

Google rectifies mistake, shows entire J&K as part of India

The search engine Google has amended its maps to show the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir as part of India. The correction came in response to the notice issued by minister of state for communications and IT Sachin Pilot to Google Inc for showing Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as part of the neighbouring country. After



Pilot noticed the lapse, the ministry wrote to the website that maps available through www.google.com/insights showed certain parts of J&K as part of a different country. The notice said that wrongful depiction of Indian map could attract action under Sections 69A and 79 of the IT Act. Sources said the website had corrected the maps in its memory though a few pages would take some time to upload. It sets right what is a sensitive issue in the country. The showing of PoK as part of Pakistan had attracted strong comments from various sections. Golfer Arjun Atwal - First Indian to win PGA Tour

World's first solar diesel plant opens

THE world's first solar-diesel power station has opened in Western Australia's Pilbara region at Marble Bar, known for its record high temperatures. WA's Mines and Petroleum Minister Norman Moore opened Horizon Power's Pippunyah Solar Diesel Power Station today. The new \$34 million station is powered by the biggest sun-tracking solar panel farm in Australia. "Marble Bar is significant for many reasons; the three billion year-old rock on which it was based, the world record it held for the most consecutive days of maximum temperatures and, now, a world-first in power generation technology," the minister said. The power station will generate 1048 megawatt hours of solar energy a year and provide 65 per cent of daytime energy demand from solar power. It is estimated it will save 1119 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions a year and save between 35 and 40 per cent of diesel consumption a year. The station began powering Marble Bar in May but the testing period was only completed at the end of July. Horizon Power managing director Rod Hayes said the traditional custodians of the 45,373 square kilometres east Pilbara region, the Njama people, were consulted during the development of the new station. "The group chose the name Pippunyah, which is the name of the river that runs below the power station," he said. The project is supported by the Federal Government through the renewable remote power generation program and is implemented by WA's Office of Energy.

'Go India, Go for gold' campaign launched

With some days to go for the Commonwealth Games, the organising committee has launched a campaign to spread awareness about the mega event and muster support for the Indian sportspersons.

Under the campaign titled - '*Go India! Go for Gold*' the OC in collaboration with HT Media and Muthoot Pappachan group will collect about one lakh hand imprints from citizens as a gesture of 'high five' in support of the Indian teams. In the three-week campaign, canvases will be put up at various colleges, schools, markets, malls, and offices and it will culminate in a march on an undecided venue.

During that march, the canvases will put up on both sides of the road to form a wall, stretching up to 4-6 kms.

"Ultimately people after the games will ask how many medals India won. They will probably not talk how beautiful the stadium is. So this (campaign) is to encourage the sports persons," OC Secretary General Lalit Bhanot said.

Bhanot was also the first person to put his hand imprint in green colour on a large canvas at the OC headquarter.

Anand Bhardwaj, Business Head (New Media Initiatives), HT Media said,

"It's time that we celebrate and move forward. The objective of this campaign is to encourage the sportspersons."

Manomohan, CEO of the Muthoot Capital Services, said this campaign will help the Indian athletes know the kind of expectations countrymen have from them.

"We believe it's time that awareness is spread. The athletes will know the burden of expectation they will be carrying during the Games," he said.



Look East Policy of the Country

The 'Look East Policy' of the Government has been evolving since the early 1990s and has significantly deepened India's engagement with the countries of East and Southeast Asia. India's trade and Investment with that part of the world has been enhanced significantly. India had signed a 'Trade in Goods' agreement with ASEAN in 2009, which became operational from 1 January 2010. India has

concluded a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Korea (RoK), which is also being implemented from 1 January 2010.

India and China have established a Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and have enunciated a Shared Vision for the 21st Century. There are regular high-level political contacts between the two countries. The two

sides have established a dialogue architecture to discuss the entire range of bilateral relations. The functional cooperation between the two countries is expanding in all areas. During the visit of Commerce and Industry Minister to China in January 2010, the two countries signed a MoU on Expansion of Trade and Economic Cooperation. An Agreement on the Establishment of the Direct Secure Telephone

Link between the Prime Minister of India and the Chinese Premier was signed during the visit of the External Affairs Minister to China in April 2010. Both sides have agreed that they are committed to resolving outstanding differences, including on the Boundary Question, through peaceful negotiations, while ensuring that such differences are not allowed to affect the positive development of bilateral relations.

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Rajiv Gandhi Manav Sewa Award for Service to Children-2009

The Ministry Of Women and Child Development today announced conferring of the “Rajiv Gandhi Manav Sewa Award for Service to Children” 2009 on the eve of Birth Anniversary of the Late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The Selection Committee has selected the following three individuals for conferment of Rajiv Gandhi Manav Sewa Award for the year 2009:

Shri Fulendra Chaudhary, Bihar

Shri V Nandansabapathy, Tamil Nadu, and

Dr. Sarojini Agarwal, Uttar Pradesh

The Award carries a cash prize of Rupees One lakh and a citation to each of the awardees’.

In pursuance of the Government of India’s policy to support and promote voluntary action in the area of child welfare/development, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India instituted the “Rajiv Gandhi Manav Sewa Award for Service to Children” in 1994 to honour individuals who have made outstanding contribution towards the cause of children. The Award was first instituted on 20th August, 1994, the 50th Birth Anniversary of the Late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi who had deep love and concern for children. Every year Rajiv Gandhi Manav Seva Award is conferred on three individuals who make outstanding contribution in the fields of Child Protection, Child Development and Child Welfare. The selection for the Award is made by a National Selection Committee. The Selection Committee was chaired by the Minister of State for Women and Child Development (Independent Charge) Smt. Krishna Tirath. The Selection Committee included the Secretary, M/o Women and Child Development Shri D. K. Sikri, President, Indian Council of Child Welfare, a representative each from the Department Of Education, Department Of Health, M/o Social Justice & Empowerment, Dean, Department of Social Work, Delhi University as Members and Joint Secretary, M/o WCD Shri Vivek Joshi as its Member Secretary.

This year’s winners’ brief sketches are as follows:

Shri Fulendra Chaudhary, Secretary, Baba Baidyanath Balika Mook Bahir Vidyalaya, Ghosi Tola, Munger, Bihar, is a social worker who has keen interest for the betterment and total development of children who are neglected in the society due to poverty. He has been rendering his service for the people for the last 23 years in this locality mainly for handicapped (Deaf and Dumb) girls and has been associated with all child development activities, mainly handicapped girls, such as, health education, vocational training etc.

Sh. V. Nandansabapathy, founder and the present Secretary of CREED, No. 23, Aranganathan Nagar, Chidambaram-608 001, Cuddalore District, Tamilnadu, founded the organization with the long term objective of ensuring Children Welfare in all forms. He is involved in promotion of literacy to eradicate poverty among the children of rural area and the urban slums. He is also implementing various child development programmes such as Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme, Tribal Children Development, Rural Sanitation programme and Child welfare, Construction of Child Friendly toilets, Network against child labour and child trafficking, Short stay home, family counseling centre etc.

