: "The funding for these ventures came from ventures funding from the best of the best venture capitalists like Kleiner Perkins and strategic investments from companies like Cisco."

His success in high tech companies is all attributed to the three Ts "Team, Timing and Talent."

Honors and recognitions have come Chanchlani's way as well: Chanchlani is the recipient of the 'Technology Achievement Award' from the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce for his significant contribution to the field of technology in Canada; the 'Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year' Finalist Award; the South Asian Person of the Year Award 2010; Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Award 2010; India Abroad's 'Power List' of top 30 Indo-Canadians 2009 and Grant's Community Achievement award, etc.

Chanchlani has B.E. (Mechanical Engineering) from the Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal and M.Tech (Industrial and Management Engineering) from IIT Kanpur and the MBA from Rotman Business School, University of Toronto.



From left:
Prof. David Johnston,
Governor-General of
Canada, Dr. Jaya
Chanchlani, and
Vasu Chanchlani.

Beyond Science And Medicine

*Oncologist **Dattatreyyudu Nori** says being spiritual makes him a better physician*

There aren't many physicians who will candidly admit they have taken the path to spirituality, let alone affirming that being spiritual makes them a better doctor.

Meet Dr Dattatreyyudu Nori, arguably the world's leading authority in radiation oncology, who would write himself a prescription for spirituality any day. As professor and chairman of the Department of Radiation Oncology at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Medical College of Cornell University, as well as director of the Cancer Center at the New York Hospital of Queens, Dr Nori says that every doctor who's been in the field long enough knows there is something beyond science and medicine.

Dr Nori is a devotee of Shri Shirdi Sai Baba, a saint who practiced multi-religious philosophies of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam, advocating the oneness of God. He recalls how in his childhood in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh, he used to visit the Shirdi temple near Nashik in Maharashtra. "I did not know anything about Baba then," he says. "I too prayed like the boys of my age. But I also used to wonder what made me tranquil, what made me wanting to help others, and what gave me the courage even in my student days to think of doing big things for humanity."

"For all the knowledge one gains and the expertise one accumulates, there is not much satisfaction unless there is humanity in one's work," says Dr Nori, who has helped build a Sai temple on Long Island eight years ago and another in Edison, New Jersey last year.

While Dr Nori's late mother is his guiding spirit, he also fondly remembers his mentor, Dr Edward Beattie, who was the chief medical officer of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital. When Dr Beattie learned he had cancer, he came to Cornell requesting Dr Nori to treat him. "That was a defining moment in my life," says Dr Nori. "If my mentor could trust me with his life, I knew I had learned things the right way."

Dr Nori completed his undergraduate training at Kurnool Medical College and received his postgraduate degree from Osmania University in India.

He then joined the staff at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, where he became chief of the brachytherapy service before accepting his current position as chairman of radiation oncology at Cornell.

He has been honored as a pioneer and authority in radiation oncology and brachytherapy. He was instrumental in introducing the current techniques and clinical concepts of high dose rate brachytherapy for gynecological, genitourinary, thoracic and head and neck tumors. His research included efforts to improve the outcome for patients with prostate cancer, lung cancer, pancreas, breast and other cancers.

Dr Nori served in the American Cancer Society in various positions including chairmanship of the Professional Education Committee. The American Cancer Society honored him with their highest prestigious award "Tribute to Life" for his accomplishments in cancer research. Dr Nori has trained more than 150 residents and fellows, some of whom have become chairman of academic departments in the US.

Dr Nori is a Fellow of the American College of



Dr Dattatreyyudu Nori is driven by a passion for helping the less fortunate. Below, Dr Nori, with his wife Subhadra, at the Sai Baba temple he help build.

Radiology, Past President of the American Brachytherapy Society and has published three books and more than 200 scientific articles. Additionally, he is a consultant to the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency, advising on the formulation of guidelines for the treatment of cancer in developing countries.

"In everything I do, I see the divine presence," he continues, adding that his mother taught him to look at life from a holistic angle. "From her, I learned that success couldn't be defined by money. From her, I learned that you think of others before you think of yourself. If I bring home a box of sweets, I should be the last person to take anything out of it."

Dr. Nori has provided technical and scientific help to many cancer centers in India, South America and Israel, and he is also the Founding Member of the Indo-American Cancer Institute for Women and Children, a state-of-the art 500 bed cancer and research institute in Hyderabad, which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India in 2001. He also provides fellowships to deserving students to come to the US, training them to be able to serve at the cancer institute in Hyderabad.

While Dr Nori pursues a very successful career, he hopes that given the advances in cancer drugs at the molecular level, physicians are only 5-10 years away from making it a treatable disease, not a fatal one. "That will be the most gratifying moment of my life," he quips.



A Family Tradition of Social Work

Animesh Goenka's *voluntary work involves multifarious channels*

Growing up in India, Animesh Goenka imbibed the attribute of selfless service from his lawyer father, who was also a freedom fighter. He was always mindful of his family's penchant for philanthropy and social work.

After Goenka setup a US office in 1981 to expand the family business of metals and textiles, he and his wife Anupam continued the family tradition of social work and volunteering for needy causes through multifarious channels like the Association of Indians in America (AIA), the Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA) and the India Association of Long Island (IALI).

