

NRI ACHIEVERS

AN INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY MAGAZINE CONNECTING INDIA WITH NRIs, PIOs & OCIs

BUILDING AN ABODE FOR KRŠNA THE VRINDAVAN HERITAGE TOWER





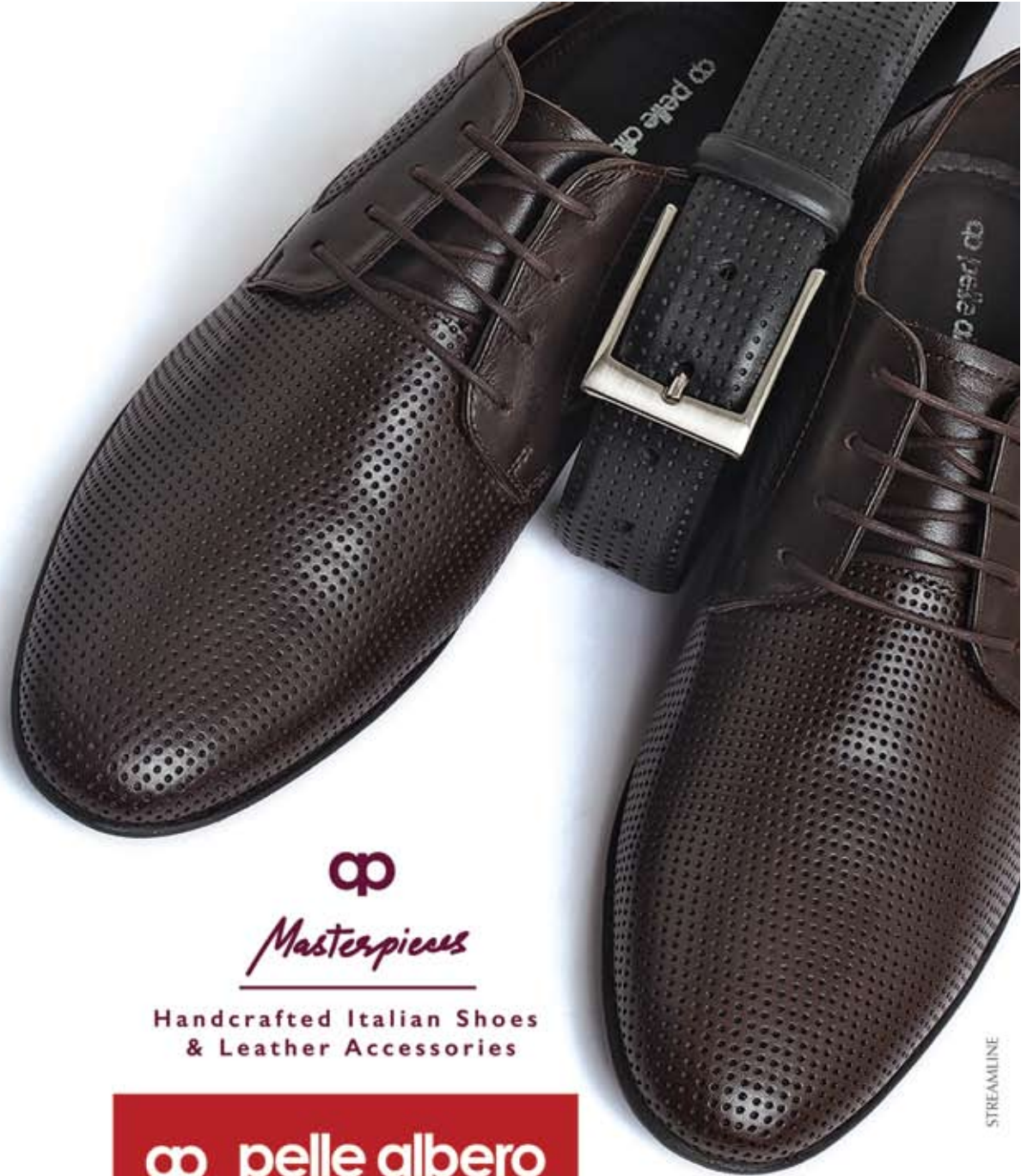
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LETTERS MATTER

WHAT A SURPRISE!

At last saw some changes in the magazine. It's for the first time I noticed change in the appearance of your Publisher. But looking good – more mature, more impressive. A publisher should be like this.

Again PM Modi on the cover. Are you obsessed with him. Most of the people around me call him 'Good for Talking only'. I'm in confusion too. I agree I lack independent opinion, but I'm sure for one thing.... He shouldn't have promised STARS so early. Before NDA Govt. people never asked for report card of Congress Govt. but now they have become caretakers of the health of India & they are asking 'Daily Reports' from Mr. Modi. Anyway, results of the elections of five states UP, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur & Goa will decide the future roadmap of India. I suggest you to start taking care of all kinds of news like murders, deaths, problems of Indian Diaspora more. This way it would become complete Diaspora magazine.

Prakash K. Shah, CA, USA



मेरा खत भी छाप दीजिए!

February 2017

मैं मॉरिशस में अध्यापक हूँ और हिंदी के विकास और प्रचार के लिए प्रयासरत हूँ. आप 2013 में जब मॉरिशस आए थे तो हमारे यहां महात्मा गांधी इंस्टीट्यूट (MGI) में आपसे मुलाकात के दौरान लंबी बातचीत हुई थी. आपने कहा था कि जो भारतीय बाहर जाकर बस गए हैं वे भारत की संस्कृति, भाषा, संस्कार इत्यादि सब भुला बैठे हैं और सिर्फ पैसे के पीछे भाग रहे हैं. मैं आपको इस पत्र के जरिए बताना चाहता हूँ कि यह पूरी

तरह सत्य नहीं है. यहां हम भारतीयों की संख्या 50 फीसदी से भी ज्यादा है और जितना हम अपनी संस्कृति, भाषा, संस्कारों को सहज कर रख रहे हैं वैसा भारत में बिल्कुल भी नहीं है. आज भी सभी धर्मों के भारतीय त्यौहार चाहे वो दिवाली हो, होली हो, दशहरा हो, ईद हो, क्रिसमस हो या गुरु नानक का जन्मदिवस, हम बेहतरीन तरीके और पूरी मान्यताओं के साथ मिल-जुलकर मनाते हैं. आपसे निवेदन है कि हमारी इन सभी गतिविधियों

को अपनी पत्रिका में उचित स्थान दें, आपको बताते हुए हर्ष हो रहा है कि हमारे यहां आपकी पत्रिका के पाठकों में लगातार विस्तार हो रहा है. बस एक छोटी सी शिकायत है कि मॉरिशस और अफ्रीका के बारे में बहुत कम जानकारी होती है, जबकि आपकी पत्रिका अमेरिका और इंग्लैंड में रह रहे भारतीयों की खबरों से भरी रहती है. कृपया ध्यान दें.

प्रियाब्राटा साहू, मॉरिशस

IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	COUNTRY	DAY
MARCH 1	BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	NATIONAL DAY
MARCH 3	BULGARIA	NATIONAL DAY
MARCH 5	AFRO-ASIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION	NATIONAL DAY
MARCH 6	GHANA	NATIONAL DAY
MARCH 12	MAURITIUS	REPUBLIC DAY
MARCH 17	IRELAND	ST. PATRICK'S DAY
MARCH 20	TUNISIA	INDEPENDENCE DAY
MARCH 21	NAMIBIA	INDEPENDENCE DAY
MARCH 22	LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES	ANNIVERSARY DAY
MARCH 23	PAKISTAN	NATIONAL DAY
MARCH 25	GREECE	INDEPENDENCE DAY
MARCH 26	BANGLADESH	NATIONAL DAY

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SILVER SCREEN

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HANOUZ DEHLI DOUR AST...



he famous and pithy statement “Hanouz Dehli Dour Ast” is old Persian for: “Abhi Dilli Door Hai,” – a maxim, adage, saying, or idiom, that in generic meant that the task undertaken is currently far from over – that it is still very much work-in-progress, or to paraphrase and pun on the words, a ‘journey’ still underway, and it will still take us a long time before we reach the destination. Put simply, it could be taken that on the one hand ‘we should not count our chicken before they cross the road,’ or on the other, ‘it is still too early to applaud or condemn (an initiative), so the best stance to take right now is to wait and watch ...’

This sense of the unfinished, work-in-progress state-of-affairs holds good for the perception and image of India that is undergoing a transformation in the minds of countries looking to partake in India’s growth story, of the prospective investors now looking to park their surplus funds in the Indian economy, and even in the minds of our very own Indian Diaspora.

Today, while India and of course, fellow Indians too, are being perceived differently by our Diaspora – be they PIOs, OCIs or NRIs – there is also a subtle shift taking place in their minds, on how they view other NRIs Non Residents Indians, Persons of Indian Origin, or Overseas Citizens of India, they all keep coming to India more often these days, and they show surprise, gratification and nod in approval on seeing the changing faces of multifaceted India. But they also have their grouses, complaints and their ‘nits to pick’ on negatives – ... ‘too difficult to navigate for doing business’ ... ‘too much red-tape’ ... ‘corruption-ridden’ ... , etc., whenever we talk to them about their upping their participation in changing India.

“Bureaucratic hurdles are galore. We are compelled to wait for some more time and see how this NDA government makes the country more business friendly,” says a prominent Indian American. Another high profile NRI (unnamed here as he wished to remain anonymous) says: “यहां अभी भी ऐसा माहौल नहीं बन पाया है कि हम पैसा लगाएं... क्योंकि पहले तो यहां औपचारिकताएं इतनी हैं कि पूरी करते-करते जूते घिस जाते हैं, और अगर पूरी कर भी लेते हैं तो करप्शन का नेटवर्क ऐसा है कि लगता है कि भाई कमाएं हम, और खाएं वो. बस इसलिए मैंने तो अपना प्रोजेक्ट ही बंद कर दिया.” Talking to yet another from the GCC, he says: “I was the part of the delegation from my country of residence for Namami Gange project. We have given some very good projects. But the response is not very encouraging. Sometimes we feel we are here more as guests than as Indians, albeit overseas ones.” Another problem often highlighted is that when they go to their native places and talk to local authorities about contributing and participating in the development of the place, general response is negative.

Understandable, and we do agree that the interfacing needs to be improved a lot, and there is indeed much to be done. But right here at the outset it is indeed necessary to also understand ... and we would like to urge our overseas brethren to take a pause once in a while, and understand that modern India is still a work-in-progress. Every coin, as the adage goes, has two sides. And this is exactly where domestic perception of overseas Indians comes into play – and yes, we did a bit of homework on this. Here is what emerged: ‘Many of our Diaspora people presume themselves to be above ordinary. They look at every Indian with doubts and a feeling of being cheated. They try to praise their country of residence and demean their country of origin. अरे भाई India is India ... ’

The only thing permanent in today’s world is ‘Change’ with a capital C. And although things here are changing – the work culture, ethos, how government machinery functions etc., are all changing, that change is gradual – and sustainable. Have patience. “Dilli abhi door hai ... ’

- Rajeev Gupta



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INDIA... A CONTINUUM



lot has changed in India and the world, over a comparatively short period of time. We are today the fastest growing among emerging economies of the world, overtaking China to that pole position. Our way of doing things governmentally has seen a revamp, with a workaholic Prime Minister and his A-team of ministerial colleagues working round-the-clock to make doing business in and with India a breeze ... but mark you, while things have changed for the better, it is still a work-in-progress – there is still much of red-tape, unwieldy rules and regulations to get rid of. The United States of America has a new President, in Donald Trump, and India has much uncertainty to face on that front, even as the president unfolds his new agenda for his country. Europe teeters on the brink of a cohesiveness crisis, and the seemingly unending strife in the middle-east is still that – unending – and shows no sign of abating anytime soon. The fourth NDA financial budget is behind us, which subsumed the Railway Budget and took place a month early – presumably consolidating further on steps taken in earlier iterations to streamline the economy. Apart from all that, it is campaign time once again, with multiple states going for elections. The Uttar Pradesh state is where the battle royale is – with road shows, rallies and glitz galore ... We also had these mega state events – Karnataka, Jharkhand, to name two, reaching out to our global Diaspora and to foreign investors, governments et al with the 'Make in India' message.

NRI Achievers too continues to evolve, and seeks to mature further as your platform of choice for news and views that matter most to you. In an ongoing effort to reshape and restructure content within the magazine, you might have noticed that we are getting more and more oriented toward Diaspora outreach, though not too much is new on the spectrum of content being offered. But despair not, that too will come sooner than later, keep reading! As is always the case with India, we are going to have interesting days ahead, even if we be in the news for all sorts of wrong reasons today ... in a country as large as ours, there will be plenty of negatives – and raging controversies. Remember we are a thriving democracy, and we have a media, guess what? A media that has been named one of the most unreliable by the World Economic Forum! However, we will be prudent enough to take the WEF pronouncement about Indian media with er, WTF, a proverbial fistful of salt...

And so, like your regular monthly routine, do take some time out and browse through, and yes, please do not forget to write us your views on the magazine! Have a great Holi and summer time ahead.

- Chakravarthi Suchindran

INDIANS LARGEST GROUP OF FOREIGN SKILLED WORKERS IN UK

At 57%, Indians have become the largest group of skilled workers granted visas to live and work in the UK last year, according to official figures. The UK home office has said that Indians accounted for 53,575 skilled work visas granted in 2016, and Americans the second largest at 9,348. "Indians accounted for 57% of total skilled work visas granted (53,575 of 93,244). The IT sector sponsored 42% of skilled work visa applications, followed by professional, scientific and technical (19%), and financial and insurance activities (12%)," according to the Office of National Statistics. Indians also accounted for over half the applications made in the sponsored skilled visa category last year – at 30,556 of the total 56,058 applications. "Indians were issued the largest proportion (40% of the total) of skilled work visas in the 2010 cohort and, of these skilled Indians, 32% had



received settlement after five years, while a further 12% still had valid leave to remain in the UK," it said. Student visa figures for India have registered a slight uptick with 11,330 granted in 2016, up from 11,160 in 2015. "For us, mobility

is the key for our services sector. There has to be a system where our professionals can come to the UK and return. They contribute immensely to both the economies," avers Indian high commissioner to the UK, Yashvardhan R Sinha.

दिल्ली में पहला भोजपुरी फिल्म फेस्टिवल

भोजपुरी फिल्म लवर्स के लिए पहला भोजपुरी फिल्म फेस्टिवल दिल्ली में सफलतापूर्वक सम्पन्न हुआ। सीरीफोर्ट ऑडिटोरियम में इस समारोह का 3 फरवरी को उद्घाटन हुआ। सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय के इस फेस्टिवल के पहले दिन भोजपुरी सिनेमा



के कई स्टार्स पहुंचे। तीन दिन के इस फेस्ट में 10 फिल्मों की स्क्रीनिंग हुई। मशहूर फिल्म 'गंगा मैया तोहे पियरी चढ़ैबो' की स्क्रीनिंग के साथ सीरीफोर्ट ऑडिटोरियम में पहले भोजपुरी फिल्म फेस्टिवल का आगाज हुआ। सूचना प्रसारण मंत्री राजवर्धन राठौर ने समारोह का उद्घाटन किया, बीजेपी लीडर मनोज तिवारी बतौर चीफ गेस्ट पहुंचे। इस फिल्म फेस्टिवल के ब्रैंड एंबेसेडर नामी एक्टर रवि किशन। रवि ने कहा, भोजपुरी समाज को पहले हेय दृष्टि से देखा

जाता था और यह बात हमेशा से मुझे चुभती रही है। यहां तक कि मैंने शुक्ला टाइटल तक अपने नाम से हटा दिया था क्योंकि सब 'भैया' बोलते थे। आज भी कई लोगों की नजर में ठेले वाला, दूध वाला... ही भोजपुरी, जबकि इन्हें अंदाजा नहीं कि आईएस, आईपीएस समेत कई कलाकार भी भोजपुरी समाज से हैं। 34 करोड़ लोग भोजपुरी बोलते हैं, यहां तक कि विदेश में भी यह भाषा बोली जाती है। रवि ने कहा, मगर आज इस समारोह को देखकर मुझे लगा है कि भोजपुरी को लेकर बढ़िया काम शुरू हो गया है। इस मौके पर मनोज तिवारी ने कहा, 25-30 साल से लोग दुआ कर रहे हैं कि उनकी मां की जवान को पूरा देश पहचाने। आज वो मौका आ गया है, जब करोड़ों लोगों की इस भाषा को यह सम्मान मिल रहा है। मनोज ने कहा कि यह आगाज है और जल्द ही यह भाषा 8वीं अनुसूची में भी आएगी। तिवारी ने इस पहल के लिए पीएम नरेंद्र मोदी और राजवर्धन राठौर को धन्यवाद दिया। फेस्टिवल में 4 और 5 फरवरी को सुबह 9.30 बजे से शाम 8.30 बजे के बीच नामी मूवी बिदेसिया, गंगा किनारे मोरा गांव, ही, देसवा, गंगा, ससुरा बड़ा पइसावाला, कब होई गवना हमार, लाडला, कब अइबू अंगनवा हमार की स्क्रीनिंग हुई। फिल्मों के साथ साथ सीरीफोर्ट ऑडिटोरियम में लगी मधुबनी पेंटिंग और बिहार के मशहूर लिट्टी चोखा ने इस फेस्टिवल के माहौल को तरोताजा बना दिया।

रूसी दूतावास पर हिंदुओं के समर्थन में प्रदर्शन

रूसी दूतावास के सामने भारी संख्या में लोगों ने इकट्ठा होकर रूस में रह रहे हिंदुओं की सुरक्षा के लिए शांतिपूर्ण प्रदर्शन किया। यह प्रदर्शन रूस के हिंदू नेता और योग टीचर श्री प्रकाश के समर्थन में किया गया। प्रदर्शनकारियों ने अलेक्सजेंडर द्वोर्किन नाम के व्यक्ति जिसने रूस में भागवत गीता पर प्रतिबंध लगाने के लिए कुछ साल पहले अभियान शुरू किया था, उसका पुतला भी जलाया। आरोप है कि द्वोर्किन रूस में हिंदुओं को सक्रिय रूप से पिछले कई सालों से परेशान कर रहा है। यह भी आरोप है कि द्वोर्किन और उसके लोग रूस में हिंदुओं के समर्थन में बोलने वाले सभी लोगों को डराता है और उनके घरों में गुंडे भेजकर धमकता है। इस सिलसिले में एक ऑनलाइन सक्रियता मंच change.org की भी शुरुआत की गई। इस याचिका का उद्देश्य रूस के राष्ट्रपति ब्लादिमीर पुतिन और भारत के प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी, दोनों देशों के विदेश मामलों के मंत्री सेर्गेई लावरोव और सुषमा स्वराज सहित बड़े पदाधिकारियों समेत रूस व भारत की मीडिया को आकर्षित करना है। इस ऑनलाइन याचिका को दायर करने वाले प्रसून प्रकाश हैं। प्रसून रूस के मास्को शहर में श्री प्रकाश धाम के सार्वजनिक संचार के डायरेक्टर हैं जो कि रूस में भारतीय संस्कृति के विकास और संरक्षण के लिए काम करने वाला केन्द्र हैं।