Dr. Sarojini Agarwal is the Founder and President of Manisha Mandir, Viram Khand-2, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-226010, Uttar Pradesh. Till today,

Royal Rajasthan train to kick start its journey today

Royal Rajasthan on Wheels, the new super luxury train, will start its journey on Sunday with several new destinations like Khajuraho and Varanasi in its itinerary. The luxury train is a joint venture of Rajasthan Tourism and Development Corporation and Indian Railways.

Encouraged with the grand success of Palace on Wheels, the tourist train was introduced in January 2009.

While the Palace on Wheels starts its journey on every Wednesday between August to April, the Royal Rajasthan is scheduled to run on every Sunday between September and April.

For the first time the train will include popular destinations like Khajuraho and Varanasi in its itinerary. The new train promises to offer more facilities to its passengers.

The refurbished train has 22 coaches comprising of one super deluxe coach, 13 deluxe coaches, two restaurants and bars and a spa coach, having a capacity of 82 passengers.

Indian men’s recurve team wins gold in Archery World Cup

The Indian men’s recurve team of Jayanta Talukdar, Tarundeep Rai and Rahul Banerjee clinched the gold medal at the Archery World Cup Stage IV after beating Japan in the summit clash in Shanghai .

The Indian trio beat the Japanese team of Ryota Amano, Takaharu Furukawa, Hideki Kikuchi 224-220 to finish on top.

India led Japan 57-54 at the end of the first end and built on it to make it 113-108 in the second end.

Japan was better in the third end (56-55) and both teams finished in a tie of 56-56 for their last arrows.

However, India rode on the fine show in the first ends to clinch the gold medal.

The men’s team had

Dr. Sarojini, aged 72 years, has raised more than 400 girl children. She believes, raising children means not just providing shelter, clothes and food but much more than that by providing unlimited affection, warmth, care, submission, attention just like a real mother one can possibly do. She has dedicated herself to bring up, educate and build up their character. She herself made provisions for their lodging, food and other daily requirements.

Status of Indian Hockey Federation

Following the High Court judgement, the Government has restored the recognition of Indian Hockey Federation as the National Sports Federation for Hockey subject to amalgamation of Indian Hockey federation (IHF) and Indian women Hockey Federation (IWHF) in accordance with Societies registration Act, and amendments to its constitution to make it compliant with Government guidelines. Separately, Hockey India has been derecognized because of its claim to be a private body and refusal to accept Government guidelines for recognition of National Sports Federations. This was stated by Shri Pratik Prakashbapu Patil, Minister of State of Youth Affairs & Sports, in the Rajya Sabha today in a written reply to a question by Shri Kalraj Mishra.

The Minister further stated that Indian Hockey federation is yet to be recognized by International Hockey Federation (FIH), which still recognizes Hockey India. Government of India has informed FIH about the above mentioned development and that IHF would approach them for recognition after meeting the requirements of putting up a unified body of men and women hockey. Pending satisfactory resolution of the entire matter, which is also before the Supreme Court, the Government has requested FIH to allow the Indian Olympic Association(IOA) to field the national men and women hockey teams in international competitions recognized by FIH. The IOA has been advised to send the entry for the participation of the Indian Women hockey team in the World Cup to be held in Argentina from 29th August to 12th September, 2010, which they have confirmed.

Agro Forestry

The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides for social forestry, farm forestry etc. on the various categories of land other than notified / recorded forests. These activities including agro forestry can be undertaken on non forest land.

The State Governments are encouraging plantation of trees on various categories of non forest lands to meet the requirement of the people for timber and timber products to reduce the pressure from forest areas. As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR), 2009, the growing stock of the woody biomass is 1,599 million cubic metre out of the total 6,098 million cubic meter from Forest and Tree cover. Further Gram Van Yojana scheme, mooted by Government of India, envisages planting on non forest land during 12th five year plan.

Van Gogh found hours after theft

It is the second time the painting was stolen from the Cairo museum [GELLO/GETTY] A Vincent van Gogh painting valued at \$50 million has been recovered by police at Cairo airport, Faruq Hosni, Egypt’s minister of culture said.

Two Italians were trying to smuggle it out of the country on Saturday evening, hours after it was sto-

returned empty-handed from the World Cup Stage III at Ogden after losing the quarterfinal to the hosts USA.

This time India’s first round victim was Great Britain, one of the strong contenders at the Commonwealth Games, and the team notched a 218-215 victory.

Incidentally, India beat USA 225-208 in the quarterfinal to avenge their loss in the last edition.

Japan came into the final after shocking world champion Korea 224-216.

Melting of Glaciers

The studies carried out by Geological Survey of India indicate that the majority of Himalayan glaciers are passing through a phase of recession which is a worldwide phenomenon.

Recession of glaciers is a part of the natural cyclic process of changes in size and other attributes of the glaciers.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was launched in June 2008 which includes, among others, the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system. This Mission is aimed at understanding whether and the extent to which the Himalayan glaciers are in recession and how the problem could be addressed.

A new research centre on Himalayan Glaciology has been established at Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun. Government has also prepared guidelines and best practices for sustaining Himalayan eco-system and has shared it with all State Governments in the Himalayan region.

Mothers are now legal guardians

In yet another step towards making the laws of the country free from gender bias, Parliament has passed a Bill that will give equal right to women with regard to guardianship and adoption of children.

The Lok Sabha today passed a Bill, which provides for mother to be appointed as the guardian along with the father so that the courts

len from the Mahmoud Khalil Museum in the Egyptian capital, Hosni said.

The painting goes by two titles, “Poppy Flowers” or “Vase with Flowers,” and was cut out of its frame in the museum after it opened this morning.

Second time

This is the second time the painting by the Dutch-born postimpressionist has been stolen from the Cairo museum.

Thieves made off with the canvas in 1978, before authorities recovered it two years later at an undisclosed location in Kuwait.

One year later, a duplicate was sold for \$43 million in London, sparking a debate in Egypt whether the returned painting was, in fact, a fake.

Authorities have never fully revealed the details of the first theft of the painting.

When it was recovered, Egypt’s then-interior minister said three Egyptians involved in the heist had been arrested and informed police where the canvas was hidden. Authorities never reported whether the thieves were charged or tried.

The one-foot-by-one-foot painting resembles a flower scene painted by the French artist Adolphe Monticelli, whose work deeply affected the young van Gogh. The Monticelli painting also is part of the Khalil collection.