Long Island-based Goenka says that his parents' teachings have served him well in life and is more important to him than his college education. Only after two months in medical college, his father pulled him out advising him to carry on the family tradition of business.

"A Marwari family believes that through engaging in business, one can not only generate wealth, but also provide jobs to several people. The wealth generated should be used for social upliftment of the society, by charitable, religious and educational work," Goenka says explaining his father's logic.

Goenka was born in Amritsar to a Marwari family, which moved to Punjab, from Rajasthan, at the invitation of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, to promote business in the state. Goenka's grandfather was a respected philanthropist and a community leader who influenced political fortunes of many, but did not seek any office of power and authority for himself.

Goenka, who holds a masters degree in economics, believes education must lead to all-round growth of a person, and not merely provide intelligence leading to monetary success.

"Selfless service must be performed without desiring rewards or fruits, which shall be a natural outcome," he explains philosophically. "Sharing your fortunes with the less privileged is the essence of the advice I received from my parents and grandparents."

Goenka has always remained in the forefront to promote the cause of India in various political caucuses and forums. He has been recognized for his community leadership by various leaders like Nassau County Executive Thomas Suozzi and Congressman Steve Israel.

In 2008, Goenka served as national president of Associations of Indians in America, which is among the oldest Indian associations in the US. He earlier served as the AIA's president of the New York chapter. He has been the board of directors of the Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA) from 2003-2007 and Hindu Center of Flushing since 2002. He has also been a member of the India Association of Long Island since 1990.

As founding-president of Heritage India in 2006, Goenka was instrumental in organizing Swami Ramdev's Yoga camp in 2007 in the New York area. The two camps in NY and NJ drew thousands, generating tremendous international media coverage. New Jersey Congressman Frank Pallone also recognized Goenka for the successful organization of the yoga camps.

Goenka's Heritage India group promotes cultural, social, and educational awareness based on Indian traditions. The organization seeks to promote the exchange of ideas and customs between India and America. On an ongoing basis, the organization plans to host a series of seminars, led by scholars and leaders in the fields of sociology, culture, education, and healthcare. The Heritage India group is also supporting *gurukuls* in North India, having more than 300 students who join the institution at the age of 5 and leave when they are 21.

Among his other projects, Goenka has started a senior citizens center on Long Island. He has spearheaded Hindi-USA project to promote Hindi language through various Hindi learning centers across America. He is also involved with Rainwater Harvesting Project to provide clean drinking water for the villages in Rajasthan.

"Education is a must for empowerment of individuals and the nations," believes Goenka. Living true to his belief, his family has taken a leadership role in 'Ekal Vidyalaya' movement to bring education to remote areas in India.

The soft-spoken Goenka and his wife Anupam, have three children. Daughter Sonal is a final-year student at Drexel Medical School; son Anuj is a resident doctor at Sloan-Kettering, NY and the youngest son Abhijay is pursuing business studies at NYU's Stern Business School ■



Above, Animesh Goenka, left, with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his wife Gursharan Kaur during Singh's recent New York visit. Below, Goenka at a meeting of Asian Indians in America, a national community group which headed in 2008.



Helping The Needy Is A Way Of Life

*Philanthropy and community service are intrinsic to **Peter Bheddah's** nature*

Long Island

NY-based Peter Bheddah has always been driven by an overriding impulse to help the needy. He has delved deep into his own pockets, working tirelessly to provide the much needed succor to the needy in the US as well as India. And, yet, Bheddah is not the kind who will hog the limelight at community events.

Bheddah, who came to the US in 1960 from Kutch, Gujarat, has remained deeply connected to his country of origin through his active involvement in community service. His humanitarian efforts have been geared toward helping the less fortunate in the two countries he has called home throughout his lifetime.

Bheddah's company IDC Marketing, started in 1972, was among the first Indian American companies in electronic wholesale business.

While business grew and wealth accumulated, Bheddah never lost track of what he had set out to achieve: to help the needy.

"It's something intrinsic to my nature," says Bheddah explaining his urge to help the less fortunate.

In 1994, Bheddah originated and promoted the concept of assisting less fortunate through India Association of Long Island. Over the last 16 years, Bheddah has been a grand sponsor every year and has obtained truckloads of food for IALI's annual food drive. This has helped IALI to provide the Interfaith Nutrition Network, which operates 19 soup kitchens for homeless people, with more than 300,000 meals.

A lifelong Democrat, Bheddah was invited twice to the White House, first in 1993 and again in 1995.

Bheddah is a past president and a director of the Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation. The fund raising and completion of projects during his presidency (1992-1994) has been unsurpassed on many accounts.

Just last year, the foundation has committed \$150,000 to the Indore Cancer Foundation Charitable Trust, which was created in 1988 through the efforts of the late Sunil Dutt and the renowned Dr Jatin P Shah of the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York.

Over the past 29 years, the New York chapter of the Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation has provided financial support for over 50 projects. Numerous hospitals have received equipment for detection and treatment of cancer in needy patients; Bheddah has actively supported those efforts.