अमेरिका में गायों की जिंदगी बचाने खड़े हुए एनआरआई

अमेरिका में 'लैला' उन सात गायों में शामिल थी, जो बूचड़खाने में जाने वाली थीं, लेकिन भारतीय-अमेरिका समुदाय के शांति को बढ़ावा देने के प्रयास की वजह से आज वह सुरक्षित है। एरिजोना में भारतीय मूल के समुदाय ने गोशाला शुरू कर दी है, जहां गायों को रखा जाता है। समूह के अध्यक्ष नारायण कोका ने कहा कि हमारा मानना है कि पशुओं के प्रति दया से इंसानों में मानवता बढ़ती है। ये शांतिपूर्ण विश्व के लिए बेहद जरूरी है। उन्होंने कहा कि गोशाला में गायों की अच्छी तरह से देखभाल होती है और शांति एवं अच्छे स्वास्थ्य को बढ़ावा देने के लिए इनकी रक्षा की जाती है। कोका ने कहा कि हम यह संदेश फैलाते हैं कि गायों को संरक्षण कितना महत्वपूर्ण है और लोगों को शिक्षित करते हैं कि गायों को सुरक्षित रखकर हम किस तरह से अपनी भावी पीढ़ियों के लिए

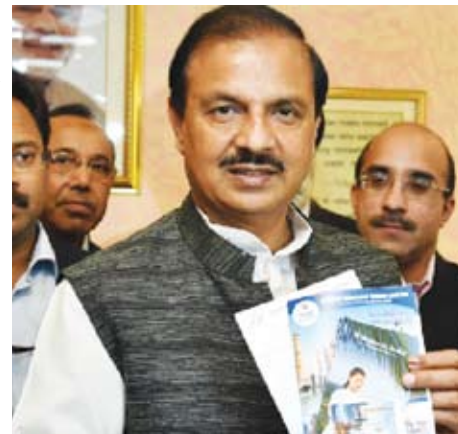
सतत पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का निर्माण कर सकते हैं। इस संगठन ने यह काम उस वक्त शुरू किया, जब 2010 में काले रंग की जर्सी गाय 'लैला' को कटने से बचाया गया। गोशाला के संस्थापक प्रयाग नारायण मिश्रा ने कहा कि इस गाय के मालिक कहीं और जा रहे थे और उन्होंने



इसे कटने के लिए दे देने की योजना बनाई, लेकिन हमने गाय को खरीद लिया। एरिजोना में भारतीय मूल के समुदाय ने गोशाला शुरू कर दी।

विदेशी दूरिस्टों को एयरपोर्ट पर फ्री सिम

विदेशी दूरिस्टों के भारतीय सरजमीं पर उतरते ही भारत सरकार की ओर से उन्हें सौगात में मोबाइल फोन के सिम देने की शुरुआत की जा रही है। इसके तहत ई-वीजा के जरिये भारत आने पर सरकार की ओर से वेलकम किट मुहैया कराई जाएगी, जिसमें तमाम जानकारियों के साथ-साथ पहले से ही ऐक्टिवेटेड सिम कार्ड भी



होगा। 15th February को संस्कृति व पर्यटन मंत्री डॉ. महेश शर्मा ने इस योजना की शुरुआत की। इस सिम में जहां 50 रुपये का टॉकटाइम फ्री दिया जा रहा है, वहीं 50 एमबी डेटा भी मिलेगा। पहली किट जारी करते हुए पर्यटन मंत्री ने इसे ट्रेवल और टूरिजम सेक्टर के एक प्रतिनिधि को सौंपा। यह सिम 30 दिनों के लिए वैध रहेगा। शुरू में यह सुविधा दिल्ली स्थित इंदिरा गांधी इंटरनैशनल एयरपोर्ट पर उपलब्ध होगी, लेकिन जल्द ही देश के उन बाकी 15 इंटरनैशनल एयरपोर्ट पर भी यह सुविधा मुहैया कराई जाएगी, जहां ई-वीजा की सुविधा उपलब्ध है। यह सुविधा बीएसएनएल के जरिये उपलब्ध कराई जा रही है, जिसके लिए विशेष काउंटर बनाए गए हैं।

NRI Achievers News Network

STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF NRI ACHIEVERS, DELHI. AS REQUIRED UNDER RULE 8 OF THE REGISTRATION OF NEWSPAPERS (CENTRAL) RULES 1956.

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THIRD INDIAN-ORIGIN WOMAN TO FLY INTO SPACE

Dr. Shawna Pandya, a physician with Canada's Alberta University Hospital, is today training as an astronaut in preparation for two crucial space missions, and will become the third woman of Indian origin to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams. She began her career as a neurosurgeon before switching fields. She is also a singer, author, international taekwondo champion and has even trained in Muay Thai with a Navy SEAL. The 32-year-old Indian-Canadian was shortlisted after topping the CSA (Citizen Science Astronaut) programme. During her Mumbai visit to meet family in their Mahalaxmi home, she said that being an astronaut has been a passion since she was a teen. As part of a project called Polar Suborbital Science in



the Upper Mesosphere (PoSSUM), which will study the effects of climate change, Pandya says she will do experiments in bio-medicine and medical science. She will also work on Physiological, Health, and Environmental Observations in Microgravity (PHEnOM), and is a prime crew member of Project Poseidon, a 100-day underwater mission at the Aquarius Space Research Facility in Florida. Talking about her roots in India, Pandya avers that there is tremendous potential in people. "When I talk to students – medical undergraduates, I realise they have the zeal to venture out but aren't always aware of the ways in which they can. All we need is to get acquainted with everyday developments in science, be resilient and always try to achieve something bigger."

INDIAN-ORIGIN SCIENTIST RECIPIENT OF UK'S TOP HONOUR IN MATHEMATICS

Cayley Aerospace Inc. CEO Eur. Ing. Bishnujee Singh has been elected a Fellow of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications in the UK. He is the first ever engineer from India to receive this major award in mathematics. The Indian-origin scientist is a chartered mathematician of the same institute, and also the first-



ever aeronautical engineer to be conferred as a chartered scientist with UK's Science Council. The honour recognizes outstanding contributions to the advancement of mathematics. In 2011, Bishnujee Singh was awarded EUR ING (European Engineer) Award from FEANI Brussels.

NRI DONATES US\$ 25,000 TO WAR WIDOWS AT PBD

Setting an example for benevolent initiatives by overseas Indians, Mr. Ashok Mago, the founder chairman of the US-India Chamber of Commerce, Dallas, has donated a cheque of US\$ 25,000 to the Indian Development Foundation (IDF), to be used for the welfare of war widows of martyred Indian soldiers. He wants these women to learn through distance education courses and stand on their own feet after losing their sole breadwinners in the line of duty. He handed the cheque over to Gen. (Retd) VK Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, on the third day of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD). Ashok Mago, recipient of the Padma Shri in 2014, said: "What we have given today is a seed fund. We hope others too contribute to the cause. We will speak to the Dallas Country Community College to help us in providing online coaching content. As I grew up in Ambala Cantonment, I have seen the travails of the widows and skill development could help in providing a proper livelihood in their post traumatic period," he added. Mr. Mago hoped that the Defence Ministry would agree to the proposal. He said that since NRIs could select specific projects under the India Development Fund, he had chosen to help war widows.



NRI'S TEAM SETS GUINNESS RECORD FOR LONGEST UNDERWATER HUMAN CHAIN

A 24-year old mechanical engineer, Suneet Jain, along with his astounding team of 182 scuba divers from Pune, have beaten the previous world record for the longest underwater human chain and have set a new world record, marking their entry into the Guinness Book of World Records. The record attempt was planned with 'Absolute Scuba' in India and took place at Coral Grand Resort, Sairee Beach, Koh Tao, Thailand. The total length of the human chain was 140 metres. The preparation for this attempt had been going on for the last six months. The team included more than 30 non-swimmers, several first-time scuba divers and all age groups from 8-year-olds to 58-year-olds. The journey to victory was not easy and the team had to face several obstacles, though they



triumphed over each and every one. The main aim of the group was to 'inspire ordinary people to extraordinary accomplishments.' They collectively overcame several challenges including recruiting and training over 200 participants, scouting for a suitable location internationally and organising a large-scale scuba diving event in a foreign country. Unfamiliar with saltwater, the team failed their practice attempt the previous day after six months of planning.

AN INDIAN-AMERICAN GIRL AMONG 2017 PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

Indian-American Shreya Bhadriraju, of Elkins High School in Missouri City, Texas, is among 60 students in the US who have

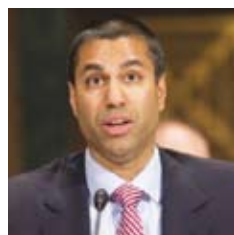


been nominated for the 2017 Presidential Scholars programme, for exemplifying academic and artistic excellence. The National Young Arts Foundation announced the Arts nominees on January 31 for the 2017 US Presidential Scholars. Speaking on the awardees, the Young Arts president and chief executive Carolina Garcia Jayaram says: "Each year we are amazed by the

artistry of the students who come through our programme, but this year raised the bar - the sheer talent and tenacity of the artists coming from all walks of life and every corner of the country was astounding, and we celebrate their work and look forward to what they will do next." Presidential Scholars in the Arts honour high school seniors who exemplify academic and artistic excellence.

TRUMP PICKS ANOTHER INDIAN AMERICAN TO HEAD COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

US President Donald Trump has picked Ajit Vardaraj Pai, 44, an outspoken opponent of net-neutrality, to head the powerful US communications regulatory agency, making him the fourth



Indian-American in the administration at a senior level. Pai will now head the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) as its next Chairman. The FCC

regulates cell-phone spectrum & services, radio, television, PSTN and internet, as well as satellite and cable.

INDIAN-ORIGIN ARTIST WINS 2017 GENESIS PRIZE

Renowned Indian-origin sculptor Anish Kapoor, 62, who has emerged as a champion of Syrian refugees' rights, has won Israel's prestigious one million dollar Genesis Prize for his commitment to Jewish values. The prize committee, headed by Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky, acknowledged Kapoor as "one of the most influential and innovative artists of his generation." Kapoor created the Holocaust Memorial for the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in London and the 70 candles for Holocaust Memorial Day in Britain in 2015, commemorating the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz from the Nazis. Kapoor, born in Mumbai to an Iraqi-origin Jewish mother and Indian father, has decided to use the US\$ 1 million award money to help refugees and try to expand the Jewish community's engagement in a global effort to support Syrian refugees, according to a statement issued by the Genesis Prize Foundation.



TRUMP APPOINTS INDIAN-AMERICAN ATTORNEY TO WHITE HOUSE POST

US President Donald Trump has appointed well-known Indian-American attorney Uttam Dhillon to a key White House position. Mr. Dhillon, who has earlier served as chief oversight counsel for the House of Representatives Financial Services Committee, will now assist the US President on ethics and compliance matters. In this position, as a special assistant to the President, he would be a part of the legal team to serve under White House Counsel Donald F McGahn. "The appointment of a team of this calibre reflects the importance of ethics compliance to the President and this administration," said White House counsel Don McGahn. Mr. Dhillon has previously worked as an associate deputy attorney general for the Department of Justice, as a Chief Counsel for the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, as a Policy Director for the US House of Representatives Policy Committee, and as an Assistant United States Attorney in Los Angeles.



THREE INDIAN-AUSTRALIANS AWARDED HIGHEST CIVILIAN HONOR

Three people of Indian-origin have been bestowed with Australia's highest civilian honor, the "Order of Australia," for their remarkable contribution in the fields of engineering, medicine and physics - Dr. Purshottam Sawrikar, Prof. Makhan Singh Khangure & Prof. Vijay Kumar. Dr. Sawrikar is a prominent Sydney-based medical practitioner honoured for his contribution to the medical fraternity and the Indian community. A former President of Australia's Indian Medical Graduates Association, he is also credited with founding a



Prof. Makhan Singh Khangure, Dr. Sawrikar, Prof. Vijay Kumar

community radio station "Akashwani Sydney". Prof. Khangure is a Perth-based radiologist awarded for his notable service in the field of medicine. He's famous for developing interventional neuro-radiology, a way of

treating brain hemorrhage without surgery. Prof. Vijay Kumar, a nuclear medicine specialist and a researcher, gets the award for rendering significant service to medical research to professional organisations and to the community, in disciplines of nuclear medicine and biology. He is a founding member of the Sydney Tamil Sangam Association. He was also awarded the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Award in 2007 and 2014. These three awardees are among a list of 958 Australians nominated in several categories.

KNOW PHILANTHROPIST RAMESH SHAH – WHO WORKS FOR TRIBAL CAUSES

Ramesh Shah, an Indian-American philanthropist, was recently felicitated by the Indian Consulate in Houston USA, for his contribution towards the community and starting a mission that provides education to millions of tribals in India. He was acknowledged for his 4 decades of contribution to spreading awareness about the welfare of the most neglected Indian communities. He was also awarded the 'Pravasi Bharatiya Samman' (PBS) in the recently concluded Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas held in Bangalore. Shah shared the honour with the



dian-American community and said they have supported him in all his endeavours. Ramesh has travelled extensively across India, Europe and the US creating awareness about remote parts

of India, including the tribal belts. With an aim to provide education in tribal areas in India, the philanthropist also founded the 'Ekal Vidyalaya' chain. He is presently global coordinator of the school chain and travels worldwide to advocate the 'Ekal mission'. A native of Gabat village in Gujarat, Ramesh moved to the US in 1970 and established the Gujarati Samaj of Houston in 1978. Interestingly, Shah was also a part of the team that organised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's grand Madison Square Garden reception in September 2014.

INDIAN ORIGIN WOMAN DIES AFTER ROAD RAMPAGE DOWN UNDER

Ms. Bhavita Patel, a 33-year-old woman of Indian-origin and a director at a leading audit and economic firm in Melbourne, died after becoming the sixth victim of an "intentional" road rampage in a not-so-new case of a road accident. Gravely incapacitated in an accident at a busy street, her family took the tough decision to turn off her life support, as her condition did not get any better following the fatal accident on January 20th, 2017.



Patel was on her way back to her office when a speeding car took her down and also rammed into several other pedestrians on Bourke street, killing five and grievously hurting some 31 people. "My parents and I are broken. But we all appreciate the love we're getting from people," says Ms Patel's brother, Mitesh, who adds that the family was distraught with grief. "I have no idea what to say about what happened except that I miss her and love her so much and can't believe that I won't see her any more," he said. Among the others to have died include a 10-year-old Thalia Hakin, who was out walking with her mother and eight-year-old sister Maggie when all three were hit by the car.

INDIAN-ORIGIN BRITISH PROFESSOR KNIGHTED

Professor Shankar Balasubramanian, 50, an Indian-origin professor of chemistry and DNA expert at Cambridge University, has recently been knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. The Chennai born professor was recognised for his work as a co-inventor of NextGen DNA sequencing (also known as Solexa sequencing), described as the most transformational advance in biology and medicine for decades. He is, at



present, Herchel Smith Professor of Medicinal Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Cambridge. "Solexa sequencing, as it is now known, allows an individual genome to be sequenced in a day or two at a cost of less than 1,000 pounds; previously, sequencing the human genome took years of work and cost billions.

TELUGU NRI COUNSELS DISTRESSED FARMERS VIA TELE-PSYCHIATRY

A Telugu psychiatrist based out of Florida, Dr. Vidyasagar Vangala is working Medical Director of Mid-Florida Psychiatry Center with faculty appointments at NOVA Southeastern University and Barry University. The doctor was perturbed with the absence of facilities to save the precious lives of farmers who tend to take extreme steps with emotional reasons.



The doctor, who was recently in India, spoke to a few farmers in his district to glean that several of them were on the verge of committing suicide. Dr. Vangala has now decided to get in touch with farmers directly in his area through a group of friends and offer counseling free of cost. "It pains me that most of these suicides can be prevented with a session or two by the psychiatrists. If I can prevent even two three suicides I will be happy," says the alumnus of Osmania Medical College and a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association (FAPA). In his view, first awareness has to be created on identifying the symptoms of depression and suicidal tendencies, and the resources have to be made available. 📺

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LAMBORGHINI LAUNCHES - AVENTADOR S

Priced at Rs. 5.01 Cr., Italian super car marque Lamborghini launched the extreme super sports car AVENTADOR S. The new Aventador S LP 740-4 Coupe replaces its predecessor and is sharper and more powerful version of the coupe mounted on a 6.5 litre engine offering 350 kmph of top speed.



HP LAUNCHES 'OMEN'



HP launched its 'Omen' range of notebooks, desktop and gaming enthusiasts in the country. The new launch includes five notebooks and a desktop powered with sharp designs and graphics priced between Rs. 79,990 and Rs. 1.40,000 Lakh, the laptops will be available in two variants — 17.3-inch and 15.6-inch screen size. HP is also introducing gaming accessories like keyboard, headset, mouse and mouse pad.

HONDA LAUNCHES ACTIV- 4G

Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India, has launched its 4th Generation upgrade, called the Activa 4G. It retains tested 109 cc Honda Eco Technology Engine, dishes out 8 bhp of power at 7,500 rpm and a torque of 9 Nm at 5,500 rpm, Combi Brake System (CBS) with Equalizer technology, a mobile charging socket, a safety boost with the Automatic Headlamp On feature and a retractable front hook available for a price of Rs. 50,730.