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India and South Korea Sign two Landmark MoUs to Boost Defence Cooperation

Heralding a new chapter in the history of defence cooperation, India and South Korea today signed two landmark Memoranda of Understanding to give a huge boost to the Strategic Partnership between the two countries. The two MoUs were signed at the end

of nearly ninety minutes of intensive discussions, marked by warmth, between the delegations of the two countries, led by their Defence Ministers, Mr AK Antony and Mr Kim Tae-young in Seoul. This was the first ever visit of a Defence Minister of India to South Korea. Shri Antony was accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Defence Secretary Shri Pradeep Kumar, Vice Admiral RK Dhowan, Lt General KT Parnaik, Dr Prahlada and Shri Sundaram Krishna.

The first MoU signed by Mr Antony and Mr Kim envisages exchange of defence related experience and information, mutual exchange of visits by military personnel and experts including civilian staff associated with defence services, military education and training and conduct of military exercises, exchange of visits of ships and aircraft, as jointly decided between the two countries. The MoU further envisages cooperation in humanitarian assistance and international peace keeping activities. The MoU will remain valid for a period of five years with provision for its extension by five more years.

The Second MoU was signed by the Chief Controller of Research and Development of DRDO, Dr Prahlada and Vice Commissioner, Defence Acquisition and Procurement Agency (DAPA) of South Korea, Mr Kwon Oh Bong. To be operational under the overarching umbrella of India- South Korea Defence Agreement, the MoU aims at identifying futuristic defence technology areas of mutual interest and pursuing R&D works in both the countries. It also envisages co- development and co-production of defence products with Indian industry through DRDO. There will be joint IPR on all the products developed through this mechanism. Some areas of immediate interest e.g., marine systems, electronics and intelligent systems have been identified as priority tasks.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr Antony said New Delhi will be happy to see the defence industry relationship to be more than a buyer-seller relationship and its further evolution into Transfer of Technology, joint production and joint R&D etc. He hoped that ‘his visit will start a new chapter in our already close relationship’.

Mr Kim said the two MoUs signed today will provide a win-win scenario for the two countries in a number of areas.

The talks covered a wide range of security issues- both regional and global.

Maritime Security

Mr Antony said India and South Korea share common perception of maintaining peace as well as ensuring safety and security of sea lanes of communication in the region. He said regular exchanges towards ensuring maritime security is important to both countries, especially in securing vital energy supplies that pass through the Indian Ocean. ‘ It is of particular importance for like- minded countries working in the Gulf of Aden to coordinate efforts and also exchange information on the happenings in the area. We look forward to continued and enhanced cooperation between the navies of India and South Korea in this regard’, said Mr Antony.

Regional Security Scenario

Talking about the regional security scenario in the Indian subcontinent, Mr Antony said we live in a troubled neighbourhood. ‘ Some call it a fragile region. We have to maintain balance and restraint even in the face of grave challenges to our security. Our intention is to develop friendly and cooperative relations with all our neighbours so that we can focus on our major development needs’, Mr Antony said.

East Asian Architecture

India to overtake China GDP in 2013: Report

India will overtake China's GDP growth between 2013-2015. Global investment firm Morgan Stanley has said in a report that it is likely that India and China will achieve growth rates of close to 9 per cent by 2012. India's GDP growth is inching closer to China's and it is estimated to be 8.5 per cent in 2010.

Morgan Stanley's Chief Economist for China Qing Wang said China's growth will move towards 8 per cent by 2015. The report says India's growth will accelerate to a sustainable 9-10 per cent by 2013-15, outpacing China's growth. India is expected to remain the highest growth economy among large countries over the next 20-25 years.

Centre starts centralised monitoring system for trial run of new communication traffic tracker

India has begun tests of its indigenously built centralised monitoring system (CMS), which can track all communication traffic - wireless and fixed line, satellite, internet, emails and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls - and gather intelligence inputs. The ministries of defence, law, finance, home, telecommunications and IT will soon seek Cabinet approval for implementing this system across the country.

Planning for CMS, which was aimed at strengthening the country's internal security apparatus, began in 2007 but the project was put on a fast track after the Mumbai attacks, when the terrorists received orders via VoIP (internet telephony).

The centralised system aims to be a one-stop solution against the current practice of running several decentralised monitoring agencies under various ministries, where each one has contrasting processing systems, technology platforms and clearance levels.

This CMS is modelled on similar setups in several Western countries - for instance, in the US, the National Security Agency monitors all communication traffic while in the UK, this is undertaken by the Government Communications Headquarters. The CMS is also considered as India's equivalent of UK's upcoming Interception Modernisation Programme (IMP) - a massive expansion of its current communications surveillance facilities for the internet age.

At present, the country's monitoring system works as follows. With no centralised system in place, officers of the Vigilance Telecom Monitoring (VTM) cells of the DoT assist the different security agencies which monitor mobile, fixed, satellite and internet services

2010 Pakistan floods

The 2010 Pakistan floods began in July 2010 after heavy monsoon rains affected the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, lower Punjab as well as parts of Balochistan. An estimated 2,000 people have died so far with close to a million homes badly damaged or destroyed. The United Nations estimates over 20 million people are suffering and homeless with over 160,000 square kilometers affected as a result of the flooding, exceeding the combined total of the affected of 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Kashmir earthquake and the 2010 Haiti earthquake. However, the death toll in each of those three disasters was much higher than the number of people killed so far in the floods. Around a fifth of Pakistan's total land area was impacted by the flooding.

UN Secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon has asked for an initial \$460 million for emergency relief, noting that the flood was the worst disaster he had ever seen. 50% of the relief funds requested has been received as of 15 August 2010. The U.N. is concerned that aid is not arriving fast enough, while the World Health Organization reported that ten million people were forced to drink unsafe water. The Pakistani economy has been harmed by extensive damage to infrastructure and crops. Structural damages are estimated to exceed 4 billion USD, and wheat crop damages are estimated to be over 500 million USD. Total economic impacts are estimated at about 43 billion USD according to official estimates.

Flooding

The floods were caused by monsoon rains, which were forecast to continue into early August and were described as the worst in this area in the last 80 years. The Pakistan Meteorological Department said that over 200 mm (7.88 inches) of rain fell over a 24-hour period over a number of places of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab and more was expected. A record breaking 274 mm (10.7 inches) rain fell in Peshawar during 24 hours, previously 187 mm (7.36 inches) of rain was recorded in April, 2009. So far as many as 500,000 or more people have been displaced from their homes. On 30 July, Manuel Bessler, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stated that 36 districts were involved, and 950,000 people were affected, although within a day, reports increased the number to as high as a million, and by mid-August to nearly 20 million affected. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial information-minister Mian Iftikhar Hussain said "the infrastructure of this province was already destroyed by terrorism. Whatever was left was finished off by these floods." He also called the floods "the worst calamity in our history." Four million Pakistanis were left with food shortages.