Bheddah is also involved with the Gujarati Samaj of New York, where he is a past president. Recently, he was named as a trustee of the Samaj for 2009-2012. During his two year term from 2001 to 2002, he is credited with raising a substantial amount of money and restructuring the finances of the Samaj.

Among his other affiliations, he serves as a vice president of Indian National Overseas Congress, an affiliate of the Indian Congress party; he is a member of the Advisory Board of the Heart and Hand for the Handicapped; a director of the Bidada Hospital in Kutch, Gujarat and a director of KOJAIN, a community organization of Kutchis in the United States. As chairman of fundraising for KOJAIN he raised more than



Above, philanthropist Peter Bheddah and his wife Dorothy with President Bill Clinton at a fundraiser at Sheraton Hotel in New York. Insert, Bheddah with community leaders at Kutch's Bhujpur Hospital, which he helped fund.



\$150,000 to support community members affected by heavy monsoon rains in Mumbai in 2005.

His commitment to the humanitarian cause has resulted in supporting projects worth \$1 million for the earthquake-hit Kutch in 2001. Bheddah spends winters in India, visiting the projects he has supported.

Now retired, Bheddah lives with his wife Dorothy in Port Washington, LI. ■

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The Friend, Philosopher And Guide

H.R. Shah's desire to safeguard Indian heritage reflects in his various activities

Entrepreneur

H. R. Shah has endeared himself as a close friend of the Indian American community by generously donating his time, energy, and resources for social and cultural activities.

He is the chairman of the famed Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan USA, an organization committed to promoting Indian culture, values and philosophy and enriching the Indian art forms, music, dance, drama, painting and films.

Shah's work for the upliftment in lifestyle of Indians through education, as chairman and trustee of Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan USA, is lauded by many. The Bhavan has dedicated "Romanti Auditorium" in memory of his late daughter. The new sprawling building of Bhavan is testimony to his untiring efforts.

Shah is also known to take a lead in building Indo-US relations, generously supporting meetings of all major Indian politicians visiting the United States.

Shah is the director of the Indian American Center for Political Awareness, which promotes stronger U.S.-India ties, nurturing a new generation of Indian Americans to become a part of the political mainstream.

Conscious of the role politics plays in the future growth and potential of the Asian Indian community in the US, Shah participates in the country's political process at many levels and has made outstanding contributions to Indo-US relations. He has organized or supported awareness meetings for governors, senators, congressmen and candidates for the US presidency.

He accompanied President Clinton on his visit to India in the year 2000 and, in the year 2001 to Gujarat to help India in managing the Gujarat earthquake disaster.

Shah has been associated with one of the oldest not-for-profit charity organizations, Share and Care Foundation, Inc., since its inception decades ago. Thanks to his active involvement, the organization has done immense philanthropic work for the benefit of the poor in India, helping victims during times of natural calamities and man-made disasters.

He actively supports Queens Child Guidance Center of New York, a group that has helped children of all ethnic groups receive better healthcare and lead a better life in the United States.

Shah is also the director and supporter of Gift of Life, a US-based international humanitarian group dedicated to top quality health care and the general well-being of children everywhere.

Reflecting his diverse interests, Shah is among first NRIs to own and operate the 24/7 television channel TV Asia, on satellite and cable for South Asians in North America.

He acquired the Network from legendary filmstar Amitabh Bachchan in 1997 and has built the network into a dynamic entity with a brand new image.

With the revamping of TV Asia by Shah, the dormant Indian television market in United States was revitalized. Many India-based Networks followed his lead and today Indian electronic media has exploded, far outnumbering print media and other forms of communication in North America.

Luminaries such as former President Late S. Venkataraman, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and many others have reached out to the community through TV Asia, which creates four hours of local programming daily.

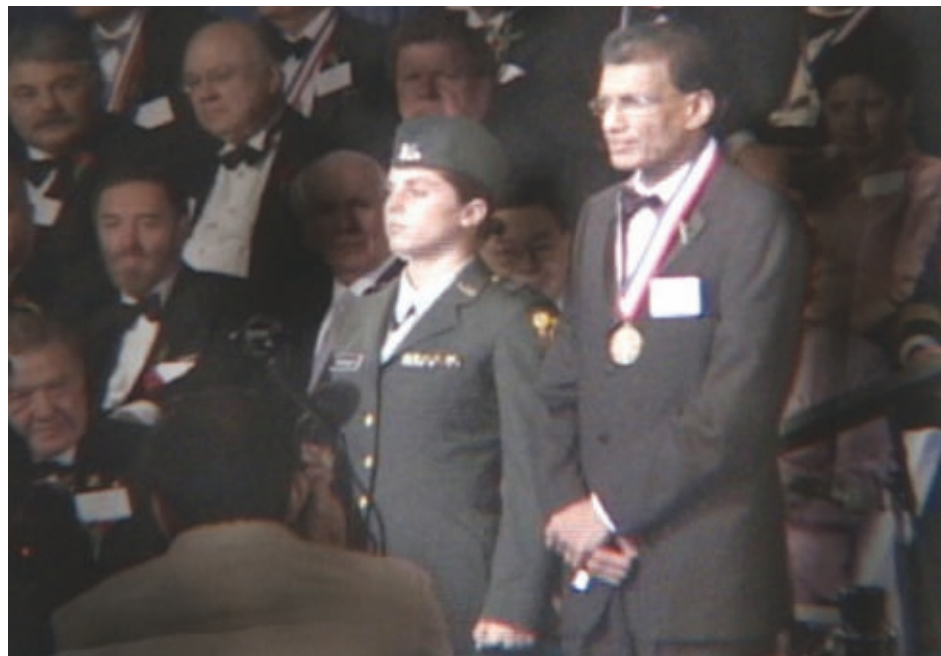
"TV Asia holds the mirror to the South Asian community and is its voice," says Shah. "It is a true example of my vision to make the Indian community in the US feel Home Away From Home."