'JIO EFFECT'



'Jio effect' – Reliance chairman Mukesh Ambani, who has called it the world's largest start-up, announced that the company's telecom venture has crossed 100 million subscribers in less than six months since launch. Significantly, the company has also said that it would start charging users for data from April 1st of 2017. The market capitalisation (m-cap) of RIL rose by INR 38,729 Cr. during the day. Interestingly, the gain in market cap for RIL is almost equal to the entire market cap of Idea Cellular, India's third largest telecom operator in the country by subscribers. The RIL scrip, which touched a 52-week high of INR 1,212, surged about 11% to close at INR 1,208 on the BSE. The scrip soared nearly 11.2% to end the day at Rs 1,210 on the NSE. RIL has invested about INR. 1.5 Lakh Cr. in Jio, Ambani has said that the company would invest a total of INR. 2.5 Lakh Cr. in the digital space.

ONGC TO INVEST INR 7,337 CRORE TO BOOST OUTPUT

The country's top oil and gas explorer ONGC (Oil & Natural Gas Corporation), will invest INR 7,337 Cr. in five fields, to produce about 15 million tonnes of oil and about 3 billion cubic metres (BCM) of gas. India wants to boost its local output to cut dependence on imports from the current 77 percent. Most of this investment would go into developing the R-Series fields, off the west coast, that can produce 8.39 million tonnes of oil and 1.696 BCM of gas. ONGC will invest about INR 4100 Cr. in the fields that will begin oil production during 2018-19. These fields are expected to produce at a peak rate of 14,583 barrels per day (bpd) in 2019-20. 🇮🇳



NRI Achievers Business Network



BHEL WINS GOLDEN PEACOCK AWARD

BHEL has won the prestigious Golden Peacock Award for excellence in HR for 2016. The award was received by Atul Sobti, CMD, BHEL and D. Bandyopadhyay, Director (HR), BHEL from Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Founder, The Art of Living, in the presence of Lt Gen J S Ahluwalia, PVSM (retd), President, Institute of Directors; Mrs Rajshree Birla, Chairperson, Aditya Birla Group and other dignitaries. The award has been conferred on BHEL by the Institute of Directors for exemplary contribution to the HR function, initiatives taken towards enhancing the engagement and satisfaction of employees and BHEL's best practices.

SAIL'S STEEL FOR ISRO'S SATELLITES

Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has once again become true force in transforming the nation by supplying steel to ISRO for the launch of a record 104 satellites in a single rocket on February 15. In this scientific feat SAIL's Salem Steel Plant (SSP) has played an important part by way of providing high quality stainless steel for the fuel and oxidizer tanks used in the launch vehicle. SAIL SSP has supplied steel for the iconic Chandrayan and Mangalyan missions too. With this feat of ISRO, India now becomes the first country to script history after launching a record number of satellites in a single rocket. ISRO's workhorse rocket PSLV created the record by launching 104 satellites in a single mission from the state-of-the-art space centre at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.



TOP POSTINGS



POWERGRID: **Seema Gupta** has taken charge as the Executive Director of POWERGRID, Northern Region-1. Prior to this, she

was heading the Corporate Monitoring Group and the Cost Engineering Department of PowerGrid. Earlier, she was the Chief Operating Officer at Central Transmission Utility & Cost Engineering Departments and was responsible for the development of Inter-State Transmission Lines. She has also headed or worked in Commercial, International Business, Energy Efficiency, Corporate Planning, Telecom and System Energy.

Shri Prabhakar Singh has assumed charge as Director (Projects) of PowerGrid in February, 2017. Prior to this, he was working as the Executive Director (NR-I). Before joining PowerGrid he has worked in Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board (MPSEB) and NTPC Ltd. He is an electrical engineer from Madan Mohan Malviya Engineering College, Gorakhpur.



NHPC: Shri Nikhil Kumar Jain joins NHPC. Shri N K Jain, Director Personnel, Air India Limited, has taken over as Director Personnel, NHPC.

NALCO: Shri Sanjib Kumar Roy, Executive Director (Production), NALCO has joined as the Director (Projects & Technical) of the company



on superannuation of Shri N.R. Mohanty, from 3rd February 2017.

AWARDS & HONOR



Dr. U.D. Choubey, Director General, SCOPE has been conferred "FORE-Top Rankers Excellence Award for Outstanding Services to the Management of Public Sector Enterprises".

NRI Achievers Corporate Network

AERO INDIA 2017

Within the space of a decade, Aero India – our own premier aerospace exhibition, has carved a niche for itself as a globally relevant air show.

The eleventh edition of the event took place from 14 to 18 Feb 2017 at the Air Force Station Yelahanka, Bengaluru. Aero India provides a significant platform for boosting business opportunities in International aviation, and in the present context, is favourably poised to notch up exponential growth over previous editions. A rapidly growing economy, defence preparedness challenges and the opening up of defence production to private investments have all given a good fillip to the defence industry in India. Aero India too in this context has also become a hub centre for exploring defence business in the Asia, and Bengaluru like a magnet draws global aerospace majors every year.

At the opening of this 11th edition of Aero India 2017 – Asia's largest Air-show, a breathtaking display of thrilling manoeuvres by military aircraft and aerobatic teams left audiences spell-bound. Billed as Asia's premier air show, the biennial International

al Aerospace and Defence Exhibition aka Aero India 2017, was inaugurated by defence minister Manohar Parrikar. Betting high on the defence market in India, global aerospace giants are hard-selling their wares with potential deals worth billions of Dollars on offer. A total of 549 companies took part in the event, of which 270 were



Indian and 279 foreign. Mil-Mi-17 helicopters, indigenously built HAL products like Light Utility Helicopters (LUH) flanked by Cheetal helicopters, Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) and the Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), a formation comprising Dornier Do 228, Light Combat Aircraft Tejas, HTT-40 (Basic Trainer Aircraft), the Hawk and others were showcased at the event by India.

The excitement in the air was palpable at the Yelahanka Air Force Station on 17-02-2017, when Aero India finally opened its gates to the general public for the last two days. Aviation enthusiasts poured into the air base in large numbers, and the event, which had been a largely underwhelming fare for the past three days, suddenly came alive. Loud cheers from the large crowd rent the air as the metal birds in the sky performed one manoeuvre after

another. The experience was more memorable for those attending the show for the first time. The many shutterbugs at the show too returned with some great pictures. But it was disappointing to see no new aircraft this year. Long queues could be seen in front of the Dassault Rafale and Saab Gripen jets. Besides being given a glimpse at the cockpits of these powerful machines, the public were allowed to sit in them.

KARNATAKA STATE HANDICRAFTS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

With the aim of reaching out to more customers in India and abroad, KSHDCL had sought and held a meeting with Smt. Arathi Krishna, the Deputy Chairman of the NRI Forum Karnataka, to discuss and to promote the spread of handicrafts from the state of Karnataka across the globe in

general, and in the USA, UK and Australia in particular. KSHDCL also strove to seek suggestions on exports to wide markets across the globe. During the meet, Smt. Arathi Krishna promised help in arranging exhibitions at the embassies of potential market countries, and said that

she would request all joint secretaries to encourage the art and crafts patronised by the erstwhile Maharajas of Mysore. She also learnt that KSHDCL Exhibitions were more successful in events like 'Make in India' and 'Think Big.' Today, KSHDCL is touching an annual turnover of 54 Cr. Discussing on creating a global market for Karnataka-origin handicrafts, Smt. Arathi Krishna suggested that we seek and look out for local dealers and distributors in the foreign countries, and facilitating them to retail it to customers where sandalwood carving, rosewood furniture etc., has good demand in the USA, Canada and all countries where there is potential market for the products. Smt. Arathi Krishna also assured the KSHDCL delegate that her Forum will promote KSHDCL during her forthcoming tours to Australia in May and Dallas in September this year. 🇮🇳



NRI Achievers Bureau



GLOBAL INVESTORS SUMMIT 2017

INVESTMENT PROPOSALS

WORTH ₹ 3 LAKH CR. SIGNED

Jharkhand is India's 28th state that was born out of the Bihar Reorganization Act on the 15th of November 15, 2000 – also the birth anniversary of the legendary tribal revolutionary of the region, Birsa Munda. Jharkhand is known for its rich mineral resources like uranium, mica, bauxite, granite, gold, silver, graphite, magnetite, dolomite, fireclay, quartz, feldspar, coal (35% of Indian reserves), iron, copper (20% of Indian reserves) etc. Forests and woodlands occupy more than 29% of the state – among the highest in India. The state had organised and hosted a "Momentum Jharkhand Global Investors' Summit 2017" recently. We bring you a short report about it here ...

The two-day "Momentum Jharkhand Global Investors' Summit 2017" hosted by the State was attended by about 6,200 delegates. Partner countries were Japan, the Czech Republic, Tunisia and Mongolia. The Jharkhand government projected investment proposals worth Rs. 3 Lakh Cr. during this maiden global investment summit that took place this February. The Chief secretary to the state government, Rajbala Verma, said the state has bagged investments to the tune of Rs. 50,000 Cr. from overseas before the domestic roadshows were held last year. Stating that investment promotional roadshows have improved Jharkhand's image both at home and abroad, Verma said the state is ready to invest in products across four sectors that the investors are looking to explore. "The investment promotional tours conducted last year have fetched us proposals worth Rs. 50,000 Cr.

JHARKHAND FACT SHEET

Population	3,29,88,134
Male Population	1,69,30,315
Female Population	1,60,57,819
Density of Population	414 persons / Sq. KM
No. of Districts	24
No. of Sub divisions	38
No. of Blocks	260
No. of Villages	32,620
National Highways	1,844 KMs
State Highways	6,880 KMs
Total Geographical Area	79.70 Lakh Hect



from both Indian and overseas investors. Some of the investors are inking Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with us during the summit," Verma told media-persons. "Overall, we are projecting investment proposals to the tune of Rs. 3 Lakh Cr. during the summit," she added.

The event took place at Ranchi on February 16 and 17 and was attended by delegations from 25 countries. The presence of head-honchos from India's front-running corporate houses and inking multi-sectoral deals in business to government (B2G) and government-to-government (G2G) meetings were highlights during the summit. Several Union cabinet ministers, including finance minister Arun Jaitley and industries and commerce minister Nirmala Sitharaman, were present.

Addressing the Momentum Jharkhand Global Investor's summit 2017, Union

Minister of Law and justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad spoke about the development of the country. The Union Minister stated that 111 Cr. people in the country have Aadhar cards and also speaking on the digital growth of India, Prasad said that in the last two years 72 mobile manufacturers have come in India. Also citing the importance of Income Tax payments, he said that while the country has 125 crore people only 3.70 crore pay taxes. He also spoke about the development of Jharkhand and said that the state is becoming digital by days.

Earlier, asserting that Jharkhand is of strategic importance to the Adani Group, Adani Enterprises Managing Director Rajesh Adani had said that they would invest Rs. 20,000 Cr. in the various sectors, including investments into an ultra mega power plant. Adani Power Jharkhand

Ltd has signed an MoU for setting up the ultra mega power project in Godda district, and construction is likely to start later this year, he said. In the renewable energy sector, Adani said that the group will set up a 500 mws solar power project worth Rs. 3,000 Cr. in the state. The group will also invest INR 700 Crores in coal block mining, he said, adding that the company intends to set up an integrated fertiliser complex here as well.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi exuded confidence that 'Momentum Jharkhand Global Investors' Summit 2017' will create several opportunities for people of the state and "give wings to their aspirations". In a tweet, he had posted: "Best wishes for @InvestJharkhand. May the deliberations in this Summit lead to fruitful outcomes that contribute to Jharkhand's growth." In another tweet, Modi asserted that skills and determination of the people of Jharkhand and proactive efforts of the state government are bringing record development in the state. "Investment generated from @InvestJharkhand will create several opportunities for people of the state and give wings to their aspirations," the Prime Minister had added. 🇮🇳

NRI Achievers Bureau

MAKE IN INDIA KARNATAKA INITIATIVES



The Government of Karnataka, in association with the DIPP (Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion) of the Central Government and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), had organised a 'Make in India' Conference on the 13th & 14th of February 2017 at Bengaluru. Earlier on, the state had successfully hosted and conducted an "Invest Karnataka 2016 Global Investors Meet" last year, during February 2016. A report:

Karnataka is labelled as one of the most progressive and industrious states in India. Being a globally renowned knowledge hub, it is home to the largest number of R&D Centers, technical & medical institutions, and boasts the highest number of start-ups in Asia. It's salubrious climate, cosmopolitan culture, investor friendly ecosystem and highly responsive administration makes Karnataka one of the most preferred investment destinations globally.

The Make in India – Karnataka conference was successfully organised with a thrust on re-energizing industry and boosting the manufacturing sector. The conference, which gave a special focus to encouraging manufacturing start-ups, saw an overwhelming participation of more than 5000 delegates from India and abroad. The Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah took this opportunity to announce various plans for encouraging manufacturing start-ups and also announced the institution of a new manufacturing excellence award.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, in his inaugural address, emphasized that manufacturing is where the future lies, a do-





Inaugural ceremony of the 'Make In India - Karnataka' Conference and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Government of Karnataka and the Government of India for setting up an 'Integrated Machine Tools Industrial Park' at Vasanthanarasapura in Tumakuru district. Three coffee table books - 'Make in Karnataka' in association with Yes bank Express Group and Raintree Media were released.

A 'Special thanks' to the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Government of India for partnering with Karnataka in this event, Deshpande said at the press conference. He also thanked all the foreign delegates, investors, invitees, speakers, and moderators for extending their support and participating in large numbers. He added, "I am confident that Karnataka's inherent strengths coupled with close Government-Industry partnership will lead India's manufacturing excellence, heralding the 4th industrial revolution.

Over 500 B2B meetings were held across different focus sectors with International/ National Business houses and Corporations. More than 50 World class companies showcased their manufacturing prowess at the Exhibition Centre of the Make In India - Karnataka Conference. A total of 10 sessions, one of them on 'Make in India' and 9 focus sector sessions were held during the two-day conference. The 10 focus sector sessions held at the event were:

Make in India
Aerospace and Defence
Bio Technology and Pharmaceuticals
Textiles, Apparel and Leather
Heavy Engineering and Machine Tools
Electronics and Electricals
Agriand Food processing
Auto and Auto Components
Manufacturing start-ups
Plastics and Chemicals

incidentally, the two-day 'Make in India - Karnataka' conference coincided with Asia's largest aerospace expo, Aero-India 2017. 🚀

NRI Achievers Bureau

main where job creation and mass employment will take place. He commended Karnataka for playing a proactive participation role in actually making GST a reality. Several other prominent leaders from the Union Government and State Government, including Venkaiah Naidu, Ananth Kumar, MJ Akbar, RV Deshpande, DK Shivakumar, Priyank Kharge, Ramesh Kumar, Basavaraj Ravareddy were present at the event.

Industry captains including Ms Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairman and MD of Biocon Ltd; Vikram Kirloskar, Chairman and MD of Kirloskar Systems Limited; Baba Kalyani, Chief MD of Bharat Forge, Ms. Shobana Kamineni, Executive Vice Chairman of the Apollo Group; JD Giri, Director of Shahi Exports Pvt Ltd; and Wilson Y R, President of Himatsingka Seide Ltd, shared their perspective on the evolving nature of manufacturing and participated in the focus sector sessions held during the two day conference. The Foundation stone laying ceremony for a Machine Tools Park in Tumakuru was also held during the

INDO-PORTUGAL RELATIONS

REINFORCING MUTUAL TRUST AND RELATIONS

India and Portugal have been for a long time bound by ancient historical ties and have had thriving diplomatic relations, except for a brief while in the annals of Independent India, when ties were suspended in September 1955 over the then Goa imbroglio. But after the resolution of the issue and the reestablishment of formal diplomatic relations once again on December 31, 1974, the two countries have come to share an excellent political relationship that has been buttressed and reinforced by exchanges at the highest level through recent years. Through this piece, NRI Achievers brings you a glimpse of Indo-Portuguese relations for our readers ...

While the warm and friendly relations between India and Portugal are characterised by robust people-to-people contacts and close cultural links, there is substantial scope for enhancing bilateral trade and investment. Though bilateral trade has been growing steadily it is seen as being below full potential. With remedying this in mind, many agreements have been forged between the two countries in the years gone by, such as: the Agreement on Trade, Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation signed in 1977 to give an impetus and improve bilateral trade relations; an Agreement on Economic and Industrial Cooperation signed in April 2000; Bilateral Cooperation Agreements between FICCI and the Portuguese Institute for Foreign Trade and Investment (ICEP) in 1992; a Cooperation Agreement between Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Portuguese Association of Industries (AIP); and an Agreement for Avoidance of Double Taxation, in September 1988.

Trade between India and Portugal is expected to touch 500 million Euros, the bulk of which is accounted for by exports from India. India ranks 48th on a destination list for Portuguese exports, which represent about

a quarter of imports. Indian exports to Portugal consist mainly of marine products, cotton and synthetic tex-

tiles, leather, footwear, hides and skins, staple fibres, coffee, tea & spices, carpets, gems and jewellery, silk



Liliana Domingues is a Portuguese national of Indian origin. While sharing experiences of her recent visit to participate in the PBD 2017 held at Bengaluru, she spread her hands expansively when she said: "Returning to India is always Unique! My underlying emotions and memories rise to the fore, pumped out by all the mix and contrast of people, colours, smells, places, situations ... it is ... like experiencing a whole new lifetime in a constricted time of 24 hours! Of all the places I have travelled to, I feel this only in India. And most important of all, I truly feel, empathise a human heart/soul connection in India. It's not important if it's business, tourism, or any other reason. The feeling is always the same. When I am in India, I am at HOME! And that ... is memorable!"

and silk products, tobacco, electrical machinery & parts, iron & steel products, dyeing & tanning products, and organic chemicals. Automobile spares and components, computer software, bicycles, scooters and other two wheelers, and rice have also been exported. Portuguese exports to India are mostly machinery and heavy equipment, with the balance consisting mainly of cork, cork products, pulp, paper products, organic chem-

icals and plastics.

The update and upgrade of Indo-Portuguese economic relationships was the major issue that H.E. Antonio Costa, Portuguese Prime Minister, addressed on his recently concluded State Visit to India, which happened during 7-12 January 2017. The Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa, was also the Chief Guest at the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) that was held between January 7 to 9, 2017 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Antonio Costa is the first Person of Indian Origin to lead a European country, but is not the first Portuguese of Goan origin to serve in Portuguese politics. Others before him too have been very active in public life and in politics, like the recently deceased Alfredo Bruto da Costa, the former MP Narana Coissoró and the former Foreign Minister Gonçalves Pereira. Taking advantage of his Indian roots, Antonio Costa was accompanied by five ministers and 30 business people and used the visit to seed and stimulate trade between the two countries, and has sought to reinforce mutual trust and complementarities between Portugal and India.