Officials have warned that the death-toll could rise as many towns and villages are not accessible and communications have been disrupted. In some areas, the wa-

ter-level was 5.5 m (18 ft) high and residents were seen on roof-tops waiting for aid to arrive. At least 1,588 people have been injured, 722,600 houses and 4,600 villages have been damaged or destroyed. The Karakoram Highway, which connects Pakistan with China, was closed after a bridge was destroyed. The ongoing devastating floods in Pakistan will have a severe impact on an already vulnerable population, says the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In addition to all the other damages the floods have caused, floodwaters have destroyed much of the healthcare-infrastructure in the worst-affected areas, leaving inhabitants especially vulnerable to water-borne disease. In Sindh, the Indus River burst its banks near Sukkur on 8 August, submerging the village of Mor Khan Jatoti. There is also an absence of law and order, mainly in Sindh. Looters have been taking advantage of the floods by ransacking abandoned homes using boats.

Relief efforts

Pakistan has appealed to international donors for help in responding to the disaster. Twenty-one helicopters and 150 boats were pressed into service to assist the affected people according to the National Disaster Management Authority of Pakistan. The US embassy in Pakistan provided seven helicopters to the authorities to assist in relief-operations. The United Nations also launched relief efforts. It appealed for \$460 million to provide immediate help, including food, shelter and clean water. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Pakistan on 15 August to oversee and discuss the relief efforts. A Pakistani army spokesman said that troops had been deployed in all affected areas and had rescued thousands of people. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani visited the province and directed the Pakistan Navy to help evacuate the flood-victims. By early August, more than 352,291 people have been rescued.

Response by national governments

Afghanistan finance minister Hazrat Omar Zakhailwal handed a cheque worth \$1 million to Pakistani ambassador Mohammad Sadiq at the end of a press conference in Afghan capital Kabul.

Australia announced a A\$10 million aid-package, as well as committing two C17 Globemaster aircraft to deliver emergency supplies and to assist relief efforts.

Azerbaijan embassy in Pakistan transferred its two-days' salary worth around \$2,000 to relief fund. The country will also give US\$1 million financial assistance for helping the victims and eliminate the aftermath of the disaster.

Bangladesh has pledged \$2 million for relief and will also dispatch a medical team along with material assistance including tents, blankets, water purification

tablets, mineral waters, life saving drugs and vaccines, oral saline, hygiene kit, biscuits and packed dry food.

Belgium donated 150,000 euros for the victims.

Brazil donated US\$ 0.7 million through World Food Programme or life-saving assistance to the affected.

Canada announced that it would donate \$2 million worth of emergency aid. \$750,000 are expected to be donated to the ICRC for distribution of shelter-materials and water, sanitation and health-services, while the remainder goes to the WFP to provide much-needed food-assistance.

China initially announced that it would provide emergency aid worth 10 million yuan (approx. US\$ 1.48 million) to help the flood-victims. China was one of the first countries providing immediate aid to Pakistan in the aftermath of the floods

Denmark has donated 60 million DKK (10M USD) in relief efforts and another 130 million DKK (22M USD) in further development aid.

The European Union released •10 million to help Pakistan's flood victims on 11 August, as part of emergency aid to flood-stricken country. By 18 August, the EU had committed to spending •70 million (90 million dollars) on aid for victims of the floods.

Finland government donated •1.2 million for humanitarian assistance to the flood victims. •600,000 were channeled through the World Health Organization, •400,000 through the UNHCR and •200,000 through Finn Church Aid.

Germany initially committed •1 million for the victims, which was further increased to •2 million on 6 August. On 12 August, Germany announced a \$13 million aid package.

Hong Kong has donated HK\$ 3 million to World Vision for a relief project for flood victims in Pakistan.

The government of Iceland have informed that ISK 23 million will be contributed to emergency aid in areas impacted by the monsoon floods in Pakistan.

An initial •200,000 was donated by the government of Ireland. An additional •550,000 was added on 9 August 2010. Then the total was •960,000. The Irish media were critical of the country's government for providing less than half the aid it donated to Haiti after the earthquake there. •1.19million was added on 19 August, bringing the total at that stage to •2million, the total given to the Haiti disaster. Minister for Overseas Development Peter Power, TD, said at the time that more aid would be forthcoming from Ireland and that the country had provided a "proportionally greater" amount than "most other European countries". The Irish public had provided an additional

sum of more than •2.5 million by 20 August.

India was the among the first to respond to provide succor to affected population of Pakistan. India offered on 13 August US\$5 million for provision of relief material for the victims of the massive floods. Further aid as required can be arranged, with a National Disaster Management Force in place, India finds it easier to respond for channelizing aid. Also, there are nearly 400 Indian doctors, who are waiting for the Pakistan government's nod for visas to help flood victims. India has supplied first consignment of 25 truck-loads of Indian potato to Pakistan.

Iran had committed over 400 tonnes of relief goods by 14th August 2010; out of which 180 tonnes had already been delivered by the Iranian transport aircrafts as of the said date.

Japan provided US\$ 0.23 million for emergency relief goods, while additional assistance of up to US\$3 million has been committed for the disaster aftermath.

Kuwait has also donated US \$5 million to victims of the severe floods in Pakistan, according to Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS).

Malaysia has also announced aid of \$1 million to help people in flood-hit Pakistan.

Nepal cabinet provided cash assistance of Rs 10 million for flood victims in Pakistan.

Nigeria also assisted Pakistan by donating US\$ 1 million.

Norway facilitated relief operation by providing NOK 30 million. NOK 9 million were given to UN Central Emergency Response Fund, and NOK 21 million were allocated to UNICEF, Pakistan Emergency Response Fund (ERF), and Pakistan Red Crescent Society

Saudi Arabia released a statement announcing the establishment of an air-bridge to ferry relief-supplies to Pakistan. In total Saudi Arabia has allocated US \$112.3 million.

Sri Lanka dispatched 18 metric tons of relief goods worth approx US\$ 3 million to Pakistan on a Sri Lankan Air Force C-130. The Health Ministry will also send will be in the 15 member special medical team to Pakistan.

Sweden will send eight water cleaning aggregates which together have a capacity to support 18,000 people with clean drinking water.

Syria announced that it would send 35 tonnes of foodstuffs, medical supplies, medicines and many other necessary materials to help flood victims.

Turkey has donated US\$ 5 million to Pakistan initially, in addition to 115 tonnes of humanitarian aid consisting of food packages, blankets, sleeping bags and beds delivered to Pakistan Red Crescent Society. By 18 August, Turkey has donated more than US\$11 million and issued a rallying cry and launched a large-scale relief effort for flood-ravaged Pakistan.

The government of the United Kingdom has so far earmarked up to £64.3 million (US \$100 million) for the relief and recovery effort, in addition to bringing forward a £10 million bridge project to replace some of those washed away.

The United States has been at the forefront of the relief effort.^[130] United States stated that it would provide 56,000 ready meals on 1 August and 2, twelve temporary bridges and two water-filtration-plants to help the flood-victims as part of a US\$10 million aid-pledge.