In his newest endeavor, Shah is set to launch Mybbtv (My Broadband TV), a new, personalized broadcast television delivery platform, during the first quarter of 2011. Mybbtv is in the testing phase currently. The platform will deliver unlimited mainstream and over 70 Indian television channels inclusive of radio channels, web browsing, VoIP, VOD, Pay-Per-View and video conferencing, and many other functions. Through video conferencing, Shah hopes to deliver education university-to-university internationally.

A turnaround expert, Shah made headlines for rescuing Krauszer's Food Stores, New Jersey's largest chain having over 400 convenience stores. He took over the firm in 1991 and through his keen entrepreneurial skills gave the stores renewed statewide recognition. The acquisition saved over a thousand jobs. He put hundreds of people from ethnic communities in the convenience store business, making them owners.

"They came to the US seeking job opportunities and not only secured jobs but became entrepreneurs themselves, providing employment to others," explains Shah. "I always wanted to make ethnic Americans economically strong so that they could serve their community in the US and India."

In recognition of his critical influence in the sector, he was nominated first chairman of



H.R. Shah at the ceremony where he was awarded the coveted Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 2005.

the Board of Trustees for the Asian American Retailers Association, representing more than 80,000 retailers in the United States.

Shah's desire to safeguard ethnic heritage reflects in all his social, cultural and religious activities. As part of this commitment, he has teamed with internationally-acclaimed actor Anupam Kher to launch the first North American branch of India's most sought-after acting school, Actor Prepares. The Shah-Kher joint venture will develop and train budding actors in North America for roles in the motion picture industry. The concept is in line with Shah's own philosophy to promote culture and education through the medium of film and television.

His vision and single-handed effort was the catalyst for uniting two different associations, Hotel and Motel Associations of America, in one-fold bringing laurels to the ethnic Asian community, which owns nearly 40 percent of the hospitality industry in the US. He is the founding sponsor of what is now known as the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) and supports the community engaged in hospitality by granting educational scholarships in hotel management.

Shah is the chairman and trustee of many religious organizations. A founder-trustee of Vraj Bhumi in Pennsylvania, he is also an active supporter of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha.

He firmly believes in the development of premium healthcare in India and is a founding director of the Krishna Heart Institute, a private and charitable institute, in Ahmedabad. He has been actively involved in developing the health insurance industry in India in his role as vice chairman of Paramount Health Care Ltd India.

Shah also generously supports various noble causes such as the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Washington DC, inaugurated by President Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2000 and the United Nations Conference on Religious Peace.

He has been a long-time supporter of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), the largest organization in North America representing 50,000 physicians of Indian origin.

Shah actively promotes the use of India's national language Hindi, through support of groups like Hindi USA.

While Shah has won many awards and has been recognized many times, the coveted Ellis Island Medal of Honor he received in 2005 remains very close to his heart. The honor is bestowed only on those who display significant contributions to their own communities and to the United States at large. The US House of Representatives and the Senate both unanimously passed resolutions sanctioning the Ellis Island Medals of Honor.

Shah lives with his wife, Rosemarie, and their two children, Kristina and Daniel in Colonia, NJ ■

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Karnataka – One state, many worlds...

Karnataka derived from Karunadu – the Elevated Land – in ancient times. This will not surprise you when you gaze at the splendid monuments dotting the landscape, and feel uplifted by the scene. Or as you look back over your shoulder to the distant green earth from atop a sheer cliff, after the exhilaration of the steep climb. Or stare into the height of clear blue skies as you lie on golden coastal sands...

Silicon Central Bangalore

The capital city of Karnataka, long known as India's Garden City for its tree-lined avenues, extensive parks and year-round equitable climate, has progressed into contemporaneity stride by stride. By the 1980s, it was renowned as the nation's 'pub city'; by the turn of the 1990s, as the IT hub of the subcontinent. That's a long way to come for this town founded in the Vijayanagar Empire by local chieftain Kempe Gowda, and it remains arguably India's best-planned metropolis.

Take the KSTDC sightseeing tour to take in all the cultural hotspots (don't miss the Bangalore Palace, modelled on the Windsor Palace, or Tipu Sultan's fort home, with its own dedicated temple), devote a whole leisurely day to a picnic in the expansive, undulating Lalbagh Gardens. Come night-fall, you can hit the malls and shopping area of Commercial Street; then round off

the celebrations with a jubilant pub-crawl.