During his visit, several agreements were signed to advance bilateral cooperation in key sectors like Defence, Marine Research and Resources, Start-Ups, Agriculture and allied services, not to mention IT and Electronics. Both countries agreed to expand trade and investment by leveraging the huge untapped potential in priority sectors where Portuguese companies possess world-class niche technologies, experience, expertise

and competencies such as infrastructure (Roads, Ports and Inland Waterways), Defence, Renewable Energy (Wind & Solar), IT & Start-Ups, Agriculture and Agro-food, Water and Waste management, Automotive, pharmaceuticals, and Tourism and Hospitality. There are also sectors in which both countries have developed know how and in which closer cooperation like medical research, aerospace or mobility.

India and Portugal have complementary economies and can verily take advantage of being part of different regions and markets. Portugal has been and will remain a strong advocate of India in Europe, hosting the first ever EU-India Summit and co-chairing another Summit during the Portuguese EU presidencies in 2000 and 2007, respectively. Portugal favours the rapid implementation of the outcomes of the March 2016 EU-India Summit, in particular the Agenda for Action 2020. Portugal can apropos be an ideal platform for Indian companies to address markets in Europe, especially those companies based out of London who today face the fallouts of the vexing BREXIT issue, and even Latin America and Africa where Portugal has many straight relationships.

After their visit to India Portuguese Government members highlighted the relevant activity that has been generated since and mentioned the commitment to create the right conditions to take further the opportunities that are being created. One of the steps that are being taken is the organization of an Economic Forum, announced by the Indian Embassy





in Portugal, to take place in the end of March, with the aim to gather investors and business people from both countries. Another event appointed as highly significant for business promotion opportunities between Portugal and India is the Horasis Global Meeting in Cascais, Portugal, on 28-29 May. The annual Horasis Global Meet is one of the world's foremost gatherings of business leaders who interact with key government officials and eminent thought leaders.

This conference will have several numerous Diaspora participants who will share insights and innovations on how to best navigate the future. Several of these India Diaspora participants will be from Indian community in Portugal, a long established, well integrated and valued section of Portuguese society in many ways. We, members of the Indian Diaspora of Portugal, are now creating and developing a 'Portugal India Business Council' platform to be the focus in the future economic synergies among the Portuguese Indian communities in Por-

tugal and also other countries that have economic relationships with Portugal.

The Portugal India Business Council supports Overseas Portugal communities through business Opportunities, Networks, Regulations, Policy Advocacy, Services, and Promotion need to Succeed in Overseas Indian and Portuguese communities. We aim to create a bilateral business environment between India and Portugal by linking industry, business, governments, and supporting long-term business partnerships that will nurture the spirit of entrepreneurship, create jobs, and successfully contribute to create-value in Overseas Indian and Portuguese communities. The missions of the council are:

- To Promote cooperation and evolve thriving business relationships between Overseas Indian and Portuguese communities;
- To Promote economic cooperation between Portugal and India;
- To Provide a Networking forum for businessmen and professionals;
- To Link up with organisations of

Overseas Indians and Portuguese communities dedicated to development of international trade;

- To Support companies, businessmen and professionals interested in Indian-Portuguese bilateral and overseas business opportunities, in particular to maintain close relationships with Indian and Portuguese Authorities, Promotion Boards and other government authorities;
- To promote policies and procedure suggestions to Indian and Portugal Governments to leverage business activities of Overseas Indians and Portuguese communities.

The philosophy behind the institution is that in these times of uncertainty and struggle, strife and separation where walls and divisions are being considered, let the Indian Diaspora across the world be an example of unity in diversity and with the inspiration of Mahatma Ghandi, "in a gentle way, shake the world".

Liliana Domingues
The author is an Executive Member
of the Portugal India Business
Council, and Founder of UNUS
FOR LIFE



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BUILDING AN ABODE FOR KRŠNA THE VRINDAVAN HERITAGE TOWER

Enchanting Vrindavan is best known to most as a town that served as the holy playground of Lord Krishna's childhood in times of the hoary past. In modern times it is a famous pilgrimage site not merely for Hindus but for people from all over the world. With its profusion of temples and shrines that deify the beloved Lord Krishna, Vrindavan has a lot to offer. Millions make a beeline to this town to experience the divinity of the sublime first-hand, that transcends space and time, enveloping all in its presence and making the soul dance leaving the mind unburdened. It is here in this sacred-hued north-Indian town of Vrindavan that a grand Heritage Tower and a Krishna Leela Theme Park aspire to come up. An NRI Achievers' report:



The Vrindavan Heritage Tower seeks to harmoniously meld modern architectural styles with the ancient Indian Nagara architectural thinking to create a towering 700 foot high edifice that strives to be both urban in its flair and yet aspire to be an epitome of divine culture in its effervescence. The project seeks to portray the picturesque and mesmerizing Leelas of Lord Krsna by recreating them via virtual reality using state-of-the-art technology in an attempt to cater to the pilgrim's penchant for 'recreational tourism.'

Comprising of both an indoor as well as an outdoor Krishna Leela Theme Park, the structure promises a variety of wonderful attractions. The theme park with its climate-controlled environment, spans a colossal width of 9 acres

and will play host to a number of family-oriented activities. Attractions will include four dark-ride walkthrough attractions, Sky View Galleries at heights of 140 metres (460 feet) and 175 metres (574 feet), a Kids Zone, an indoor boating experience, live shows, indoor float parades, food-courts and fine-dining restaurants, souvenir-, memorabilia- and gift stalls all celebrating the treasure of cultural heritage that is unique to Braj.

The outdoor edifice is a forest theme family park that features Braj Forest Cruise, Braj Forest Night Safari, a monorail experience, an outdoor boating experience replete with outdoor float parades, a grand musical fountain and an architectural light and projection show – the Grand Finale.

Music and dancing has always been central to the Krishna Leelas and paying proper attention to the fact, the project



also features Cultural Heritage Tourism. This is composed of educative yet entertaining attractions, aptly called 'Edutainment' attractions for school and college students, Indophiles and special interest tourists. It includes the Center for Promotion of Indian Performing Arts, the Braj Art Gallery which will showcase ancient to contemporary Braj visual arts, the Braj Architectural Gallery to showcasing ancient and recent architectural expressions of the region and the Anchorage – the Hall of Values.

'Educational Tourism' is yet another feature that explores the wisdom of the holy literature that is the Bhagvad Gita, through an exclusive Bhagvad Gita Museum and a Bhagvad Gita Academy that will serve as a centre for advanced studies, the Centre for Braj Heritage Studies and the Institute for Values and Ethics.

As a contribution to 'Spiritual Tourism' stand the Hall of Devotion, the Vrindavan Chandrodaya Mandir and the the Srila Prabhupada Memorial. MICE Tourism stands for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events, catering to corporate as well as per-

many schemes offering benefits to those visiting or residing in the Braj. It is inclusive of the 'Visitor Feeding Facility', 'the Widow Feeding Facility', a 'Multi Level Car Parking facility' that is set to become India's largest such facility to ensure a smooth experience avoiding congestion, the 'Braj Heritage Restoration' - aimed at the restoration of environmental resources and historical assets of the Braj region, the 'Young India Talent School' – a free school for children from underprivileged families of the region, a 'Skill Development' facility to train locals in the various skills relevant to Braj region tourism requirements. The 'Akshaya Patra' centralised kitchen facility is aimed at providing midday meals to children from 2010 schools of the Mathura district, and low cost affordable housing.

In addition to the myriad bouquet of educational and entertainment features, the project is a LEED Gold certified project, which through various kinds of tourism initiatives aims to meet the sustainable development of the Braj region. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental

well-being of people in society.

An alumni of IIT Bombay – he had graduated with a B.Tech in Civil Engineering – his quest for the absolute truth took him to serving the mission of his Divine Grace AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, where he tirelessly and selflessly worked for almost three decades. The Akshaya Patra programme for one is his brainchild, a programme that serves midday meals to children from 2010 schools of the Mathura district – a monumental step towards improving education through incentives. A nutritious meal can dramatically enhance productivity of the pupil, by improving learning capacity. In 1994 he had started an integrated social development project, the beneficiaries of which are the rural people of Mysore and Mandya districts.

Madhu Pandit Dasa's vision is to project the rich and enchanting cultural heritage of our motherland through dramatization of the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata – akin to world class presentation platforms of the likes of Disneyland, using 3D animation and theme parks. 'Little Krishna,' a 13-



sonal and family events. This flavour of tourism is directed at large groups and is expected to be booked in advance. The Heritage Tower promises premium facilities and services for a pleasant experience and conduction of MICE events. Other than corporate events, MICE events will also extend to destination weddings, food festivals, special events on public holidays et al.

'Retirement Tourism' focuses on providing retirement or assisted living homes for elders to enjoy the venerable life they deserve in the playground of the joyous Lord. 'Social Infrastructure Projects' consist of

Design, is a green-building rating system. LEED certified buildings are resource efficient, judiciously using water and energy – on the one hand environment friendly and on the other saving money.

The project is helmed by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, a Padmashri awardee and a truly unique person. Serving as the Chairman of the Vrindavan Heritage Tower, the President of ISKCON Bangalore, as the Chairman of the Akshaya Patra Foundation and as Chief Functionary of the India Heritage Foundation, he is a multi-faceted personality dedicated to working for the good and

episode animated series exploring the childhood of Lord Krishna, was the India Heritage Foundation's first project. The series has since been recognized internationally and went on to win numerous national and international awards.

Madhu Pandit Dasa's current focus is on setting up an Indian Heritage and Culture Tourism Park. A complete visionary rooted in the cultural riches of his motherland Madhu Pandit Dasa has given his spiritual and cultural aspirations perfect shape by applying his knowledge of civil engineering as well as his expertise. He wishes to teach

the youth Vedic values that are an omnipotent feature of Indian culture, however diverse and modern it may grow. He envisaged a holistic development of the young, utilising Vedic philosophies and preaching. He believes that corruption, crime and inequality, which are the banes of our society, cannot be curbed and kept under control simply through strict legislation or stringent laws. These are the evils of our contemporary society and these take root and reside in the heart of the individual. To eradicate these vices from taking over society, one's heart and mind need to be transformed into a higher, purer space, and all other attempts to kill these vices are only external as they address the symptoms but not the roots of the problem. His understanding of society is manifest as a holistic whole, a meeting of the heart and the mind, thriving on the pillars of ethics, values, spirituality and culture. Thus, the Vrindavan Heritage Tower project aims at a kind of spiritual as well as social awakening, a hub of recreation as well as creativity, family entertainment as well as individual development. It aims to nurture talent as well as instil morals and values. He believes that India has a lot to offer to the world with its character built on ancient wisdom and contemporary knowledge, technological advancement and spiritual and social activism. He wants Indians to be Global leaders, and the centre aspires to provide the needed momentum and impetus for facilitating this transformation. In his own words, "the Vrindavan Heritage Tower aspires to restore the pride of every Indian. We want to spiritualise people's consciousness when they come to this place, giving them an experience of the touch of the supreme spirit."

Lending him strength in this endeavor stands his team-mate the equally brilliant President of the foundation, Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa, President of the Vrindavan Heritage Tower, Vice Chairman and Trustee of The Akshaya Patra Foundation, Senior Vice President of ISKCON Bangalore and Governing Body Member of GBC Society of the Hare Krishna Movement. Working



SHRI C. P. DASS (PRESIDENT)



in the field of spiritual education since 1984, Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa started working in social development in 2000, and has been working in these two fields since. As an undergraduate student with the PSG College of Technology at Coimbatore and originally inclined towards the sciences, he took a fascination to spirituality. Deeply impressed and moved by the teachings of ancient scriptures his pursuit of spirituality acquired an even more vigorous tone while doing his master's programme in Electronics & Communications engineering at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He joined ISCKON in 1984 and became involved with the Akshaya Patra Foundation in 2000. Combining his passion for science, his compassion and his love for Indian Spirituality, he has dedicated his life to Social and Spiritual Development of society. He continues to research, teach and talk extensively on spirituality, social development and the intersection of science and spirituality.

The Project as a whole concentrates on imparting moral values to the society

through the creation of a spiritual, scientific and fun centre, catering to individuals, researchers, families, corporate groups, large groups, wedding parties, schools, colleges and many more. The project will not only boost tourism which has been only of the religious type till now, expanding its dynamic towards a group of vast and varied interests of individuals. With state of the art amenities and global standard facilities it aims to attract a diverse group of people to the Braj, which will ultimately contribute to its social as well as economic development. More importantly the project aims to meet the goals of sustainable development and is

energy efficient as is evident from it being a LEED Gold Certified project. The multifaceted project will accelerate not only economic growth but will transform the Heritage site that is Braj, keeping its values intact and putting it more prominently on the global map by the use of advanced technology and science.

The vision behind the project is what makes it so immense. The spiritual awakening of the youth and the nurturing of their talents and hopes in a realm so modern in its artifice and so cultural in its spirit is a salute to the motherland. The creation of this centre where human beings from all walks of life, from any corner of the world and across all ages can reside and interact is truly a testament to the diversity of India, its heritage, its cultural values, its ancient scriptures and its values. A place where God exists with science and humans coexist peacefully is great service to the society apart from the revenue that it will generate in terms of profits increasing the value of land as well as leading to social growth and an all-round transformation. The Vrindavan Heritage Tower will ensure that the youth has in their hearts and their brains the values of our ancient culture, the importance of the arts as well as science and also that of sustainability. The centre that caters to a plethora of interests could entirely change the face of tourism in India and make it Braj the number one tourist destination nationally as well as internationally. 🇮🇳

BUILDING A WORLD CLASS SPIRITUAL EDIFICE

SHRI MADHU PANDIT DASA



NRI Achievers sought out the Chairman of the Vrindavan Heritage Tower and the Krishna Leela theme park, Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa, a Padmashri awardee, to converse on the philosophy behind the design and structuring of the immense theme park coming up at Vrindavan. In this feature, he answers the queries posed by our writer. Presented here are his responses, largely in his own words ...



Central to Hinduism is the holy trinity of divinity in the form of Bramha the creator, Shiva the destroyer and Vishnu the protector. And Krishna is portrayed as an avatar of Vishnu. How come Lord Krishna then has become so iconic, with an universal appeal to people from across the globe? What is it about Krishna that mesmerises people harking from other cultures – mysticism, zest, festivity, frolic, what?

“The very name “Krishna” derives from the root (dhatu) “Krish.” This is the same root from which the word “akarshan” is derived as well, which means attraction. Thus the meaning of “Krishna,” is: “All Attractive.” Parashara Muni defines the ‘Supreme Absolute Truth’ to be the person who is all attractive. He further defines attractiveness as an outcome that derives from the possession of six opulences – wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge & renunciation. Parashara Muni further analyses that anyone possessing all six opulences to an unlimited extent, will be the Supreme Lord, Bhagavan.



Krishna has amply demonstrated how He possesses all these opulences to an unlimited extent, and thence fits the description of the Supreme Lord. Therefore His name, Krishna. It is but natural therefore that people from all over the world are attracted to Krishna, as He is the Supreme Lord of everything that is in this creation.

“Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, “mattahparataramnanyadkinchidasthi” – “there is nothing superior to Me”. Lord Shiva in the Padma Purana says “aradhananamsarveshamvishnoraradhanamparam” – “the worship of Vishnu is the highest.” Lord Brahma says in the Brahma Samhita “ishwarahparamahKrishnah...sarvakarakaranam” – “Krishna is the supreme controller and the cause of all causes.” So both Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma accept Krishna’s instruction in the Gita that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In fact in the Padma Purana it is mentioned: “yastunarayanamdevam brahma-rudradi-daivataih samatvenaiva vikshetasapashandibhaveddhruvam” – “A person who considers Demigods like Brahma and Shiva to be on an equal level with Narayana is to be considered an offender.” This establishes that Krishna’s position is not be equated with that of anyone else, including Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma, although they are the greatest personalities in this universe.

“In the Vedas, personalities like Brahma, Shiva, Indra, Surya, Ganesha et al are described as “Devatas” or Demigods, while Krishna or Vishnu is the Parama Purushottama or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Why this distinction? Because Krishna has created all the Devatas and hence His position is always superior. In fact in the Gita, Krishna confirms this – “ahamadir hi devanam” – “I am the source of all the demigods.”



The Rig Veda says “om tad vishnohparamampadamsadapashyantipurayah” – the demigods are simply waiting to have Darshan of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord Vishnu.” The Vedas are definitely monotheistic because they establish Krishna or Krishna’s incarnations such as Vishnu and Narayana to be the Supreme Person. It is a recent widespread misconception that Hinduism is polytheistic, which has no basis in the Vedas.”

While Buddhism, variously called a religion and a way of life, originated on Indian soil, it seems to have receded to the background here in India but thrives in many other parts of the world as a dominant religion and way of life. In the same context, how do you explain the phenomenon where the Krishna cult is witnessing a rising wave of universal and global following all in a relatively short span of time within our lifetimes?

“Lord Buddha appeared about 2500 years ago. At that time the Vedas were being misused. There is a portion of the Vedas where there are allowances for animal sacrifice. Although the Vedas do not encourage the eating of meat, they do recognize that there will always be some

people who cannot do without it. Hence the Vedas allow for it under highly restrictive conditions. This is like the government issuing licenses to open liquor vendors. The government doesn’t want to encourage alcoholism, but it will allow the selling of alcohol under some restrictions. This is because though the government doesn’t want it, there will still be some people who cannot do without it, and hence the government allows it in a limited fashion. The Vedas allow for animal sacrifice and meat-eating in a similar fashion. However people started misusing this allowance, using it to justify the wholesale slaughter of animals. And meat was sold in temples as “Prasad”. Since animals too are the children of Lord Krishna, He took compassion on the animals and incarnated as Lord Buddha. In order to stop the killing of animals, Lord Buddha rejected the Vedas and said ahimsa paramo dharma. Thus did He wean people away from killing animals. Lord Buddha propounded the ‘voidistic’ philosophy that when our existence is destroyed, we attain nirvana or liberation. Buddhism became widespread in India.

“About a thousand years later, Lord Shiva incarnated as Adi Shankaracharya.

Adi Shankara vanquished the Buddhists with his philosophical prowess and made them accept the Vedas. Thus Buddhism lost its following in India, and people once again started following the Vedas. But to achieve his mission, Adi Shankara propounded the ‘impersonalise’ philosophy, which is akin to Buddha’s voidistic philosophy so that people can easily make the shift. He said that Supreme Absolute Truth is impersonal and when we attain mukti, we merge our existence into it.”