World Bank provided US\$ 1.3 million to Pakistani government for relief work. The bank has additionally approved a loan of US\$ 900 million for medium and long term reconstruction.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) has also offered to discuss how to help Pakistan manage the economic impact of the floods.

Asian Development Bank in response to the floods has offered a loan of 2 billion dollars for the reconstruction efforts.

Islamic Development Bank in response to the floods has offered a loan of 11 million dollars for the reconstruction efforts.

Response by non-governmental organizations

U N - S P I D E R Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission SpaceAid Framework of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) during the first phase of the disaster.

Disasters Emergency Committee, an umbrella group of 13 UK charities reports that as of 16 August its flood-relief-appeal has so far raised £17 million. As of 14 August, the DEC reported that its member agencies had distributed aid to more than 600,000 people.

Oxfam has currently providing clean water and hot meals to over 180,000 people. In total, Oxfam aims to reach around 900,000 people with clean water, sanitation kits and hygiene supplies.

Save the Children are using helicopters, donkeys and boats to deliver doctors and medical supplies to families cut off by the water.

Red Cross has dispatched food and shelter items for more than 100,000 people for distribution by Pakistan Red Crescent volunteers. In addition, medicines and medical supplies have been sent to Paroa Hospital in Dera Ismail Khan and to Bannu.

Humanity First, in collaboration with NCHD has dispatched over 500 tents as well as mattresses, blankets, floor mats, buckets and shoes.

MERCY Malaysia has setup two clinics in the districts of Nowshera and Charsadda, each with a local doctor and three medical staff.

CARE International has provided water purification tablets, tents, family hygiene kits, kitchen sets, tarpaulins and mosquito nets to thousands of survivors. Mobile and basic healthcare units have provided health services to around 4,500 people.

Islamic Relief is dis-

tributing 3,570 family hygiene kits in Nowshera and Mardan districts benefitting 24,990 people.

Muslim Charity has launched £750,000 appeal to help the victims of flood in Pakistan. Muslim Charity targets to benefit 45,000 people through its activities.

Concern have helped 18,000 people and 6,400 people in Charsadda district have received emergency packages. Concern had raised more than •1 million in public donations from the Irish public by 13 August 2010.

Trócaire had raised around •700,000 in donations from the Irish public by 13 August 2010. The organisation later said there were difficulties accessing food.

UNICEF has set up 24 medical camps in the affected areas, benefiting around one million people.

United Methodist Church's representatives are on the ground with a project that within the week will purify more than 3.5 million liters of drinking water and benefit more than 73,000 people a day.

Pakistan Cricket Board and English Cricket Board are working together to organize a fundraiser exhibition match for the benefit of flood victims.

World Vision is currently providing clean water and food in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa province and is treating people at five health clinics.

Giving Children Hope donated medical supplies and other aid to several medical centers in Peshawar

Faisal Chohan has built pakreport.org as a platform for reporting and mapping incidents, directing relief to areas that need it most.

Response by Islamic militant organizations

Jama'at-ud-Da'wah (JuD) and organization which is a front for banned militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba stated that it had 2000 workers providing flood-relief.

Al Rasheed trust an organization under UN sanctions for its links to Al-Qaeda was among the first to provide aid to the flood victims.

Haqqania madrasa an Islamic school with ties to Haqqani network have converted one of their buildings into a shelter and were caring for 2500 victims.

Taliban offered to raise \$ 20 million for flood relief if Pakistani government rejected aid from 'Christians and Jews.'

Response by corporations

Google Foundation : Google Foundation donated \$250 thousand for the flood relief efforts. A corporate broadcast was sent to all employees to raise awareness about the disaster.

Cisco Systems : Cisco Systems will match employee donations for flood relief up to \$0.5 million. A corporate broadcast was sent to all employees to raise awareness about the disaster.

BMO Financial Group : BMO Financial Group, Canada's oldest bank, has donated \$0.1 million in support of Red Cross relief and recovery efforts. In addition, the company is accepting donations through its BMO Bank of Montreal branches in Canada and its Harris branches in the United States. The company is also waiving fees for fund transfers and drafts to Pakistan through 17 September 2010.

R i v e r b e d Rechnology : Riverbed Technology will match employee donations to Mercy Corps up to \$10 k. A corporate broadcast was sent to all employees to raise awareness about the disaster.

Dell : Dell has announced a \$150 thousand donation to the flood victims and has declared to match any amount donated by Dell employees.

Harvest festival Onam

Chitra Singh Rajput

Kerala celebrates Thirunam on Aug 23, 2010, the most important day of the Onam festival. Thiruvonam marks the culmination of the ten day Onam festival. People irrespective of religion or caste celebrate the festival, one of the most colourful and spectacular of all festivals in the country. The festival is one of the great unifiers of the state, promoting the ideals of secularism. People believe that it is on this day that King Mahabali, who was sent to the netherworld by Lord Vishnu, visits his subjects. Onam is celebrated to impress upon the visiting King of the prosperity of his land. Homes are spruced up, elaborate pookkalams or floral carpets are laid to welcome the king. The highlight of the day is the Onasadya or Onam feast, which takes place this afternoon. People wearing new clothes thronged temples early this morning all over the state. The Sabarimala and Guruvayoor temples witnessed heavy rush. A large number of devotees visited the Thrikkakara Temple in Kochi, associ-

ated with the Onam legend. The ten day long Onam festival at the temple draws to a close on Monday evening. Onam is the biggest festival in the Indian state of Kerala. It falls during the first month of the Malayalam calendar which is Chingam (August-September) and marks the homecoming of the legendary King Mahabali. The festival lasts for ten days and is linked to many elements of Kerala's culture and tradition. Intricate flower carpets, elaborate banquet lunch, snake boat races and the kaikottikkali dance all play a part in the festival. Onam is an ancient festival which still survives in the Modern times. Kerala's rice harvest festival and the festival of rain flowers which fell on the Malayalam month of Chingam celebrated the annual visit from pathalam of King Maveli. Onam is unique since king Maveli is revered by people of Kerala from prehistory. The celebrations of Onam start on Atham day, 10 days before Thirunam. The 10 days are part of the traditional Onam celebrations and each day has its

own importance in various rituals and traditions. Earthen mounds, which look somewhat like square pyramids, representing Mahabali and Vamanan(an Avatar of Vishnu) are placed in the dung-plastered courtyards in front of the house and beautifully decorated with flowers. Known as 'Onapookkalam', it is a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms with one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. It is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. (In a similar manner North Indians make something called "Rangoli" which is made of powders of various colors.) When completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons is erected over it. Atham- The first day of Onam Celebrations Chithira- The second day of Onam Celebrations Chodi- The third day of Onam Celebrations Vishakam- The fourth day of Onam Celebrations Anizham- The fifth day of

Onam Celebrations Thriketa- The sixth day of Onam Celebrations Moolam- The seventh day of Onam Celebrations Pooradam- The eighth day of Onam Celebrations Uthradom- The ninth day of Onam Celebrations Thirunam- The tenth day of Onam Celebrations Normally Onam celebrations ends by Thirunam. However two following days after Thirunam is also celebrated as Third and Fourth Onam. The third Onam is called as Avittom which marks the preparations of King Mahabali for his ascension to heavens. The main ritual for the day is to take the Onattappan statue placed in middle of Pookalam for past 10 days and immense in nearby rivers or seas. The pookalam will be cleaned and removed and marks the finale to the Onam celebrations. The day is also important, as it marks the great dance of lions, known as Puli Kali where men in costumes of lions, dances and make a procession around the town of Thrissur in large groups. The Puli-kali can mark the end of traditional Onam celebrations.