Heritage Trail

From Bangalore, make your journey down into historical thrills, saluting the great bull Nandi atop Chamundi Hills, to the temple towns of Belur, Sravanbelagola, Srirangapatna, the 10 Chalukya temples of Pattadakal and Halebidu, where the imposing star-shaped Hoysaleswara Temple shines at the zenith of the Hoysala architectural tradition – however, there are those who argue for the finer stone filigree of the also-star-shaped Chennakesava Temple at Belur, but why choose when you can indulge in them all... However, Karnataka's spectacular architectural wealth probably reaches its culmination in the ancient and surreal city of Hampi, where you will soon lose yourself in the wonders of the Virupaksha Temple, Ugranarasimha statue, Lotus Mahal, and Hemkuta Hill's breathtaking rock formations, amidst the boulder-strewn landscape punctuated by fragments of fortifications, opulent palaces and pavilions. If you plan your visit to Mysore in time for Dussehra, the fortnight-long illuminations and the fairground at-



mosphere that fills up the Mysore Palace (left) lawns is an experience you won't forget. Karnataka boasts a fine Muslim legacy too. Muhammad Adil Shah's magnificent mausoleum, the Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur, boasts the world's second largest dome, unsupported by pillars -- an acoustic and architectural marvel.

Beaches

Amidst all the manmade wonders, it is easy to forget that Karnataka boasts one of the longest coastlines of all the Indian states. The 320 km stretch is dotted with unspoilt beaches. Start your tryst with nature on Karwar's golden sands, which inspired Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's pen. Should you possibly tire of serenity, the wilds of Dandeli Game Park are just a short drive away.

If you follow the West Coast Highway along the River Sauparnika, you'll come upon the endearing town of Marawanthe, nestled on the coast with the sea before and the mountainous Western Ghats beyond. Apart from its exquisite seafood delicacies, here's the place to enjoy wild water sports in the glowing Arabian Sea.

Adventure

Climb the jagged Western Ghats, ford its rushing rivers, and traverse its crags and

ravines as freely as the white gulls circling over the sea beside it... For white-water rafting, it's hard to beat the Kali River near Dandeli; or Honnemaradu for water sports-canoeing, coracling, kayaking, windsurfing... The scuba dives off Devbagh's coast are among the best in this part of the world. Anglers will want to follow the mahseer, Asia's premier sporting fish, on its journey down the Cauvery River. Die-hard trekkers can explore the coastline on foot with the enchanting Golden Trek from Karwar to Gokarna. The ideal time is just after the rains, from September to December.

Spice Routes

Relax among the fragrant verdure of the Coorgi foothills. Aromatic sandalwood, coffee and spice plantations, waterfalls and wildlife surround your stay in Karnataka's hill stations. Take your pick of Madikeri's homestays in picturesque Coorg (Kodagu), a cup of fresh plantation coffee in hand, cardamom and pepper aromas wafting in the breeze as you enjoy a good book on an old-world red-roofed verandah. Other lovely hill stops include Kemmangundi, Kudremukh, Nandi Hills and BR Hills. The river Sharavati tumbles 810 feet in four cascades to create the Jog Falls – the highest in India.

www.karnatakaturism.org

New worlds await you.

UNTOLD STORIES

A land with a history that spans centuries, Karnataka has a profusion of monuments that reflect its rich heritage. The magnificent World Heritage Sites of Hampi and Pattadakal, the exquisite temples at Belur, Halebeedu and Somnathpur, the cave temples at Badami, the grandeur of the Gol Gumbaz and many more fascinating architectural delights await. Come, discover Karnataka.

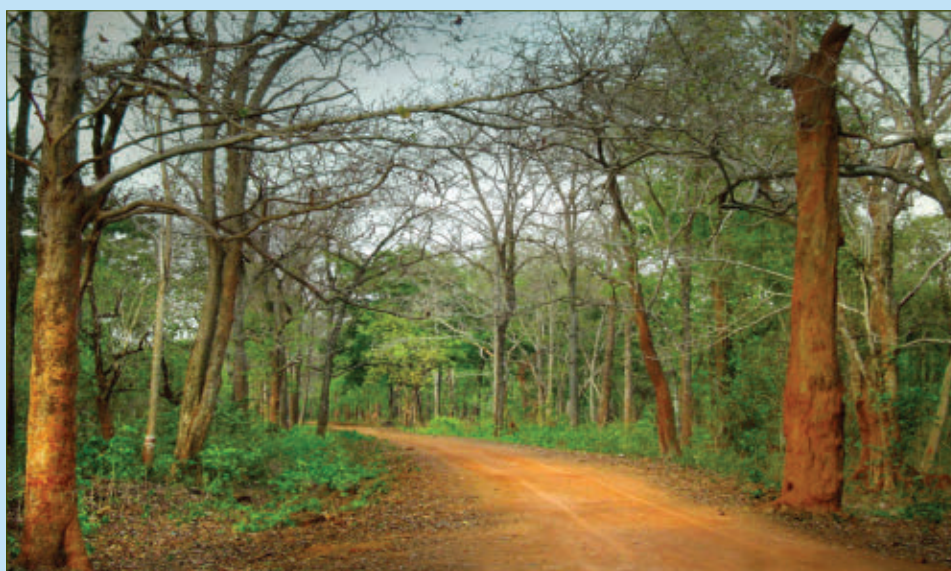
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Department of Tourism