“This was a slight improvement over voidism. After Adi Shankara came the Vaishnava philosophers, Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhvacharya, who with their philosophical prowess, unseated the ‘impersonalise’ philosophers and established that the Supreme Absolute is a person, Lord Vishnu and that after we attain mukti, we retain our individuality in the spiritual world, Vaikuntha. This understanding was further enhanced by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who appeared about 500 years ago and who gave the ultimate understanding of Krishna’s supreme position. Hence Lord Chaitanya’s movement is attracting more followers as the time goes by, as it is the ultimate philosophy.”

How do you propagate emotional and devotional surrender to Lord Krishna through your spiritual management and promotional strategy, in this fast paced world where technology has become a dominant creed of our life?

“The method of surrender to Krishna is made very simple in the modern age: “kali kale nama rupe avatar” – in the modern age, Krishna has incarnated as His holy name. In order to surrender to Krishna, all that we have to do is to chant the Mahamantra, “Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare,” for a fixed number of times daily. And whenever we get time, read Krishna’s instructions in the Bhagavad Gita. Children, students, corporate professionals, retired senior citizens – regardless of age, religion, race, nationality, profession – anyone and everyone can chant this Mahamantra and be happy. We invite people from all religions to chant Hare Krishna without any restriction. In fact, this principle is seen in all religions. Even Christianity and Islam recommend the chanting of the Lord’s holy name. If someone is not comfortable with chanting Hare Krishna because of his religion, he may chant the Lord’s names given in his religion and still derive the same ultimate benefit. The principle is to surrender to the Supreme Lord Krishna with love and devotion, through the process of chanting His holy name.”

Contemporary times are manifesting a movement towards interfaith harmony as religious feuds have eroded the faith of humanity in religion. Viewed from this point of view, how do you find the challenges of propagation of faith in Lord Krishna around the globe?

“We have the highest regard for other religions. Srila Prabhupada, our Founder Acharya, has said that we accept Jesus Christ and Mohammed the Prophet as Acharyas. They are bonfide messengers of God. So also Lord Buddha, Guru Nanak and others. They have all propagated the same message of God, in different places under different circumstances in different ways. But the principle is always

the same – to surrender to the Supreme Lord Krishna with love and devotion, through the process of chanting His holy name. Hence everyone is welcome to unite under one roof by chanting the Lord’s holy name. Everyone is welcome to chant Hare Krishna, be happy and go back to Godhead. We do not discriminate on the basis of caste or religion. And as I had mentioned earlier too, if one is uncomfortable with chanting ‘Hare Krishna’, then by all means may he chant the Lord’s names given in his religion and he will still derive the same ultimate benefit. Understanding this principle is the key to universal harmony. Our aim is to know the truth. Believing in God or believing that there is no God is not going to help. We want that people must learn the truth



about God. By reading the Bhagavad Gita, anyone can become proficient in the science of spirituality and know without doubt about the existence of the Supreme Lord Krishna. The knowledge of the Gita can dispel the darkness of ignorance and lead to a harmonious cooperation with all other religions.”

So how do you link “spiritual quotient” as a mood of convergence of body, mind and spirit, with a sense of unity of consciousness in life?

“In the Gita, Lord Krishna explains that our body consists of two components. The first is the gross body comprising earth, water, fire, air and space. These five elements make up the body that we see consisting of bone, blood, flesh, senses, organs etc. The second component of our body is the subtle body comprising the mind, intelligence and our false ego (the

sense of identity that I am such and such a person). Now Krishna analyses that we are not any of these things. We say my hand, my legs, my eyes, my mind, my intelligence etc. I possess consciousness which cannot be attributed to any of these things. That means that we have an existence independent of both the gross and subtle bodies. And we possess consciousness. To understand this is the first step in spirituality. To know that I am a conscious person residing in a body made of gross and subtle elements, is the spiritual student’s first lesson. As we improve our “spiritual quotient” by understanding more of this knowledge from the Gita, the more we understand how this body, mind and intelligence are superficial impositions on my true individuality as a devotee of Lord Krishna.”

How do you rate the response of economically advanced western nations to the Hare Krishna movement in terms of the numbers – followers, the size of the temples, their capacity to offer different facilities et al., to retain the faith structure of followers for a long time?

“Knowledge has no boundaries. Developed or developing or under-developed states of countries and economies do not really matter. People everywhere are interested to know the truth. Spiritual conviction develops on the basis of the universal knowledge of the Gita, which teaches us the ultimate truth. Once a person is in knowledge, the person’s conviction cannot be shaken. Hence our mission is to simply present the ultimate truth given in the Gita without any change as taught by our spiritual master Srila Prabhupada. People from all parts of the world are interested to know the truth of the Gita as long as it is presented without our own interpretation.”

Tell us more about the various charitable activities and community service rendered by the Hare Krishna Movement in different parts of the world to ameliorate human suffering.

“Apart from spreading the unadulterated message of the Gita, we have taken to intervening into social structures via other programmes as well over time.

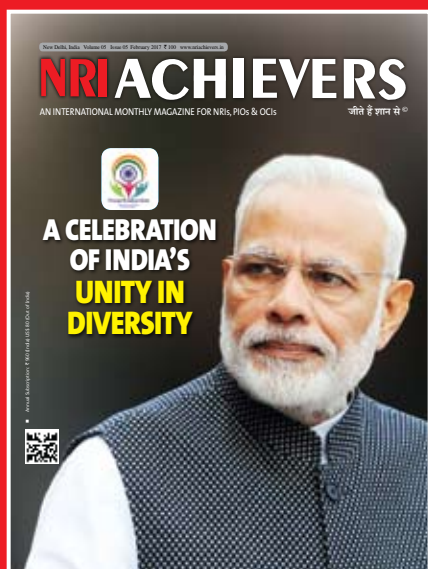
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Akshaya Patra, for instance, is a free mid-day meal programme in government schools all over India, which was initiated by ISKCON Bangalore. Nearly 1.5 million students benefit from this programme daily, which has become the world's largest NGO-run school midday meal program. This programme is run in partnership with the government. Free meals to widows of Vrindavan is another such programme. Value Education for school children is yet another such programme. Organic farming is one more initiative that has benefited many farmers in Karnataka. We also plan to start a free boarding school in Vrindavan, for children from economically challenged sections."

How do you see your upcoming Vrindavan Heritage Tower and Krishna Leela Theme Park becoming a 'signature tune' of ISKCON and transforming Vrindavan into a pulsating centre for Krishna-bhakts?

"Vrindavan for ages has been the place of pilgrimage for Krishna lovers and devotees. To herald the importance of Gita in contemporary times, what better place than that of the speaker of the Gita, Lord Krishna? The Vrindavan Heritage Tower will have facilities for courses teaching the Gita from Basic to Advanced levels depending upon the student's capacity. The indoor theme park is based upon the life and times of Krishna, and will present the teachings of Krishna in a contemporary and interesting way that is attractive to both the young and old alike. A 900 seat state-of-the-art auditorium will give

opportunities for promotion of Indian art forms like music, folk dance etc."

Salient features of Braj Cultural Heritage?

"Braj has its own distinct art forms. Dance forms like Mayur Nritya and Charkula are quite lively. Folk dances like phoolonki Holi are very popular. All of them celebrate Krishna by relating His activities through their own forms. Cow's milk and milk products form an inseparable part of Braj culture. The lassis and Mathura pedas are famous and all time favorites. Seasonal sweet dishes like gajak add to the variety. This is because of the culture of maintaining Goshalas in Braj. Braj also has innumerable places of historical importance, since they stand testimony to the various activities of Krishna as described in local folklore as well as the Vedas."

How do you manage the financial aspect of such comprehensive and huge projects within and outside India, especially with regard to Innovation In design, architecture and resource mobilization?


"The projects and social initiatives of the Hare Krishna Movement are inspired by Srila Prabhupada our beloved spiritual master and the founder and acharya of the world-wide Hare Krishna Movement. Our capital is not money - our real capital is the devotion in the hearts of thousands and millions of devotees of Lord Krishna the world over. Our asset is the blessings of Srila Prabhupada and our investment is dedication and selfless service. All these

ingredients really make the successful project. Srila Prabhupada has inspired in the hearts of many devotees round the world to not only contribute in the form of money but also in the form of selfless service. We have roped a whole bevy of consultants for the building - this Vrindavan Heritage Tower and Krishna Lila Theme Park at Vrindavan. We have with us Thronton Tomasetti, who are looking into the structural design of this skyscraper tower. Thronton Tomasetti were the ones who have the unique distinction of being known as the super-tall design firm. The upcoming tallest building in the world in is being overseen by the Thronton Tomasetti firm."

How do you link corporate governance with the philosophy of Bhagwat Gita where Krishna is the centre of all cosmic activities?

"Bhagavadgita gives us complete knowledge on how to live one's life, depending fully on the Lord and offering everything to Him. It also gives us the highest of ethical, moral and spiritual instruction. Good corporate governance is based on principles of highest morality and conduct. Gita should thus become the beacon for corporate governance as it can give one the highest moral and ethical principles."

What is the focal area of your media management to make Hare Krishna Movement a truly universal movement in nature, impact and diversity?

"The fundamental principles of the Hare Krishna movement are universal in nature. It is not meant for any particular, caste, creed on gender. Its principle of total surrender to Krishna and accepting as the Lord of all the universes and the real enjoyer is universal truth. It is not meant for only Indians or Hindus. Thus we see that Hare Krishna Movement attract following from all parts of the world. People from different nationalities, castes, religions have accepted these principles." 



Ashirvad Pandey
The writer, a BITSian, is
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profession but a hobby writer
by instinct.



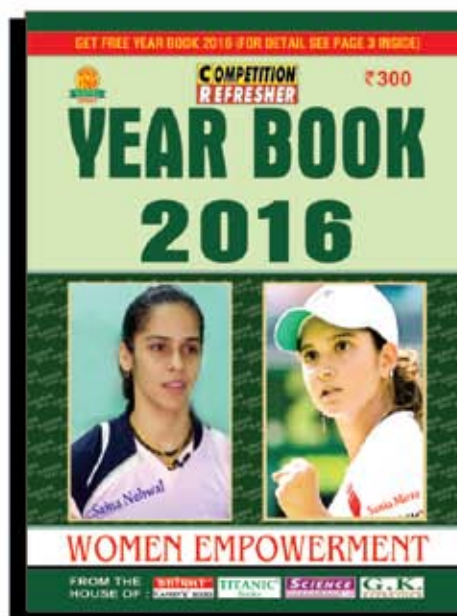
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PBD 2017

AN ENTIRELY NEW FORMAT...

We have been diligently in engagement with the Overseas Indian Affairs cell (Erstwhile MOIA) of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, about creating an interface within the confines of our magazine that would connect this important Diaspora cell within the MEA and our esteemed readers. This has borne fruit, and here you have the outcome – in the form of a regular monthly column, where the Secretary (Overseas Indian Affairs) of the MEA, presently Shri Dnyaneshwar Mulay, will respond to key policy issues and share with our readers whats in store the coming months. With this first installment, this space will also gradually take on the hues of a Q&A, or a forum to raise issues that need attention by the Ministry. Here goes ...

MINISTRY'S OUTCOME ANALYSIS OF BENGALURU PBD 2017

PBD 2017 saw an entirely new format getting introduced, to rekindle interest of Pravasis in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and make it an event that attempts to redefine the government's relationship with the Diaspora. In this new format, session themes were thought out very carefully after a thorough homework that took up almost the entire 2016 year, wherein 10 brainstorming sessions were held under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister. These sessions touched upon all the major aspects of India's relations with the Diaspora and vice-versa. Action Taken Reports (ATRs) on these sessions were presented by MEA officials and experts in the PBD. This was followed by unprecedented participation of audiences in 13 different sessions. The outcome is being compiled for Ministry's assessment as well as determin-

ing further policy approaches.

THOUGHTS ON PARTICIPATION – ESPECIALLY DIASPORA FROM ACROSS THE WORLD

PBD 2017 has seen the largest participation ever, when compared to all earlier editions. We had a total of 7212 registrations representing 72 countries and almost all the regions of the world.

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

Over half the registrations came from six countries in West Asia and the Arabian Gulf. Apart from West Asia and GCC countries, quite a large participation came from the USA and Malaysia. Countries from Asia and Europe comprised over two-thirds of the entire registrations.

DOMESTIC PARTICIPATION – FROM VARIOUS STATES OF INDIA

We had made considerable efforts to



reach out to the States/UTs at three levels. First, we invited all CMs to participate in the Chief Ministers' Session. Second, we wrote to the State/UT Governments to make their presence felt at the Exhibition specially designed with specific themes for the PBD. Third, we requested the State/UT Governments to encourage participation of their respective overseas Diaspora in the PBD. Response was quite impressive, particularly for participation in the Exhibition. Several Chief Ministers and officials participated in the PBD. Karnataka being the partner State had the highest numbers



to cover all the dimensions of our relationship with the Diaspora. However, an event of such magnitude could and should always be improved. We have assessed PBD 2017 and feel that we could improve future editions to make the PBD more content-rich and representative of this unique partnership. For example, we shall make more efforts to garner increased participation from Oceania, Africa and Eastern Europe. Similarly, we could also innovate for attracting participation of the North Eastern States so that the Diaspora from these regions also can join in good numbers.

ANY OTHER HIGHLIGHTS?

This PBD has made a mark and has paved the way for redefining and strengthening our connectivity and partnership with overseas Indians. The message of Hon'ble External Affairs Minister that India cares for the welfare and security of overseas Indians has reached every nook and corner of the globe. Overseas Indians felt a heightened sense of welcome in India. Above all, within India, there is a new awakening about the significance of our Diaspora to India's future development. 

NRI Achievers Bureau

in registration. Besides Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu accounted for a significant number of registrations. Delhi too was represented through large numbers.

DIGNITARY PARTICIPATION?

Several Cabinet Ministers from the Centre and States participated in the PBD 2017. From overseas, we had Dr. Antonio Costa, Prime Minister of Portugal, Mr. Michael Ashwin Adhin, Vice-President of Suriname and Ministerial delegates from Malaysia and Mauritius. The highlight of course was the presence of our

own Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble President. Both the Rashtrapati and the Pradhan Mantri, in their address had touched upon several aspects of our connectivity as well as measures taken by India to strengthen partnerships with overseas Indians. Hon'ble Prime Minister made a number of announcements, including extension of date for conversion of PIO cards to OCI cards.

SHORTCOMINGS?

I would not call these shortcomings since we had made every effort

DIASPORA ACHIEVERS

PRAVASI BHARATIYA SAMMAN AWARDEES

On the final day of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2017 at Bengaluru, the closing session was graced by the honorable President of India Shri Pranab Mukerjee, during which he felicitated several people of Indian origin for their contributions to society, science and human advancement. The NRI Achievers team will bring you vignettes of these unique personalities and their work in this issue and in forthcoming editions as well. We present here the first of such vignettes our editorial team has put together ...



DR. CARANI BALARAMAN SANJEEVI

Professor Carani Balaraman Sanjeevi has been awarded the PBSA by the President of India in the field of medicine, hospital & health care. A professor at the Karolinska Institute, Dr. Sanjeevi heads a research group on "Diabetes Immunology" at the Center for Molecular Medicine in Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden. Professor Sanjeevi is also a Senior Advisor to the Innovation office

of the Karolinska Institute. His research focuses on developing novel biomarkers for early identification of auto-immune diabetes as maternal-foetal interaction in the etiology of type 1 diabetes. Professor Sanjeevi has been a member of the Scientific and Medical Advisory Board since 2015.

Dr. Carani Sanjeevi is an eminent doctor of medicine and a highly qualified medical specialist who has been able to combine his professional responsibilities as medical practitioner with research and advancement of knowledge in the field of his specialization, i.e., the study of Diabetes. In the year 2013, he was selected as a member of the Nobel Prize Committee for Medicine and Physiology. Dr. Sanjeevi has been a Senior Adviser in Life Sciences at the Invest in Sweden Agency (belonging to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Sweden) which promotes Swedish investment abroad and in this capacity, he has consistently tried to foster connections between Swedish and Indian companies in the Health and Life Services sector. He has been instrumental in arranging agreements between the Department of Biotechnology in the Indian Ministry of Science & Technology and the Centre for Molecular Medicine in Karolinska Institute. He has also played a very helpful role in the efforts to promote Ayurveda and Yoga in Sweden.

DR. LAEL ANSON E. BEST

Israel's Dr. Lael Anson E. Best, another recipient of the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2017, was felicitated for his services

in the field of Medical Sciences as well. The professor, a cardiotoracic surgeon, completed both his Bachelor's in Medicine and his Master's in Surgery from the University of Gujarat, India, before immigrating to Israel in 1979.

Dr. Lael Anson E. Best is a highly accomplished thoracic surgeon, who is currently a Consultant at the Rambam Medical Centre – among the best medical institutions of Israel. During his career, he became a Fellow of the International College of Surgeons, a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians, Fellow of the American College of Surgery, Fellow of Cardiot-horacic Surgery and, significantly, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He has won several outstanding awards of excellence from the Prime Minister, the President and Ministry of Health of Israel. In 2011, India's then External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid, presented Dr. Best with the Indian Empire Magazine's award for excellence in medical sciences among the Indian Diaspora. Dr. Best has a remarkable research and academic track record. He received an Outstanding Lecturer Award more than once from the Technion Faculty of Medicine in Haifa, Israel. He has published two theses during his career and has 7 basic research publications and 28 clinical descriptive research publications to his credit. Twenty-five of his case reports have found their way into leading medical journals. He is among very few Israelis of Indian origin who have created a strong impact on Israeli society.



NAZEER AHAMED MOHAMED ZACKIRIAH

Nazeer Zackiriah, a permanent resident of the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam, is an Indian-origin entrepreneur who has contributed to the strengthening of links between India, Brunei and the Indian community of Brunei. He has actively supported Indian Government initiatives and events and has ensured meaningful interactions with local and Indian entrepreneurs for visiting Indian delegations. He has enhanced local respect for the Indian community in



Brunei through his active charitable endeavours, both in his individual capacity and as the President of the Indian Chamber of Commerce of Brunei. By virtue of the recognition that he has obtained from His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei for these charitable and community-building efforts,

he has been instrumental in raising the prestige and profile of the Indian community in Brunei as well.