Recommendations on

“Efficient Utilization of Numbering Resources in India” Released

Suraj Singh Rajput

Recommends integrated numbering scheme for fixed and mobile services by 31st december, 2011. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) yesterday released the recommendations on “Efficient Utilization of Numbering Resources in India”. The existing National Numbering Plan 2003 (NNP 2003) that was designed for 750 million connections including 450 million mobile connections and was designed to last till 2030, has come under severe strain with the mobile numbers having crossed that mark in 2009 itself. With the number of subscribers likely to exceed 1 billion by 2014, the situation calls for an urgent review to facilitate continued availability of numbers with minimum disruption to any service.

The recommendations propose a solution in this regard. In the recommendations, TRAI has proposed that the existing 10-digit numbering scheme should be continued to avoid inconvenience to the customers that would accompany any move to shift to an 11 digit numbering scheme. Giving a two pronged strategy, TRAI has recommended that India should migrate to an integrated numbering scheme for fixed and mobile services by 31st December, 2011. In other words both fixed line and mobile phones will have a 10-digit number. This would make available enough numbers to cater to expansion of existing services and introduction of new services for the next 30-40 years. This integrated numbering will also facilitate extension of

number portability to fixed lines. Till the integrated scheme is implemented the dialling of intra-circle calls from fixed lines to mobile will be with '0' prefixed. This would enable exploitation of spare capacity available in the sublevels of existing Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA) codes, to the extent of about one billion numbers without affecting any telephone number or STD code. Telephone numbers are a precious resource and should be utilized efficiently. In order to prevent accumulation of unutilized numbers by the service providers, the Authority has proposed that the service providers should not have more than 3 million unutilized numbers, in a service area, at the time of requesting a new block of numbers.

For making allocation of numbers more efficient, TRAI has recommended automation of the allocation process. This would help service providers in getting allocations online. Once the recommendations are accepted, TRAI proposes to go ahead with the work of preparation of detailed plan for migration to the integrated numbering scheme. Number resources have always played a central role in telecommunications and have acquired an important economic dimension with the liberalization of the telecommunications sector. Correspondingly significance of numbering as a regulatory instrument has also increased considerably with adequate, fair and transparent access to numbers becoming an essential part of ensuring a competitive telecommunications market.



Auction for 3G Spectrum

Auction for 3G services was held in all 22 telecom circles. The total reserve price kept for spectrum auction was Rs. 14,330 crores for 3G services and Rs. 5,250 crores for BWA services. Total amount raised by the Government through spectrum auctions is Rs. 67,718.95 crores from 3G services and Rs. 38,542.11 crores from BWA services. This amount includes the share of MTNL/BSNL.

Money raised through the spectrum auctions has been credited into Consolidated Fund of India as non-tax receipts. The additional expenditure of Government is based on the overall resource position comprising tax receipts, non-tax receipts and capital receipts. While it is correct that non-tax receipts have increased due to increased 3G and BWA spectrum auction receipts, the final outcome on tax receipts, other non-tax receipts (excluding 3G & BWA receipts) and capital receipts would be known in due course. However, Government is committed to meeting its deficit target of 5.5% GDP laid down in BE 2010-11.

The Ministry of Communications & Information Technology has requested Ministry of Finance to consider favourably the request of BSNL/MTNL for reimbursement of spectrum charges paid towards 3G spectrum. However, Ministry of Finance has not acceded to the request since the terms of allotment of spectrum to both BSNL and MTNL was that they would have to pay a onetime spectrum fee at a price equal to the highest bid, as determined through the auction of 3G services which was also incorporated in the Notice Inviting Application (NIA) for the auction and also to maintain level playing field with other service providers.

The high-speed access to voice and data technology is known as 3G service, as it is considered the third generation of cellular telecommunications technology. A 3G network is necessary for this service to function. It offers advancements on the 1G and 2G networks such as multimedia applications like video and broadband services.

3G service is based on standards developed by the International Telecommunications Union, known as the IMT-2000 criteria. The telephony service itself benefits from better range and wider accessibility. In addition, data transfer speeds are better than dial-up speeds, and more in line with cable modem technology. The first countries to implement this service option were Japan and South Korea, where 3G now accounts for nearly 70 percent of the networks. Europe and North America, specifically companies in the United Kingdom and United States, have also implemented these services to a bulk of commercial customers. Many countries such as China and Indonesia have delayed the implementation of 3G service due to licensing restrictions and the overall cost of the system. 2G uses a different radio frequency, which means that all new equipment and infrastructure are needed to utilize this service.

Mr Antony said India looks at itself as an integral part of East Asia. India is a founding member of East Asia Summit and as such, looks at the emerging architecture in East Asia as open and inclusive. ‘That is why we welcome the decision of ASEAN Foreign Ministers to move towards the inclusion of the United States and Russia as members of the East Asia Summit. We look forward to working closely with South Korea in the emerging architecture in this part of the world’, he said.

Earlier in the morning, Mr Antony along with the delegation drove down to the National Cemetery in Seoul and laid a wreath there. He also inspected, amid light drizzle, a traditional colourful inter-services guard of honour presented by the South Korean Armed Forces on arrival at the Ministry of Defence Headquarters.

China census highlights growing rights awareness

Census takers counting China’s more than 1.3 billion people already face a daunting task, and it’s getting harder for the latest once-a-decade update.

After years of reforms that have reduced the government’s once-pervasive involvement in most people’s lives, some Chinese are proving reluctant to give up personal information and harboring suspicions about what the government plans to do with their details.

“Along with China’s development, the people’s awareness of legal, personal and privacy rights has been increasing,” said Ji Lin, executive vice mayor of Beijing whose office is overseeing the census in the capital.

“When we were little, it wasn’t this way. If the police wanted to check hukous (Chinese household registration documents), they would just walk in with barely a knock. You can’t do that anymore,” he said.

Accounting for a population more than four times the size of the United States is set to take place from Nov. 1 to 10. Currently, census volunteers are going door-to-door across China, taking an initial poll of how many people live in each home and recording cell phone numbers so workers can get in touch when the census officially begins.