Sri B S Yeddyurappa
Chief Minister,
Govt. of Karnataka



Sri G Janardhana Reddy
Minister for Tourism,
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Similipal: The Himalayas of Orissa

The Similipal hill forest in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa is known as the Himalayas of Orissa. Spread over about 4,000 sq.km. area, it is a compact mass of unique natural forest that controls the climatic regime of the whole of Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand. Situated in tropical zones (21.28 to 22.88 N.Lat), it receives an annual rainfall of 1,200mm and a minimum of 200mm. But for the common man of Mayurbhanj, the forest is a bond of cultural assimilation and a perennial source of livelihood. Similipal is also the natural habitat of the Royal Bengal tiger, Asiatic elephant, deers and many other zoological species. The indigenous tribes who have been dwelling in this forest from time immemorial are a part and parcel of the eco system. They have been protecting, conserving and wisely using its resources.

History of Kingdom

It is believed the earliest homo sapiens lived in Mayurbhanj following the discovery of a stone axe, iron instruments etc. It is believed that a tribe called "Bhanna" the probable ancestors of the "Bhunja" tribe were inhabiting this region during 6th century AD later on two ruling families i.e. Mayuras and Bhanjas ruled over Khijilinga - Mandalas and their capital was Khilinga Kota, the present Khiching. The Bhanja dynasty reigned the kingdom upto 9th century AD. It was Maharani Sumitra Devi who shifted the capital to Baripada in the 18th century and on Dec. 1803 it came under British Occupation.

Ecology

The biodiversity of Similipal is determined by its typical eco-system. The south west monsoon wind passes over the Bay of Bengal in the north direction hits the hill range and causes rains in coastal areas of Orissa. The dense for-

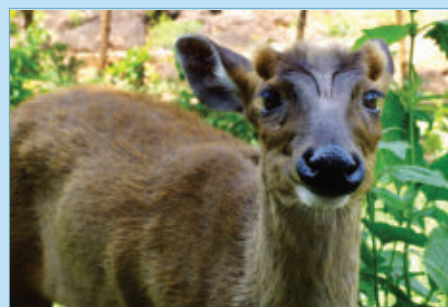
This natural forest impacts the climate of Orissa, W Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand. A rich natural habitat of the Royal Bengal tiger, deer, fauna, fungi and many zoological species, its conservation is today of utmost importance.



est generates pure air, reduces the velocity of rain drops and the water prevents erosion of soil. It is believed that due to heavy storm in the past a large number of grass lands have been created in higher altitudes of the forest. Due to precipitation from dew, forest and mist the soil organism namely bacteria, fungi, protozoa are grown and create an enormous scope for the growth of large number of plants and orchids. The above eco system is responsible for the growth of several variety of edible fungi and these are collected by the people for their requirement of protein. The inhabitants are indebted to the forest as they collect several kinds of roots, flowers, fruits, leaves, gums, barks, honey, lac, wax etc.

People

The bulk of ethnic data in the Similipal area comes from the tribes. Among major primitive tribes the famous are Erangu Kharia and Mankidia Shabara. The other inhabitants are khania, bhagat, desua, bhumija, kisan, kondh, matya, orang, pannaja, prengas, rajuar, saura, santals constitute half of the population of Similipal. The tribes collect various produces like honey, way, regin, lac roots, fruits, leaves etc. Gond and Bhatudi spend their time in collecting "Sabai" grass. The most interesting tribe is Mankadia who leads a nomadic life making Siali fibre ropes. The Mahasis or basket makers use bamboo and other fibres. The "Kharia" tribe of the hill top hardly venture out of the forest. Some tribes are so well adjusted with nature, they are a true example of care for the eco system and sustainable bio diversity.



Flora

Similipal is a virgin sub tropical forest and is a store house of large flora, which are a mixture of south Indian, north Indian and Andaman species. There are 3000 species of plants, ferns, orchids and mosses. Saxena and Brahman (1989) have reported 1076 species of plants representing 168 families. The dense species per family is one of the highest, as compared to the distribution of Himalayan species. Mishra (1986) has reported 93 species of orchid flora and Similipal, out of which 4 species are new reports for India. Besides the more economic species of trees such as sal, silk cotton, arjun, asan, champa, Eugenia, diospyros, herca etc. it also contains about 200 species of medicinal plants. The reports of Saxena and Brahman say 52 timber yielding species, 12 fuel wood species, 13 species for paper pulp, 5 species for oil seeds, 8 species of gum, and resins combining the gene pool of the natural resources that described Similipal is one of the greatest centre of bio diversity of plants in Asia.