Nazeer Ahamed has achieved notable success in the textile retail sector in Brunei. From humble beginnings, through hard work and acumen, he has built up the largest chain of textile stores of Brunei, which is now providing significant employment and promoting trade. He has contributed towards strengthening the link between the Indian community and Bruneians by organizing the active participation of the Indian community in Bruneian national events like the National Day of Brunei and the Birthday Celebrations of His Majesty the Sultan.


NISHA DESAI BISWAL

Nisha Desai Biswal has served as an Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs with the Obama Administration of the United States, and is among the six other Indian American recipients of the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2017. She helmed the United States' foreign policies and external affairs in India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh and other countries in central Asia. Previous President Barack Obama had on 18th July, 2013 nominated her to head his South Asia bureau in the US state department. Desai was the first person of Indian or even South Asian origin to head the bureau, which oversees US foreign policy and relations with India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives and Bhutan. She was also the assistant administrator with USAID, which too was headed by an Indian-American, Rajiv Shah.

Nisha, a graduate of the University of Virginia, began her professional career in Washington DC with the American Red Cross in the mid-90s before joining USAID. As a Hill staffer with the US House of Representatives; 'International Relations Committee' from 1999 to 2002, she worked extensively with diplomats from the region before going in for another stint with the NGO InterAction. From 2005 to 2010 she was the Majority Clerk for the State Department and Foreign Operations Subcommittee on the

Committee on Appropriations in the US, a crucial position close to the purse strings of American foreign aid. Nisha Desai Biswal explains the secret of friendship with PM Narendra Modi that has often puzzled pundits in both countries. Biswal, 48, a person of Indian origin, said in her acceptance speech after getting the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman from President Pranab Mukherjee at the valedictory event of the three-day Pravasi Bharat in Bengaluru: "Seeds for the chemistry between Barack Obama and Narendra Modi were sown much earlier. Obama had the cultural influences of his Indian-origin roommate in college, while Modi, as a young boy, travelled across the towns and cities of the USA. It led to a truly global partnership. Modi has visited the US twice since he became PM and was given a warm welcome by Obama in the White House on both occasions. Obama also honoured Modi's invitation and participated in the Republic Day parade in New Delhi in January 2015.

Biswal, speaking on behalf of 30 awardees of very diverse backgrounds that included one PM, four MPs and people working in community service, medicine, arts and culture and business, also outlined her own efforts at improving the India-US relationship during the Obama administration. "I have sought to deepen the ties. I have kept the interests of my country, US and also worked for India. The wonderful thing is that the interests of two countries converge. Both believe in freedom, democracy, tolerance and pluralism. In the laws that govern our countries, etched in our very souls." She said Diwali is celebrated in every state in the US as well as the White House, while new Green Card holders could put the stamp representing this festival on their cards. "It has become part of the cultural life and of the rich American tapestry.

The story of the Indian immigrants is the story of America itself – independent, industrious and ambitious. Top companies like Google, Microsoft, Pepsi now have Indian American CEO's. She added. PM Antonio Luis Santos da Costa of Portugal, Priti Patel and Neena Gill of UK, Winston Chandarbhan Dookeran of Trinidad and Tobago, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth of Mauritius, were also recipients of the award. President Mukherjee echoed the pluralism mantra that Biswal spoke of and exhorted NRIs and PIOs to be emissaries of the Indian growth story. 



NRI Achievers Bureau

INSTITUTIONAL ACHIEVERS

PRAVASI BHARATIYA SAMMAN AWARDEES

Towards the closing of the biennial mega diaspora event organised by the Indian government as part of its diaspora outreach – the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2017 – a galaxy of achievers who have contributed in no small measure to the prestige and dignity of the Indian Diaspora community worldwide were honoured with the highest award instituted by the Indian government for the 'Pravasis' - or the Diaspora, the 'Pravasi Bharatiya Samman' awards. Amongst the pathbreaking individuals who were felicitated with the bestowal of this award were some institutions as well – essentially Indian Diaspora Collectives – who have proven to be a boon to community members. We feature them in this piece for your reading pleasure ...

THE ANTWERP INDIAN ASSOCIATION, BELGIUM

President Pranab Mukerjee awarded the Antwerp Indian Association, a diaspora community collective based out of the Belgian capital, with the 2017 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman for excellence in the field of community service. The AIA was formed in 1979, and the first members of the Association were diamond traders. The Antwerp Indian Association comprises of influential mem-



bers of the Indian Community in Belgium who play an important role in the activities of the local Government both in Antwerp and in the rest of Belgium. Members of the Association have made a name for themselves in the economy and within the local Belgian Communities. This has in fact enabled them to act as a bridge integrating interests of the Indian Community in Belgium with local interests. Several members of the Association have liaised effectively with the local Belgian community and authorities to promote

welfare related interests of Indians in Belgium. The Association has facilitated formula-

tion of the 'collective' opinion of the large Indian Community by first bringing the entire community under its ambit, and then by providing effective leadership that is emphatic to the cause of India and Indians in Belgium. It has ably assisted in promoting a spirit of unity and harmony amongst Indians in Belgium as well as enhancing friendship and engagement with the local Belgian Community. The Association has also been involved with social and humanitarian causes in India and abroad, in philanthropic and charitable work, and in promoting outstanding contributions that have enhanced India's prestige in the country of residence.



SINGAPORE INDIA ASSOCIATION

One of Singapore's oldest sporting clubs for Indians has been conferred with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award during PBD 2017. The Singapore Indian Association, aka IA, formed in 1923, has a hoary past. Its foundation stone was laid by India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on the 17th of June, 1950. Jawed Ashraf, the High Commissioner of India to





INDIA SOCIAL & CULTURAL CENTRE, ABU DHABI

Another Indian Diaspora Institution that was felicitated with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award by the President of India was the India Social & Cultural Centre, at Abu Dhabi. Also for its contribution in the domain of Community Services. The ISC Abu Dhabi is a premier socio-cultural organisation and the apex body of the registered Indian associations in the capital city of Abu Dhabi. The genesis of ISC may be traced to the Unity Club that took shape in 1967 from the shared vision of a band of pioneering Indians to create a centre for social

and cultural activities, and a link to the cultural roots and memories of their homeland. With the benevolence and magnanimity of His Highness



Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the father of the UAE, the Unity Club was metamorphosed into the India Social and Cultural Centre, an institution with a brand new identity, intent on serving the Indian community. Located in Abu Dhabi, the emerging land of opportunities, ISC has grown from strength to strength and has today become a home away from home for the Indian Diaspora, serving as a venue for members and their families for a wide range of social, cultural, literary, educational and recreational activities.



Singapore, during his visit to the Club recently, said: "When I look at the history of the Singapore Indian Association, and the work it has done here and the work it continues to do, its contribution cannot simply be measured by the award ...". Ashraf also spoke about the club's illustrious sporting history in cricket, hockey, football and other sports. The PBSA recognises significant contributions in various fields, such as creating

better understanding of India abroad, support for India's causes and concerns in a tangible way, and building closer links between India, the overseas Indian community and their country of residence. The recognition is also for contributions to social and humanitarian causes in India or abroad, welfare of the local Indian community, philanthropic and charitable work, eminence in one's field or outstanding work which has enhanced India's prestige in the country of residence or eminence in skills that have enhanced India's prestige in that country for non-professional workers. Singapore has 9.2 percent Indians in its population of 5.78 million, more than 6,000-registered businesses across various economic sectors and a strong expatriate community of professionals and blue-colour workers who call Singapore their home away from India. 🇮🇳

NRI Achievers Bureau

FINDING SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

JYOTI MATHUR FILIPP

Jyoti Mathur-Filipp is a Senior Communications and Outreach Officer for the Division of the Global Environment Facility in the United Nations in Geneva. Jyoti's career has been devoted to finding solutions for better management of our environment, raising awareness and practicing advocacy on issues directly related to the importance of sustainable development. The writer caught up with her during her recent sojourn here in Delhi, to talk to her about various facets of sustainable development, and other issues close to her heart. Excerpts ...

Before jumping into the interview, let us profile Jyoti here in an introductory paragraph. Jyoti's career started with an UNDP assignment in 1993, where she began work as a Programme Officer with the Global Environment Facility, initially working for the Regional Bureau for Asia Pacific and later for the Regional Bureau for CEE countries. She then switched to the UNDP Capacity 21 programme as an information Officer, where she focused on developing resources for countries to use for developing and implementing their national Agenda 21 programmes. She has also worked with the first private-public partnership between an UN organization and the private sector, Netaid (UNDP and Cisco), to promote awareness of poverty-related issues among the public. She has been a Project Manager for the 139-country UNEP-GEF project 'Building Capacity for Effective Participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH)' in Geneva. The Biosafety Clearing-House, apropos, is a tool for implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Prior to joining UNEP, Jyoti had worked at the

Photos: Rajeev Tyagi

Secretariat of the 'United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)' and had assisted with capacity-building. At the secretariat, she had also developed a library of capacity-building tools, guidelines and applications to assist countries in fulfilling their mandates. Jyoti holds an Advanced Degree in Urban Policy, Management and Planning from the New School for Social Research in New York as well as a Masters in Business Administration from the City University of New York.

Please throw some light on your journey from India to the UN Office in Geneva. Do add a few milestone memorable childhood experiences.

The most important memory of my childhood is the iconic role of my mother, who after the death of my dad played the role of both father and mother and motivated me to be more educated, strongly independent, highly skilled, considerably empowered and widely open to global exposure. After becoming a widow, she gave dignity to her existence and joined Air India to support us with more confidence. I recalled my school days when I participated in drama, in artistic and cultural pursuits, and was actively involved in tennis, horse riding, swimming and physical fitness. Finally I found my position in UNDP, empowered by the life I had lived since childhood.

How do you see the emerging space of women's empowerment in the socio-economic landscape of India?

Women are extremely strong in India, but the problem is that Indian women are too mixed up with so many centuries. They are following certain traditions, customs and practices which date back to old centuries. Indian women have a multitude of attitudes, mixed behaviour patterns, contrasting sociological backdrops and varied cultural ethos. They should shed their old skins to become more forward looking. It is very difficult to segregate Indian women because their behaviour is full of contrast in rural and urban India. Even within urban India, patterns are strikingly different in highly affluent

metro pockets in comparison to middle class segment of metro pockets. The picture is quite the reverse in tier 'B' and 'C' cities and small towns, with lack of infrastructural, educational and other positive indicators of developed urban landscapes. But the situation is improving gradually. Electronic media and film have played a vital role in bringing Indian women of all classes onto one platform and have made them more aspirational with a true unity of oneness.

What are the marked attitudinal and behavioural perspectives that you would like to suggest to inspire thought process of women of rural and urban India?

No single formula is applicable to all

MY WORK IS MY HOBBY. I CONCENTRATE ON THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND ALTERNATIVE WAY OF LIFE WITH NATURE. FORESTS SHOULD NOT BE CUT AND SHOULD BE KEPT WITH OUR LIFESTYLE. IF WE TRY TO SAVE THE FOREST, WE SAVE THE FUTURE OF THE HUMANITY.

because journey of every individual is different and life cycles are driven by different backgrounds. I can't be a motivating model for all women. So many NGO's, social activists and successful women are playing a dominant role to influence the thought process of the women. But the most important key factor is what the perspective of individual women is, and whether they are ready to receive signals of motivations from their surroundings. ***How do you see the eco-system of creativity and design thinking in the educational domain of India for a more assertive role for women?***

The syllabus of any class in schools and colleges are defined and structured, but ultimately students are independent to choose their career on the basis of their

thinking and attitude. There are gender divisions of professions in India. For example, carpentry is dominated by men and stitching/knitting is dominated by women. Women should have equal opportunity, access and awareness to develop an ecosystem of design thinking in professional life.

Traditional family ties are fading away and nuclear families are gaining popularity day by day. Viewed from this point of view, how do you see that loss of emotional space of family life?

It is true that the emotional space of family life is fading away in modern society and the harshness of human nature is evident on streets and in the public domain. We have become less tolerant. All are in great haste to be unduly expressive and no one wants to listen. In this digital age of a presenceless, cashless and paperless era, artificial intelligence and the internet of things is a poor substitute for emotions like love, empathy, sympathy and care for others.

How do you see the symbiotic relation between Indian Diaspora and their motherland?

Honestly it's very difficult to answer because my relations with Indian Diaspora across the globe are very limited on account of my professional commitments. The presence of Indian Diaspora is highly heterogeneous and widespread in nature. But my study in New York and association with my sister's family in USA has given me a strong conviction that Indian Diaspora respect their family ties and are full of emotional stability. Overseas Indians have retained 'Indianess' in their life in host/adopted countries outside India.

Which part of Indian Culture is close to your heart and compels you to revisit it again and again?

I basically hail from Delhi and I find my heart close to Delhi with all my extended family here. The colours of emotions are very vibrant in Delhi and we visit all the cultural nerve centres of Delhi to watch drama, music & food festivals.

What is the secret of your life skill for

building a balance between professional life and family life with multiple responsibilities to actualize your different 'selves'?

My work is my hobby. I concentrate on the field of environment, forest and alternative way of life with Nature. Forests should not be cut and should be kept with our lifestyle. If we try to save the forest, we save the future of the humanity. My life partner gives me a lot of autonomy of space for life skilling and productive thinking. We support each other without any interference.

During the course of your journey of life, you must have had quite a few potential mind changing experiences that impacted your way of thinking. Do share these experiences if any with our readers.

After the early death of my father, my mother took on and played the roles of father, tutor, mentor and motivator. Her multitasking left an indelible imprint on my mind. She inspired me to persevere more for achieving success in life. My Mom ensured that our mind should not lose its mental edge to remain fit in the race for excellence. She used to say that your attitude decides your altitude in life.

India is truly continental in character with a lot of local cultural heritage, history, ecology, economy, dialects, food and other forms of pluralism. How do you capture the essence of India out of so many contrasts and variations?

India is a beautiful country and has been always viewed as a colourful land of diverse cultures and traditions. I believe we have always been empowered by our rich heritage. I visited Haridwar recently and could see plenty of cars and people throughout my journey which gives us the reflection of diverse cultural and real essence of India. The emotive colours of love, happiness, celebration, sacrifice for others, community life and taking rent-free accommodation in the hearts of others is not merely amazing but touching too in this predominantly self-seeking time and clime, where the mind is eclipsed by matter and technology. Each and every

part of India has a different story, narrative, script, location, character and unique moments to treasure in memory. Its always fascinating to witness new phases of India in countless fields. The magnitude of the country with cultural diversity is multi-dimensional and one life is not enough to fathom it.

What are the hobbies that occupy your leisure space and heal your fatigue for more fulfilling experiences?

I love to read and do a lot of exercise to retain physical fitness. I never miss out on my gym sessions even during my tours. I like to travel and explore different places which quench my thirst for knowing things in a better way. I feel when our mind is clear we can focus more on work. I like to detach from my work and work space to recharge my internal resources and 'dial to oneself' for internal harmonisation.

It is said that life is a journey and not a destination. So isn't it futile to sensitise our lives with so many agendas and expectations?

Yes, it is indeed contradictory as we cannot live without agendas and expectations that keep on changing as we take different courses in our lives. But we should always be a traveller during jour-

neys of life cycles to derive inspirations from all directions and to get a new perspective of life. Motto of momentum matters a lot during our journey to counter inertia of inaction.

Do you believe in the dynamics of destiny?

Yes, I believe in destiny. Destiny smiles on those who are steadfast travellers on the road of life and are always keen to actualize their potential and explore new opportunities of fate. After the premature death of my Dad, my mother tried to empower me through education and I was inspired to go to New York for doing my Masters, joined the United Nations in Geneva and got married to Robert Filipp there. It was sheer luck that my thesis on 'Global Environment facility' opened up my career in UN.

What is your overall reading of India as a powerful emerging economy of the world?

No doubt India is the fastest emerging economy of the world today. But India is not taking a full step forward. India should engage herself more comprehensively on the economic front, keeping in view our huge human resource, abundant natural resources and our vibrant democracy.

Do you think that gender sensitisation deserves more priority and practice in India to give voice and recognition to women?

Gender sensitisation is still a priority area for women in India to create more opportunities for their parity, progression, access, opportunity-creation and participation in decision making process. There is still a bias against women not only in developing but developed countries as well. Very few educated women are able to go on to top positions in governance and mostly remain confined to middle management positions. Inclusive and equitable quality education is the real change-agent that can make women game changers in society to promote lifelong stable opportunities. Elimination of gender disparities in education deserves more attention. 📌



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THE GREAT INDIAN DIASPORA

THE WORLD IS OUR HOME

NRI'S, PIO'S & OCI'S – FACTS AND FIGURES

We have now been in print for more than four years, striving to be a bridge between India and its diaspora spread all across the world. While it did look easy in the beginning, it has over time dawned on us how tough that task we have set for ourselves is, given the spread and diversity of our diaspora. While what we present here could rightfully be categorised as 'trivia,' it is at the same time, a sobering fact to many of us – the Indian diaspora is indeed world girdling. Some nuggets of information about them are downright interesting. Here, let's take a look:

➤ Around 6 Crore 16 Lakh 80 Thousand 8 Hundred and 38 NRI's, PIO's & OCI's are settled all around the world.

➤ If we compare the Population of NRI's, PIO's & OCI's with the Population of India, they are just about 4.93%.

➤ 28.9% of our Diaspora are PIOs, which is more than NRIs at 21.1%. But if we look at presence, NRIs are present in maximum

countries around the world whereas PIOs and OCI's are mostly in countries with maximum overseas Indian populations (50%).

➤ South Africa is the only country where NRI's, PIO's & OCI's are in major figures with around 3.6 Cr., while for U.S.A the figure is approx. 89.2 Lakh and the least figure of around 61.6 Lakh is in Saudi Arabia.