Taking an accurate census in China is a difficult task with the millions of migrant workers who’ve left their official addresses in the countryside for better opportunities in the cities.

Another complicating issue are children born in violation of the country’s one-child policy, many of whom are unregistered and therefore have no legal identity. They could number in the millions. The government has said it would lower or waive the hefty penalty fees required for those children to obtain identity cards, though so far it appears there hasn’t been much response to the limited amnesty.

In cities like Beijing, though, workers have encountered residents reluctant to allow the volunteers into their homes or answer their questions. Recent state media reports have stressed that the census workers must maintain confidentiality, though suspicions remain.

“Some people resist it because they may worry about how the information might be used by the government to investigate their wealth, for example, how many properties they have or perhaps they don’t want their ‘gray income’ to become public. These people are often rich or corrupt,” said Liu Shanying, associate researcher with the Institute of Political Sciences at

offered by both private and government companies. The VTM cells also act as the technical interface between telecom service providers and security agencies.

Rising Indian middle class

The Asian middle class, powered by India and China, is fast replacing Europeans and Americans as the global consumers who anchor the world economy, says a new study by the Asian Development Bank.

India’s booming middle class - or, those who spend anywhere between \$2 and \$20 (93 to 930) a day on purchasing power parity basis - is now spurring consumption and innovation in the country, said the study. The Rise of Asia’s Middle Class, released on Thursday.

However, more than three-fourths of India’s 274 million-strong middle class face the risk of slipping back into poverty in the event of a major economic shock as they are in the lowest spending bracket of \$2-4 (93-186) a day.

Over the next two decades, the Indian middle class population is expected to touch one billion, it said.

And 55% of the world’s middle class will be in Asia by 2030, up from 25% now.

The study found that Asia’s consumers spent an estimated \$4.3 trillion (in 2005 purchasing power parity dollars), or about one-third of OECD consumption expenditure, in 2008 and by 2030 will likely spend \$32 trillion, comprising about 43% of the worldwide consumption.

China had 817 million people, or 63% of its population, in the middle class bracket in 2008.

Ban on Mobiles Manufactured in China

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has not issued any orders/ guidelines in respect of ban of mobiles manufactured in China and operating in the country for want of valid International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number. However, Department of Telecom (DOT) has issued instructions to Telecom

the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Those concerns may be well-founded. The State Statistics Bureau will use the census to examine the real estate market in parts of several cities to determine how many homes were purchased by speculators and are sitting empty, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Thursday.

Also raising privacy concerns in China was a requirement that started Wednesday for people who buy new cell phone numbers to register their personal details. Authorities say they have their sights on rampant junk messages — but some believe the government will use the new tool for monitoring its citizens.

Some ordinary Chinese cited other reasons for objections to the pre-census poll.

Guo Ying, a 31-year-old office worker in Beijing, said he would participate but questioned whether there was any point to it. He wondered whether the results would be accurate — a common concern among Chinese that official figures are often fudged to create a false sense of optimism.

“The final result might not be true and therefore it would be meaningless. Some figures are said to be found through investigation, but is that true? A lot of people have their doubts. Figures like the CPI (consumer price index), the GDP, do they reflect the real situation? Many people are skeptical,” said Guo, taking a break outside the high-rise office complex where he works in IT.

The reluctance to cooperate is even as basic as not wanting to open doors to a stranger. For decades, life in China under the Communist Party centered around tight-knit government work units that were responsible for everything from housing assignments to granting permission for marriage.

Since the country embraced capitalist reforms in 1970, life here has become increasingly urbanized and Chinese are much like their counterparts in other industrialized countries: they commute, work in offices and live in anonymous apartment blocks.

“I live by myself, no way would I open the door to a stranger. Maybe I’d open the door if it were a woman, but if it were a man, definitely not. Safety first, right?” said 25-year-old real estate agent Yin Honglei.

At least one dissident was taken away by police who came knocking on the pretext that they were there to conduct a pre-census check.

Xie Zhaoping, who recently published a book criticizing a forced relocation project in Shaanxi province, was knocked to the ground, handcuffed and taken away by seven plainclothes police, wife Li Qiong told The Associated Press. They had pounded on the door and said they were there to check hukou information.

Li said some of the officers were from Shaanxi’s Weinan city, where a man in the police’s legal department said he did not know details about the incident. Other officers were from Beijing’s Chaoyang district, where phones in the police department rang unanswered. The Beijing city police did not immediately respond to a faxed request for comment.

China Population Census official Gu Yili brushed aside questions about concerns over improper use of census information or other potential violations of personal rights. Nearly everyone is supportive of the census because they know it’s necessary for setting government policy in the years to come, she said.

“The government needs an accurate figure to make appropriate policy and people need to cooperate. It’s in the best interest of ordinary people,” she said, working one recent morning in a Beijing neighborhood of traditional courtyard homes, making sure volunteers were giving out copies of confidentiality

Service Providers that calls from mobile handsets with any IMEI number which is not available in the latest updated IMEI database of Global System for Mobile Association (GSMA) alongwith without IMEI or all zeroes IMEI are not processed and rejected with effect from 24 Hrs. of 30th November 2009.

Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)

Indian Institute of Science and Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, are the only two institutions to make it to the list of the top 500 universities, in Shanghai Jiao Tong University’s 2010 edition of ARWU.

What ARWU factors in is how many Nobel Prizes or Fields Medals (Nobel equivalents in maths) have gone to alumni and staff, how many papers have been published in Nature and Science, and the total number of papers indexed in Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Science Citation Index. Indian schools fare very poorly on all these counts.

Penalty on telecom Service Providers

Amendments were issued in December, 2009 in the Licence Agreements of all telecom service providers for security related concerns. As per these amendments, the Licensee(s) have to apply to the Licensor for security clearance, along with the details of equipment(s) as well as details of equipment(s) suppliers and manufacturers including Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM), before placement of the final purchase order for procurement/upgradation of equipment/software for provisioning of telecommunications services under the licence and that it shall also include any such activity by the franchisee, agents or person of that licensees. In addition, Licensee is required to submit a self certification with Licensor (DoT) that the equipment/ software

agreements and putting blue nylon covers over their shoes before entering homes.

Arab League backs direct Palestinian talks with Israel

Mr Abbas met Arab League delegates representing 13 countries. The Arab League has endorsed direct Palestinian peace talks with the Israelis, but has left the timing to the Palestinians, officials said.

The US has been pushing Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to restart the direct talks, suspended since 2008.

Mr Abbas has demanded a settlement freeze and a return to 1967 borders as a precondition of direct talks.

The move by the Arab League makes it likely the talks will resume in the coming months.

The Palestinian president is now expected to return to Ramallah and seek endorsement for the direct talks from a meeting of Palestinian factions, says the BBC's Jon Leyne in Cairo.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has publicly stated he wants direct talks to start as soon as possible.