Fauna - the natural habitat

Similipal is the unique natural habitat of endemic animals. In the areas of dense wood lands, sambar, kutra, wild bear, gaur, elephant, gaurandi etc. are found. In the open wood land areas the forest experiences the existence of cheetal, sambar, kutra, porcupine, hare, antelope, elephants are found and more nocturnal occupancy of these areas are sloth bear, hyena, ratel and the Indian Pangolin. Grass lands above 1000 meter and higher valleys are most

suitable for all gregarious species of deer and antelopes. Fourhorned antelope wild buffalo are also found in the grassland area.

Avifauna

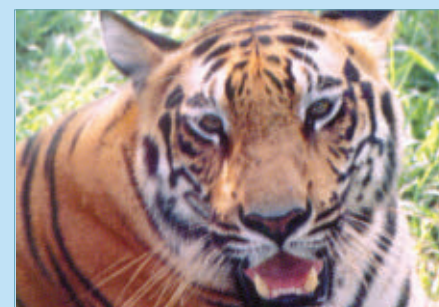
Similipal has varied avifauna of Peninsular region. Pea fowl, jungle fowl, spur fowl, the black partridge grey partridge are found in the entire zone of forest. The famous mimic bird, hill myna, kingfisher are also found. It is an ideal habitat place for tiger and panther with ample prey animals. This reptile species are python, king cobra, rattle snake, Russels viper.

Agents of Destruction

Unsystematic and unscientific management of forest, unplanned grazing, ruthless tree felling, forest fires, barbarous practice of shifting cultivation over exploitation of wild life, mass hunting of wild animals (akhanda shikhar), vegetation clearance for agriculture and human habitation, grazing of domestic live stock are destructing agents of forests wealth and wild life in Similipal area.

Conservation measures

Gradual depletion of the forest is a great hindrance in the path of Similipal in preserving its naturalness. So with a view to conserving



the floral and faunal species of Similipal a tiger project was established in 1973. Similipal was also declared as a wild life sanctuary in 1973.

Conclusion

Human interference with nature has resulted in the depletion of traditional resources. An organised system should be developed to take joint responsibility of the forest by tribes and forest management to use the bio diversity in a sustainable manner for all time to come. ♦





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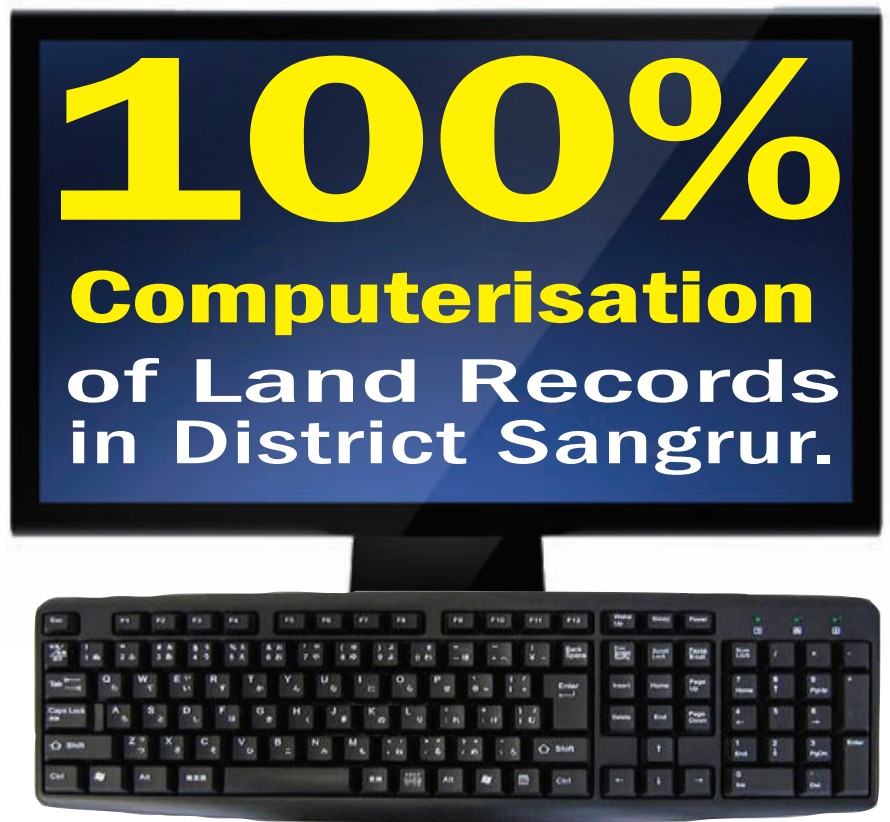