As on December 2016

POPULATION OF OVERSEAS INDIANS

Sl. No.	Country	Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) (2016)	Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) (2016)	Overseas Indians (2016)
1	Afghanistan	2,960	9	2,969
2	Albania	50	-	50
3	Algeria	3,770	17	3,787
4	Andorra	160	0	160
5	Angola	1,500	2,500	4,000
6	Anguilla	15	5	20
7	Antigua & Barbuda	250	300	550
8	Argentina	600	1,800	2,400
9	Armenia	1,465	23	1,488
10	Aruba	-	1,000	1,000
11	Australia	241,000	255,000	496,000
12	Austria and Montenegro	15,500	4,500	20,000
13	Azerbaijan	1,694	83	1,777
14	Bahamas	300	100	400
15	Bahrain	312,918	3,257	316,175
16	Bangladesh	10,385	6	10,391
17	Barbados	100	2,114	2,214
18	Belarus	280	60	340
19	Belgium	10,651	8,000	18,651
20	Belize	200	1,300	1,500
21	Benin	1,563	0	1,563
22	Bhutan	60,000	0	60,000
23	Bolivia	50	10	60
24	Bonaire & Smaller Islands	-	200	200
25	Bosnia & Herzegovina	23	1	24
26	Botswana	9,000	3,000	12,000
27	Brazil	832	393	1,225
28	British Virgin Islands	75	3	78
29	Brunei Darussalam	11,500	98	11,598
30	Bulgaria	100	62	162
31	Burkina Faso	200	5	205
32	Burundi	465	35	500
33	Cambodia	1,400	10	1,410
34	Cameroon	245	0	245
35	Canada	184,320	831,865	1,016,185

36	Cape Verde Islands	20	0	20
37	Cayman Islands	1,500	100	1,600
38	Central African Republic	10	0	10
39	Chad	120	0	120
40	Chile	1,400	1,300	2,700
41	China	55,500	520	56,020
42	China (Hong Kong)	45,000	6,430	51,430
43	China (Taiwan)	2,444	128	2,572
44	Colombia	112	106	218
45	Comoros	30	200	230
46	Congo (Dem. Rep. of)	9,000	25	9,025
47	Congo (Republic of)	350	8	358
48	Cook Island	5	200	205
49	Costa Rica	230	20	250
50	Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	1,500	0	1,500
51	Croatia	42	38	80
52	Cuba	500	200	700
53	Curacao	-	1,500	1,500
54	Cyprus	5,730	128	5,858
55	Czech Republic	1,800	600	2,400
56	Denmark	8,100	3,100	11,200
57	Djibouti	350	0	350
58	Dominica (Commonwealth of)	50	500	550
59	Dominican Republic	100	75	175
60	East Timor	70	0	70
61	Ecuador	43	47	90
62	Egypt	3,500	265	3,765
63	El Salvador	3	3	6
64	Equatorial Guinea	250	0	250
65	Eritrea	1,000	3	1,003
66	Estonia	450	50	500
67	Ethiopia	5,250	23	5,273
68	Fiji	1,000	313,798	314,798
69	Finland	5,500	1,500	7,000
70	France	19,000	90,000	109,000
71	France (Reunion Island)	250	280,000	280,250
72	France (Guadeloupe, St. Martinique, Mayotte)	420	66,800	67,220
73	Gabon	100	10	110
74	Gambia	600	15	615
75	Georgia	3,228	8	3,236
76	Germany	76,093	67,029	143,122
77	Ghana	10,000	0	10,000
78	Greece	12,319	181	12,500
79	Grenada	200	5,000	5,200
80	Guatemala	84	33	117
81	Guinea (Republic of)	700	0	700
82	Guinea Bissau	100	3	103
83	Guyana	300	297,493	297,793
84	Haiti	580	0	580
85	Holy See	NA	0	0
86	Honduras	13	2	15
87	Hungary	902	98	1,000
88	Iceland	225	80	305
89	Indonesia	7,500	100,000	107,500
90	Iran	4,000	190	4,190
91	Iraq	10,000	0	10,000
92	Ireland	17,000	9,000	26,000

93	Israel	12,467	85,000	97,467
94	Italy	172,301	25,000	197,301
95	Jamaica	4,000	70,000	74,000
96	Japan	28,047	670	28,717
97	Jordan	11,000	82	11,082
98	Kazakhstan	5,500	250	5,750
99	Kenya	20,000	60,000	80,000
100	Kiribati	-	50	50
101	Korea (DPR)	12	0	12
102	Korea (Republic of)	10,869	310	11,179
103	Kuwait	921,666	1,594	923,260
104	Kyrgyzstan	4,786	28	4,814
105	Laos, PDR	425	75	500
106	Latvia	604	20	624
107	Lebanon	8,000	30	8,030
108	Lesotho (Kingdom of)	500	1,000	1,500
109	Liberia	3,000	0	3,000
110	Libya	1,500	2	1,502
111	Liechtenstein (Principality of)	5	5	10
112	Lithuania	250	50	300
113	Luxembourg	500	500	1,000
114	Macedonia	10	5	15
115	Madagascar	2,500	15,000	17,500
116	Malaysia	244,274	2,742,000	2,986,274
117	Malawi	2,500	8,000	10,500
118	Maldives	25,000	108	25,108
119	Mali	212	0	212
120	Malta	300	65	365
121	Marshall Islands (Republic of)	14	1	15
122	Mauritania	200	0	200
123	Mauritius	10,500	884,000	894,500
124	Mexico	1,750	250	2,000
125	Micronesia	1	0	1
126	Moldova	190	10	200
127	Monaco	30	40	70
128	Mongolia	150	5	155
129	Montserrat	40	200	240
130	Morocco	300	20	320
131	Mozambique	1,500	20,000	21,500
132	Myanmar	8,337	2,000,000	2,008,337
133	Namibia	200	59	259
134	Nauru	6	0	6
135	Nepal	600,000	0	600,000
136	Netherlands	25,000	200,000	225,000
137	Netherlands Antilles	-	2,700	2,700
138	New Zealand	75,000	125,000	200,000
139	Nicaragua	6	6	12
140	Niger	150	0	150
141	Nigeria	40,000	35	40,035
142	Norway	7,718	12,300	20,018
143	Oman	795,082	919	796,001
144	Pakistan	0	0	0
145	Palau (Republic of)	15	0	15
146	Palestine (PLO)	65	0	65
147	Panama	4,000	9,000	13,000
148	Papua New Guinea	1,400	100	1,500
149	Paraguay	200	400	600
150	Peru	400	50	450
151	Philippines	100,000	15,000	115,000

152	Poland	4,000	600	4,600
153	Portugal	6,935	65,000	71,935
154	Qatar	600,000	Nil	600,000
155	Romania	500	210	710
156	Russian Federation	28,610	1,950	30,560
157	Rwanda	2,940	60	3,000
158	Samoa	40	30	70
159	San Marino	NA	0	0
160	Sao Tome and Principe (Rep. of)	50	0	50
161	Saudi Arabia	3,050,000	3,567	3,053,567
162	Senegal	380	31	411
163	Serbia	46	6	52
164	Seychelles	4,000	6,000	10,000
165	Sierra Leone	900	50	950
166	Singapore	350,000	300,000	650,000
167	Slovak Republic	130	50	180
168	Slovenia	80	50	130
169	Solomon Islands	20	0	20
170	Somalia	100	0	100
171	South Africa	60,000	1,500,000	1,560,000
172	Spain	35,308	20,000	55,308
173	Sri Lanka	14,000	1,600,000	1,614,000
174	St. Kitts and Nevis	250	500	750
175	St. Lucia	250	5,005	5,255
176	St. Martin	-	5,300	5,300
177	St. Vincent & the Grenadines	50	3,000	3,050
178	Sudan	3,400	100	3,500
179	South Sudan	500	Nil	500
180	Suriname	150	154,321	154,471
181	Swaziland	500	500	1,000
182	Sweden	12,500	9,000	21,500
183	Switzerland	13,295	6,738	20,033
184	Syria	107	0	107
185	Tajikistan	590	20	610
186	Tanzania	10,000	50,000	60,000
187	Thailand	20,000	175,000	195,000
188	Togo	500	10	510
189	Tonga	6	40	46
190	Trinidad & Tobago	1,800	555,000	556,800
191	Tunisia	121	11	132
192	Turkey	847	64	911
193	Turkmenistan	309	-	309
194	Turks & Caicos Islands	200	35	235
195	Tuvalu	-	50	50
196	Uganda	23,500	6,500	30,000
197	Ukraine	5,737	317	6,054
198	UAE	2,800,000	3,751	2,803,751
199	UK	325,000	1,500,000	1,825,000
200	USA	1,280,000	3,180,000	4,460,000
201	Uruguay	500	30	530
202	Uzbekistan	650	47	697
203	Vanuatu	10	800	810
204	Venezuela	75	40	115
205	Vietnam	2,600	2,120	4,720
206	Yemen	400	10,000	10,400
207	Zambia	5,000	18,000	23,000
208	Zimbabwe	500	9,000	9,500
	TOTAL	13,008,012	17,835,407	30,843,419

Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

THE REAL ESTATE ROLLER COASTER REVIEWING 2016 & LOOKING FORWARD TO 2017

The real estate sector that had faced some really turbulent times this year, is now left staring at another challenging year ahead, following the disruptions caused by the government ushering in reforms like the Real Estate Regulation Act (RERA) and demonetisation. But all this may in the end augur quite well for real estate in coming times, for amidst all this prevailing uncertainty, the new year may well see the Indian realty sector firmly getting on to a path of transformation and consolidation, and moving towards more stability and some healthy growth. An NRI Achievers' report ...



The year 2016 had actually started on a promising note for real estate, as the sector had experienced a smooth start. But much against the the expected revival, some subsectors – especially residential real estate – faced headwinds in terms of weak demand and muted sales in the backdrop of large scale delivery defaults, developer-buyer face offs, unaffordable prices and high interest rates. The introduction of RERA stoked the fires further by adding further confusion to the prevailing chaos and finally towards the end of the year, demonetisation badly hit the struggling sector, with the year coming to a really painful and bumpy end.

It had proved to be a really gloomy year for the housing market. The ever-widening trust-deficit between developers and

home-buyers added to the woes of residential real estate, especially because a rather large number of developers ended up not delivering their homes on time. The top seven cities in the country have over 1.5 million units delayed between 14-30 months, with one fourth of them in NCR. And due to this lack of trust on the buyers' side, home-selling became extremely difficult. Even those who did take a buying decision, preferred ready-to-move homes in order to secure their investment. By the end of Q1, 6.6 lakh units across top 8 cities remained unsold, with NCR topping with 2 lakh unsold units. Even the festive season couldn't be of much help, as demonetisation struck a body-blow even as sales had just started to pick up.

Demonetisation will adversely impact

those real estate developers who follow a business model with large cash components. Downward pressure on prices will be likely as these cash-strapped developers will be compelled to liquidate their inventories at discounted rates to generate cash flows. But on the other hand, demonetisation will, however, have a positive impact on home buyers – especially buyers of affordable homes who invest through home mortgage and do transactions through cheque. And going forward, demonetisation will bring in more transparency in real estate transactions and bridge the gap between primary and secondary market prices. While the residential sub-sector was floundering, commercial real estate in contrast saw healthy demand (26.4 msf by 3Q 2016), with a total yearly pan-India demand expected to touch 34.2 million




mark, driven by sectors such as manufacturing, logistics and FMCG. Gaining further strength, commercial realty is likely to see a higher demand of 38- 40 msf in 2017 – with cities like Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune driving the growth.

The theme song of the year was affordability, with affordable properties clearly dominating the property landscapes across cities. With developers increasingly taking to affordable housing in response to rising demand, about 59 percent projects were launched under this segment. Developers have also resorted to creating compact sized homes to make them more affordable. And considering that the residential real estate was still facing lot of stress, the government, in line with its 'Housing for All' mission, also put its entire focus on affordable housing, and

developers were incentivised by way of a 100 percent service tax waiver for affordable homes of sizes up to 30 sq mts in metros and 60 sq mts in non metros via the 2016 budget. But to promote timely delivery, the tax benefit was linked to completing construction within 3 years. There was a rebate of INR 50,000 per annum on housing loan interest for first-time home buyers in the affordable segment, with a loan amount not exceeding INR 35 lakh and property value not exceeding INR 50 lakh. Rental housing also got a boost with a HRA hike – up from INR 24,000 to INR 60,000.

There were many positives in the otherwise dull and difficult year. It was a watershed year in a sense that it was a year of reformed, regulated and reoriented realty. It was a year that provided a protective shield to home buyers by way of passing legislation like RERA, promising a transformed and transparent realty with fair transactions. The passing of Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act was also a positive move, a move towards simplifying the tax system and making it more predictable for investors. The year also saw the putting in place of disclosure norms for REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts), along with detailed norms for public issuance of REITs. The abolition of the 'Dividend Distribution Tax' paved the way for making REITs

financially viable for retail investors. In order to help the ailing construction sector tide over the crisis, reforms were introduced to speed up resolution of disputes and ensure that construction companies' investments do not get stuck in arbitration. Further, amendments to the 'Benami Transaction (Prohibition) Act' were made to introduce stringent rules and penalties for benami transactions – that is, transactions carried out in fictitious names. These initiatives, there is no gainsaying, will go a long way in regulating the sector and making it more attractive for investors.

Notwithstanding the multiple bumps faced in 2016, in the net, the positive measures have put the sector firmly on the path of long-term sustainable growth. Though 2017 may well start on a tepid note due to the massive demonetisation-remonetisation disruption, a tax-friendly budget coupled with rationalisation of property prices, lower home loan rates and implementation of RERA, GST and Benami Act, may improve demand and significantly push up sales, paving the way for a more organised, regulated, reliable and investor-friendly real estate. 

Vinod Behl

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CASH CLEANUP

HOW INDIA CAN COME OUT STRONGER

It has been several months now since Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared the so-far highest denominations of Indian currency invalid. I hope businesses and private individuals have largely recovered from the initial stress and difficulties during these past few months or so, but I am afraid a full recovery may take longer. Politically, in my view this was a risky move for the government fraught with many imponderable dangers, but I presume they were aware of that, and consciously took this step. One of the main and professed purposes of this measure was to curb counterfeit currency. I would humbly like to aver that the percentage of counterfeit notes in India is much higher than RBI's published estimate of about two hundred fifty in ten lakhs or 0.025 percent. Apparently fake banknotes are not being done by some dingy printers, but in proper mints outside India. Also apparently, just a few years ago, the same note presses that we commissioned to print our money also produced counterfeit Indian notes. These fake notes were so well done that sometimes even banks could not identify them as counterfeit.

Another well-advertised aspect of the measure was to address the black money problem, which I feel will be effective only to some extent. Maybe twenty-five to forty percent of the black money can be retrieved like that – the rest of them will find some other ways. Unfortunately, nearly fifty percent of the day-to-day business transactions in our country

have been and still are being conducted below the radar of the tax authorities so far. But on the plus-side, at least thirty to forty percent of our shadow economy will now become part of the official economy. Bringing these earnings on the radar will allow us to show our economic strength in the comity of nations, which is important. This means what used to be a two-and-a-quarter trillion dollar economy will suddenly become a three trillion dollar economy. It is indeed high time that we as a nation got our act together. We will all have to go through this temporary hardship to set India's economy on a more stable basis for it to blossom. This requires that our economic transactions are properly recorded and taxed.

Our country is incredibly old. And there have always been businesses in India. Right from the times of kings there were taxes. When the British came, they called the district administrators "Collectors." why so? Because their only work was to collect taxes – and not to render any service to the public. It is unfortunate that to this day, we have retained the same terminology. For generations, we have been thinking that if you avoid taxes, you are smart. This idea of giving a share of the money that you make to the government has still not sunk in. This is not out of criminal intent – people just have not internalised the concept of paying taxes to fund public services. They think the way to do their bit is to donate to a temple, the

poor, or to an orphanage. This is why until now, our nation has been just a geographic entity with different communities. And within their respective communities, people may help each other, but often times not beyond that.

There are people in our country who are sitting on thousands of crores of rupees. Because they think money is some kind of a commodity that they need to store. But money in essence is not a commodity – it is merely a transactional tool. And any transactional tool must be moving, rather than staying in one hand. Apart from that, many people in our country tend to think that it is all right to break the law. Mentally, we are still stuck in pre-independence times when breaking the law was heroic,






nationalist, and visionary. Mahatma Gandhi did it with great élan and expertise – rasta roko, hartal, bandh, and so on. For a long time, we were an occupied nation where the administration was against us. Consequently, those who broke the law were our heroes. This attitude and approach was necessary then, but it is time to understand that those days are long gone.

We are still in a mode where we essentially want a king. We want to eulogize a human being to such a level that he himself becomes an institution. If you look at public life today, it is amazing how people of a certain status and position in society can go on television and tell absolute lies in front of the camera. Even as they speak everyone knows it is

a lie, but still they get away with it. If someone is intentionally trying to mislead the public, they must be gone the next day. But out of their personal charisma, they have a large following, which enables them to say whatever they want without being called to account. We have to do away with such things if we want to move ahead.

We need to make everyone understand that the nation is not just a geographic area we live in – it is an institution. Within this institution, there are laws to be followed, there are contributions to be made, and there are benefits to be reaped. If we as citizens do not receive the benefits in the form of infrastructure, services etc., we have the right to demand them. We have the right to ask where our

money is going. Right now, we are neither contributing, nor are we demanding. This has not occurred to us so far. We never thought the government is responsible for providing services, nor that we are responsible for providing money for the government to function. If we want our nation to function effectively, we need everyone to contribute. And we need clear-cut laws that everyone must follow. Simplification of laws and bringing an unambiguous understanding of law to all citizens of the Nation is the need of the hour. 

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

The author is a prominent Indian spiritual leader, a self-realised yogi, mystic, seer and visionary. Prolific author, poet, and an internationally-acclaimed speaker. You can learn more @ isha.sadhguru.org.



सिर्फ नसीब के सहारे चलने पर बर्बादी तय है...

आचार्य चाणक्य एक ऐसी महान विभूति थे, जिन्होंने अपनी विद्वत्ता और क्षमताओं के बल पर भारतीय इतिहास की धारा को बदल दिया। मौर्य साम्राज्य के संस्थापक चाणक्य कुशल राजनीतिज्ञ, चतुर कूटनीतिज्ञ, प्रकांड अर्थशास्त्री के रूप में भी विश्वविख्यात हुए। इतनी सदियाँ गुजरने के बाद आज भी यदि चाणक्य द्वारा बताए गए सिद्धांत और नीतियाँ प्रासंगिक हैं तो मात्र इसलिए, कि उन्होंने अपने गहन अध्ययन, चिंतन और जीवानुभवों से अर्जित अमूल्य ज्ञान को, पूरी तरह निःस्वार्थ होकर मानवीय कल्याण के उद्देश्य से अभिव्यक्त किया। पेश है 17 अध्यायों वाली 'चाणक्य नीति' का तेरहवां अध्याय। हर अंक में हम एक अध्याय पर नजर डालते हैं।

यदि आदमी एक पल के लिए भी जीए तो भी उस पल को वह शुभ कर्म करने में खर्च करे। एक कल्प (4,320,000 * 1000 साल) तक जी कर कोई लाभ नहीं। दोनों लोक इस लोक और पर-लोक में तकलीफ होती है।

A man may live but for a moment, but that moment ought to be spent in doing auspicious deeds. It is useless living even for a kalpa (4,320,000 * 1000 years) and bringing only distress upon the two worlds (this world and the next).