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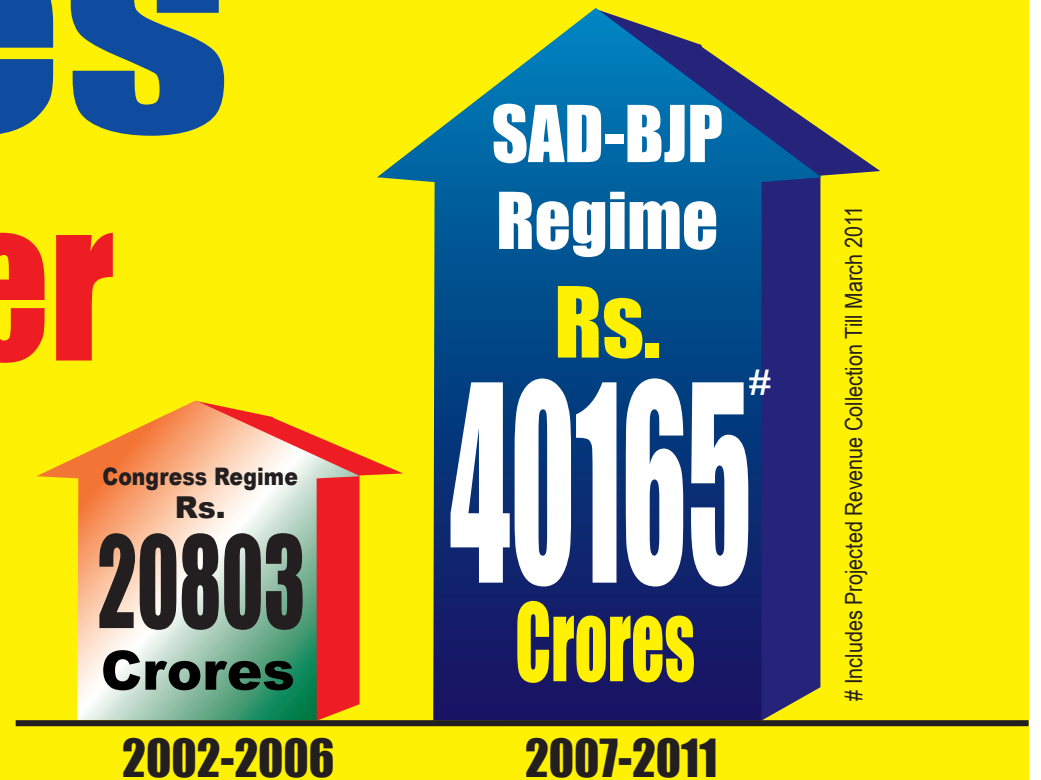
Punjab - On the road to progress

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**Comparison of
Total Revenue Collection**



Revenue Collection* by Punjab Govt.

CST+VAT+State Excise

Regime	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Congress	4505	4772	5316	6210
SAD-BJP	7732	8857	10385	13191**

*All figures in Rs. Crores

**Projected Revenue Collection till March 2011



Punjab - On the road to progress



Goa: Sun, Sea and Splendour

This island beauty - Goa, is a land of sun, sand and sea. The ideal holiday destination in India thanks to its beautiful weather all year through. It is not too hot in summer and not too cold in the winter making it a favourite tourist destination all year through. Goa has a rich culture. Once ruled by the Portuguese, this tiny island was also ruled by Hindu and Muslim dynasties thus evident from the coexistence of churches, temples and synagogues. There is plenty to do here too - pristine beaches offer all the fun while the excitement comes from many water sports options like para sailing, snorkeling, wind surfing, jet skiing, scuba diving, angling, motor boating, deep sea fishing and more.

What to see

There are a number of forts, churches, temples, mosques and museums that narrate the history of the state. Goa has a lovely coastline full of pretty islands, coral reefs and beaches, popular among them like Calangute, Baga, Anjuna, Dona Paula, Varca, Colva, Bogmalo, Benaulim, Miramar and Vagator.



What to do

There's plenty to do here. Travellers can sightsee to places like Aguada Fort,



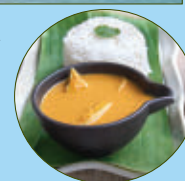
Santa Monica Convent, Naval Aviation Museum, St. Monica Sé Cathedral and more. Due to the huge flow of tourists, Goa has plenty of luxury hotels, budget resorts, cottages, villas, at-home stays to suit any budget.

Music and party

Goa has a vibrant music scene ranging from Indian classical to pop, rock or jazz. Besides English songs, Portuguese and local Goan tunes, Hindi and Konkani songs are also popular. People love music in



Goa and don't be surprised to find each village having its own band or DJ. The merry making mood is best accompanied by lip-smacking Goan delicacies, sumptuous seafood tempered with Konkani and Portuguese spices. Goan cuisine carries traces of the different cultures that are or have been part of the state.



Beach wedding

With the sun, sea and amazing weather,

many tourists prefer to tie the knot in this idyllic surroundings. It is easy to join the revelry of Goan beach weddings that are also part of the landscape.



Shopping

No holiday is complete without shopping. Goa offers plenty of excitement through street shopping or malls. But the road-side stalls or flea markets are best. Look for typical Goan souvenirs such as shell work, brassware, crochet, cotton beachwear, embroidered bags, attractive sarongs, oxidized jewellery, carved furniture, terracotta, papier-mâché items and antiques. Tip - remember to bargain.



Festivals

Goa comes alive during festivals and events. It is best to plan holidays keeping some festivals in mind like Goa Carnival (Feb), Diwali, Christmas, New Year and more. Being well connected, you can reach Goa by air, train or bus. Within Goa taxis, autorickshaws, bikes and water transport work best. It is a land of myriad colours and absolute joy. ♦



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