हम उसके लिए ना पछताएं जो बीत गया। हम भविष्य की चिंता भी ना करें। विवेक बुद्धि रखने वाले लोग केवल वर्तमान में जीते हैं।

We should not fret for what is past, nor should we be anxious about the future – men of discernment deal but with the present moment.

यह देवताओं का, संत जनों का और पालकों का स्वभाव है कि वे जल्दी प्रसन्न हो जाते हैं। निकट के और दूर के रिश्तेदार तब प्रसन्न होते हैं जब उनका आदर सम्मान किया जाए, उनके नहाने का, खाने पीने का प्रबंध किया जाए, पंडित जन जब उन्हें अध्यात्मिक सन्देश का मौका दिया जाता है तो प्रसन्न होते हैं।

It certainly is the nature of demigods, men of good character, and parents to be easily pleased. Near and distant relatives are pleased when they are hospitably received with provision of bathing, food and drink; and pundits are pleased with an opportunity for giving spiritual discourse.

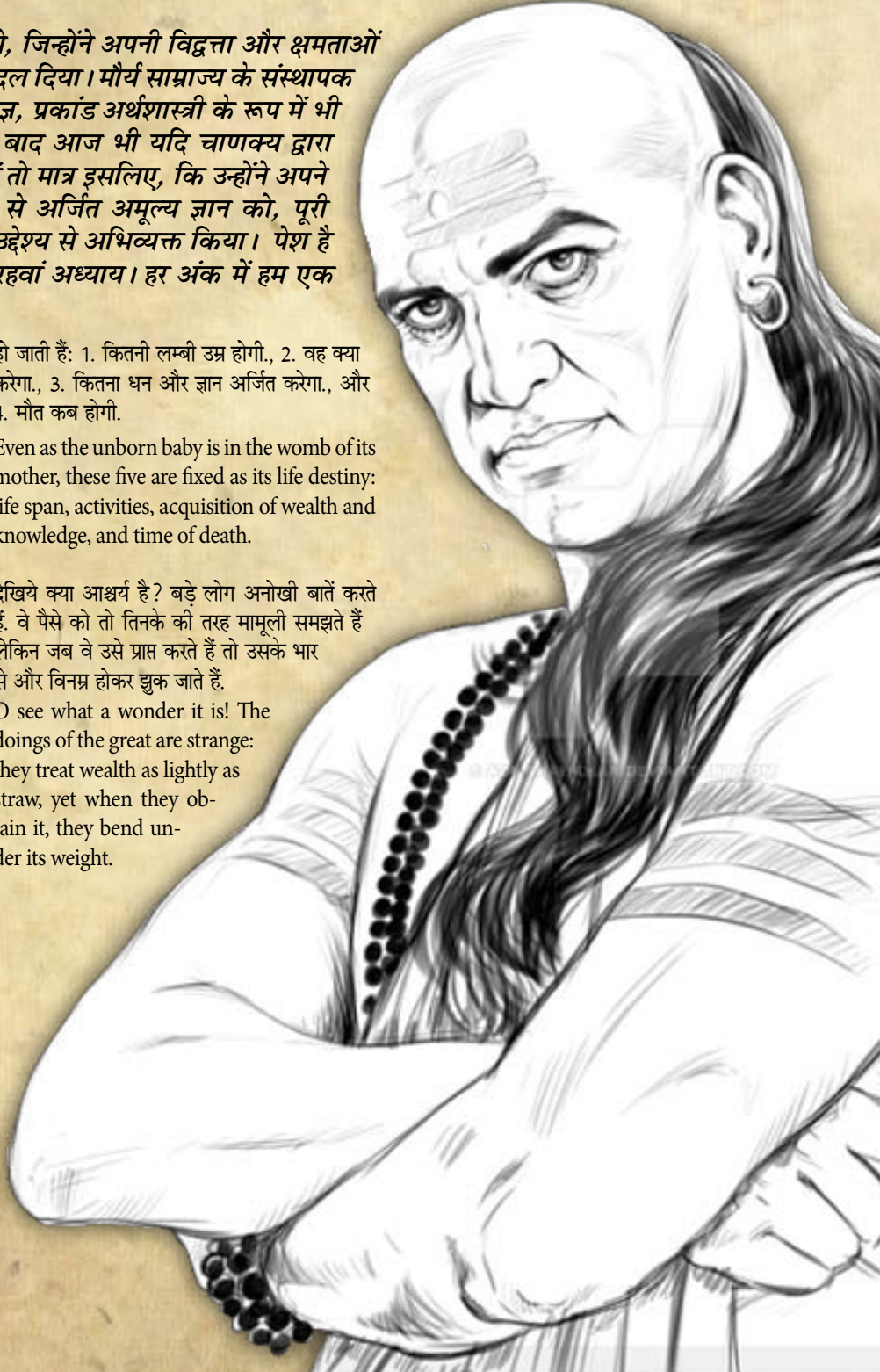
जब बच्चा माँ के गर्भ में होता है तो यह पांच बातें तय

हो जाती हैं: 1. कितनी लम्बी उम्र होगी., 2. वह क्या करेगा., 3. कितना धन और ज्ञान अर्जित करेगा., और 4. मौत कब होगी।

Even as the unborn baby is in the womb of its mother, these five are fixed as its life destiny: life span, activities, acquisition of wealth and knowledge, and time of death.

देखिये क्या आश्चर्य है? बड़े लोग अनोखी बातें करते हैं। वे पैसे को तो तिनके की तरह मामूली समझते हैं लेकिन जब वे उसे प्राप्त करते हैं तो उसके भार से और विनम्र होकर झुक जाते हैं।

O see what a wonder it is! The doings of the great are strange: they treat wealth as lightly as straw, yet when they obtain it, they bend under its weight.



जो व्यक्ति अपने घर के लोगों से बहुत आसक्ति रखता है वह भय और दुःख को पाता है। आसक्ति ही दुःख का मूल है। जिसे सुखी होना है उसे आसक्ति छोड़नी पड़ेगी। He who is overly attached to his family members experiences fear and sorrow, for the root of all grief is attachment. thus, one should discard attachment to be happy.

जो भविष्य के लिए तैयार है और जो किसी भी परिस्थिति को चतुर्गई से निपटता है। ये दोनों व्यक्ति सुखी हैं। लेकिन जो आदमी सिर्फ नसीब के सहारे चलता है वह बर्बाद होता है।

He who is prepared for the future and he who deals cleverly with any situation that may arise are both happy; but the fatalist who depends wholly on luck is on the path to ruin.

यदि राजा पुण्यात्मा है तो प्रजा भी वैसी ही होती है। यदि राजा पापी है तो प्रजा भी पापी। यदि वह सामान्य है तो प्रजा सामान्य। प्रजा के सामने राजा का उदाहरण होता है। और वो उसका अनुसरण करती है।

If the king be virtuous, the subjects are also virtuous. If the king be sinful, the subjects too become sinful. If he be mediocre, the subjects are also mediocre. The subjects follow the example of the king. In short, as the king is, so are his subjects.

मेरी नजरों में वह आदमी मृत है जो जीते जी धर्म का पालन नहीं करता। लेकिन जो धर्म पालन में अपने प्राण दे देता है वह मरने के बाद भी बेशक लम्बा जीता है।

I consider him who does not act religiously as dead though living, but he who dies acting religiously unquestionably lives long though he is dead.

जिस व्यक्ति ने न ही

कोई ज्ञान संपादन किया, ना ही पैसा कमाया, मुक्ति के लिए जो आवश्यक है उसकी पूर्ति भी नहीं की। वह एक निहायत बेकार जिंदगी जीता है जैसे के बकरी की गर्दन से झूलने वाले स्तन।

He who has acquired neither virtue, wealth, satisfaction of desires nor salvation (dharma, artha, kama, moksha), lives an utterly useless life, like the 'teats' that hang from the neck of a goat.

जो नीच लोग होते हैं वो दूसरे की कीर्ति को देखकर जलते हैं। वो दूसरे के बारे में अपशब्द कहते हैं क्योंकि उनकी कुछ करने की औकात नहीं है।

The hearts of 'base' men burn before the fire of another's fame, and they slander them being themselves unable to rise to such a high position.

यदि विषय बहुत प्रिय है तो वो बंधन में डालते हैं। विषय सुख की अनासक्ति से मुक्ति की और गति होती है। इसीलिए मुक्ति या बंधन का मूल-मन ही है।

Excessive attachment to sensual pleasure leads to bondage, and detachment from such leads to liberation – therefore it is the mind alone that is responsible for bondage or liberation.

जो आत्म स्वरूप का बोध होने से खुद को शरीर नहीं मानता, वह हरदम समाधि में ही रहता है भले ही उसका शरीर कहीं भी चला जाए।

He who sheds bodily identification by means of knowledge of the indwelling Supreme Self (Paramatma), will always be absorbed in meditative trance (samadhi) wherever his mind leads him.

किस को सब सुख प्राप्त हुए जिसकी कामना की। सब कुछ भगवान् के हाथ में है। इसलिए हमें संतोष में जीना होगा।

Who realises all the happiness he desires? Everything is in the hands of God. One ought to therefore learn contentment.

जिस प्रकार एक गाय का बछड़ा, हजारों गावों में अपनी माँ के पीछे चलता है उसी तरह कर्म आदमी के पीछे चलते हैं।

As a calf follows its mother among a thousand cows, so do the good (or bad) deeds of a man follow him.

जिस के काम करने में कोई व्यवस्था नहीं, उसे कोई सुख नहीं मिल सकता। लोगों के बीच या वन में। लोगो के मिलने से उसका हृदय जलता है और वन में तो कोई

सुविधा होती ही नहीं।

He whose actions are disorganised has no happiness either in the midst of men or in a jungle -- in the midst of men his heart burns by social contacts, and his helplessness burns him in the forest.

यदि आदमी उपकरण का सहारा ले तो गर्भजल से पानी निकाल सकता है। उसी तरह यदि विद्यार्थी अपने गुरु की सेवा करे तो गुरु के पास जो ज्ञान निधि है उसे प्राप्त करता है।

As the man who digs obtains underground water by use of a shovel, so the student attains the knowledge possessed by his preceptor through his service.

हमें अपने कर्म का फल मिलता है। हमारी बुद्धि पर इसके पहले हमने जो कर्म किये हैं उसका निशान है। इसीलिए जो बुद्धिमान लोग हैं वो सोच विचार कर कर्म करते हैं। Men reap the fruits of their deeds, and intellects bear the mark of deeds performed in previous lives; even so the wise act after due circumspection.

जिस व्यक्ति ने आपको अध्यात्मिक महत्ता का एक अक्षर भी पढ़ाया उसकी पूजा करनी चाहिए। जो ऐसे गुरु का सम्मान नहीं करता वह सौ बार कुत्ते का जन्म लेता है। और आखिर चंडाल बनता है। चंडाल वह है जो कुत्ता खाता है।

Even the man who has taught the spiritual significance of just one letter ought to be worshiped. He who does not give reverence to such a guru is born as a dog a hundred times, and at last takes birth as a chandala (dog-eater).

जब युग का अंत हो जायेगा तो मेरु पर्वत डिग जाएगा। जब कल्प का अंत होगा तो सातों समुद्र का पानी विचलित हो जायेगा। लेकिन साधू कभी भी अपने अध्यात्मिक मार्ग से नहीं डिगेगा।

At the end of the yuga, Mount Meru may be shaken; at the end of the kalpa, the waters of the seven oceans may be disturbed; but a sadhu will never swerve from the spiritual path.

इस धरती पर अन्न, जल और मीठे वचन ये असली रत्न हैं। मूर्खों को लगता है पत्थर के टुकड़े रत्न हैं।

There are three gems upon this earth; food, water, and pleasing words -- fools (mudhas) consider pieces of rocks as gems.

Source: www.hindisathiyadarpan.com

**“ARTISTES OF MY
AGE GROUP ARE NOT
NEEDED TODAY”**

HARIHARAN



Hariharan, who has come up with a breezy single called HAULE HAULE for singer Sadhana Jejurikar tells his friend from the school days & our Mumbai Bureau that he has never believed in promoting himself as a music director. NRI Achievers reproduces that conversation for our readers here in this vignette ...

● ***You have composed the song HAULE HAULE for singer Sadhana Jejurikar. Why did you not also sing a duet with her for the album?***

Yes, I composed the lilting song Haule Haule for Sadhana Jejurikar's single which is being brought out by T Series. It is a breezy romantic number which highlights the mystic element in a romantic relationship. The reason I did not sing a duet with her is that I wanted her to hog all the attention that she gets for the song. I told her that I wanted her to establish herself with her album first and only then sing with other singers.

● ***What made you say yes to her when the offer came to you to compose the song?***

Though I am a singer by profession, I would say that music direction is my hobby. Sadhana Jejurikar has painstakingly written the biography of Ghulam Ali after waiting for almost three years and is very passionate about singing. I saw her lagan for music. It isn't the first time that I have composed the song for a female singer. I had composed Aabshaar E Ghazal way back in 1984 for Asha Bhonsle as well.

● ***You are known more as a singer than a music director. Why?***

The reason I am known more as a singer than a music director today is because I have never believed in promoting myself as a music composer though I have composed for not only Aabshaar E Ghazal but also Leslie Lewis and come up with an album with him called Colonial Cousins, besides several films in Tamil. Though I have been active in the industry as a singer since 80's, I have mostly composed songs only for myself.

● ***Though you had given a break to music director A.R.Rahman when he entered the industry with ROJA way back in 1992, you do not seem to sing for him these days. Why?***

I did not give Rahman his break as a music director. It would be pretentious on my part to say that I had given a break to A R Rahman though I had sung his first song in Roja. His style keeps on changing from year to year and he keeps brisk pace by giving a break to new voices. Besides he is also into singing.

Go on!

I am practical enough to know that my sound belongs to the 90's and people will be automatically reminded of the songs of 90's as and when I sing today. Hindi films today do not need artistes who belong to my age group as sound has changed to a great extent today and its timbre is quite different. From the 90's till 2010, it was only me and hence a change is really needed. Also singers from the earlier era are actually not needed at all today. It's actually the law of nature or call it mathematics.

● ***Yet no one can deny that you are busy today too!***

You bet. I am in fact more busy today than in the 90's because of the proliferation of music reality shows today, which gives mass education. When I hear the kids today, I feel it is good that I have receded from the scene and glad that my time is over. However I can never be a part of a musical reality show anymore today because I cannot be harsh on kids and admonish them when they sing a wrong note in front of me.

● ***Your son Akshay Hariharan is today a music director on his right and that too on his own steam.***

Yes. I am indeed proud that my son Akshay has branched off on his own as a music director today, without asking me to help him out. You should listen to the thumri based song that he has composed in Black Home to know his versatility as a music director. He has also composed an International pop album. I'd say that his clarity has sprung from me.

● ***Akshay has also composed for the Marathi film KOKANASTH for producer Mahesh Manjrekar.***

Yes. Besides Black Home, his mellifluous compositions in Kokanasth have also been appreciated. Soon, Askshay and I will be collaborating on an EDM. It will be a Hindi fusion album.

● ***Your another son Karan Hariharan has taken up acting.***

Yes. My son Karan made his debut with the film 'Missing on a Week-End' which was released last year. 📺

Jyothi Venkatesh
The writer is a well-known &
established film critic.



PRAKASH RAJ & DEVGN TEAM UP IN 'GOLMAAL AGAIN'

National award winning actor Prakash Raj, who played baddie Jaykant Shikre in Singham, will once again team-up with Ajay Devgn in GOLMAAL AGAIN. Shooting will begin soon, at Mumbai this month. He got notified about his character in GOLMAAL AGAIN so he instantly flew down to Mumbai and did a narration with dialogue writers Sajid-Farhad. The film is directed by Rohit Shetty and also features Parineeti Chopra, Neil Nitin Mukesh, Arshad Warsi, Tusshar Kapoor, Kunal Khemu, Shreyas Talpade and Tabu.



SABA QAMAR BACKTRACKS ON SALMAN KHAN STATEMENT

Pakistani actress Saba Qamar, making her debut in Bollywood in the Irrfan Khan starrer HINDI MEDIUM, has been in the news of late regarding an excerpt from a two year old Pakistani fun show GOOD MORNING ZINDAGI. Sabah Qamar clarifies, "Good Morning Zindagi is a fun-show where they ask you fun-questions about Bollywood stars. Whatever I said about each of the actors was said just for fun at that moment. I love and respect the Indian film industry especially Salman Khan, who is such a huge star and so humble".



JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ ADMITS TO FIRST KISS AT AGE 14



Jacqueline Fernandez talks about her teenage years and reveals that her nickname in school used to be Radio Bahrain. She also revealed some interesting nuggets of information about her teenage days and school time – including how her first boyfriend had first kissed at the age of 14. Jacqueline also admits how she regrets kissing a few people and how she was really naive and easily taken advantage of when she was in school. 📌

'HALF GIRLFRIEND' SHOOTING AT ST. STEPHENS DELHI

Chetan Bhagat, Arjun Kapoor and Shraddha Kapoor have all via Twitter revealed glimpses about the college portions of the film being shot in the very prestigious St. Stephens College. With just 12 and a half weeks left for the release Chetan Bhagat, Arjun Kapoor and Shraddha Kapoor shared a little about the filming and the location. The lead characters in the very popular Chetan Bhagat's novel belong to St. Stephens, where they meet and the premise is set. To maintain authenticity, the college portions of the film were actually shot at the eminent institution.



AKSHAY KUMAR'S 4TH CONSECUTIVE HIT WITHIN 13 MONTHS

JOLLY LLB 2 has success written all over it. Akshay's 2016 releases — AIRLIFT, HOUSEFUL 3 & RUSTOM — had all crossed the '100-Cr.' mark. Now with JOLLY LLB 2, the star has managed to retain his loyal audience in the face of big releases. JOLLY LLB 2 was a successful beginning for the franchise, and with Akshay Kumar the game has only got bigger.



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