In response to the Arab League decision, his office released a statement saying he was "ready to start, already in the next few days, direct and frank talks with the Palestinian Authority".

Thorny issues

The Arab League agreed in principle to direct talks with Israel provided the Palestinians saw fit, said Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem al-Thani, who chaired a meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Cairo.

Mahmoud Abbas Palestinian leader "Of course, there is agreement, but agreement over the principles of what will be discussed and the manner of the direct negotiations," he said. But the timing of the direct talks was "a matter for the Palestinian side to decide", he said. Mr Netanyahu has said he is ready to discuss all the core issues of the decades-old conflict, and has accused the Palestinians of avoiding direct talks.

Mr Abbas wants Israel to agree to a complete halt in settlement construction and to accept a Palestinian state in territories seized in the 1967 Middle East war - the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

"When I receive written assurances [about] accepting the 1967 border and halting the settlement [building], I will go immediately to the direct talks," Mr Abbas was quoted as saying by Egypt's state-owned news agency before the meeting.

Mr Netanyahu has accepted the idea of Palestinian statehood with conditions, but has ruled out giving up control of East Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as the capital of a future state.

Israel also acceded to US pressure to temporarily limit settlement building in the West Bank, but its 10-month moratorium expires in September.

Mr Abbas suspended negotiations after Israel carried out an offensive on the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip in December 2008 in response, Israel said, to Palestinian rocket fire.

UNICEF Report

The Coverage Evaluation Survey 2009 (CES-2009), a nationwide survey covering all States and Union Territories of India, commissioned by UNICEF was conducted during November 2009 to January 2010. The CES shows significant increase in major

proposed for procurement/upgradation is free from black boxes, malware, trapdoor and remote/hidden attack through computerised command and control and adequate steps and mechanisms for adequate security against any subversive activity by company/manufacturer/vendors involved in the supply chain have been taken and are in place. If the Licensor/Government of India at later stage, after security audit of the above said equipment/software procured by them for use in their network for providing licensed services, finds that the self certification as above is incorrect, then they agree to accept a penalty of upto Rupees Fifty Crore as per Licence Agreement for each such procurement. In such an event, on hearing from Licensor/GoI, they shall immediately uninstall and remove the equipments/software from the network for providing licensed services and follow any other direction from the Licensor/ Government of India in this regard in the interest of National Security.

Recently, amendments in the Unified Access Services (UAS)/Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS)/Basic Services License Agreements and template of agreement between telecom service provider and vendor of equipment/software/services has been issued on 28-07-2010 in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs, to addresses the security concerns in procurement of equipment from foreign vendors. Accordingly, in the event, any security breach is detected at later stage after deployment/installation of equipment as a result of security audit or in any other manner, the relevant equipment supplied by the vendor shall be taken out of service and penalty of Rs. Fifty crore for each Purchase Order shall be imposed on the Licensee. In addition, a penalty of 100% of contract value shall be levied by the Licensor on the licensee. The Licensee shall deposit the penalty and additional penalty with the Licensor within 30 days of the Notice. The Licensor may also at its discretion

indicators for maternal and child health including immunization and reaffirms the positive results of the strategies adopted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) for the Reproductive and Child Health Programme.

Maternal health

Janani Suraksha Yojana has changed the scenario of institutional delivery in the country. The CES results show that when compared to data of NFHS-III, which provides the figures for 2005-06, beginning of NRHM, certain important parameters of maternal health have shown impressive increases:

Institutional delivery has increased from 40.7 % to 72.9 %

Safe delivery by skilled birth attendants has increased from 48.2% to 76 %

Mothers who had 3 or more Ante Natal Check-ups has also increased from 50.7 % to 68.7%.

In the so called backward states such as Madhya Pradesh institutional delivery has increased from 29.7 % to 81%, in Orissa where institutional delivery has increased from 38.8 % to 75.5%, in Rajasthan from 32.2 % to 70.4 %, in Bihar from 22.0 % to 48.3%, in Chhattisgarh from 15.7% to 44.9% and in Uttar Pradesh this has increased from 22.0 % to 62.1 %.

Child Health

There has been a considerable improvement in Child Health indicators as compared to NFHS III (2005-06)

The proportion of children with diarrhoea in the last two weeks who received ORS has increased from 26 % in NFHS III to 53.6 in CES 2009

The proportion of children with Acute Respiratory Infection in the last two weeks who were given advise or treatment has increased from 69% in NFHS III (2005-06) to 82.6% in CES 2009

The number of children breast fed within one hour has increased from 24.5 % in NFHS III (2005-06) to 33.5 % in CES 2009

Additionally the CES findings in some of the high focus states show substantial change in two critical child health indicators:

Oral Rehydration Solution Use/Oral Rehydration Therapy (increased fluids for diarrhoea)

Orissa (54.8 % in NFHS III to 69.0 % in CES)

Chhattisgarh (46.4 % in NFHS III to 68.3 % in CES)

Jammu & Kashmir (46.6 % in NFHS III to 79.8 % in CES)

Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) care seeking in any health facility

Madhya Pradesh (51.5 % in NFHS III to 75.9 % in CES)

Jharkhand (67.0 % in NFHS III to 70.9 % in CES)

Bihar (70.2 % in NFHS III to 82.9 % in CES)

Orissa (76.5 % in NFHS III to 79.4 % in CES)

Chhattisgarh (66.8 % in NFHS III to 85.0 % in CES)

Jammu & Kashmir (71.6 % in NFHS III to 83.7 % in CES)

The Coverage Evaluation Survey shows a significant change in newborn care practices which are important in preventing infections and hypothermia and absence of these practises contribute substantially to Infant Mortality Rate. For instance:

86.0% of the newborn had their cord cut with a sterilized/new blade

43.6% of newborn were not given bath immediately.

74.3% of children were wiped dry and wrapped

The Proportion of newborn checked within

blacklist the vendor from making any supply deals with Indian Operators.

India to push for early opening up of services sector with ASEAN

The proposed services and investment agreement between India and Asean hasn't made much headway due to the trade block's reluctance to open up a large number of services to Indian companies and professionals.

So far, most Asean members have made offers in just four-five of the more than 150 services categories and are hesitating to give commitments on allowing easier movement of professionals.

India and Asean have already implemented a bilateral free trade agreement in goods early this year with the intention of extending it to services and investment by the end of the current calendar year.

The delay in talks is disappointing for India as it expects to gain much more in services than from goods as Asean has also not agreed to India's demand for a separate chapter on liberalising movement of professionals and are yet to come up with specific offers in the area. India hopes to make inroads into several areas such as education, medicine & healthcare and accountancy and architecture once the norms are liberalised.

FDI in Aviation Sector

The Policy on foreign equity participation in the domestic air transport services has been revised w.e.f. 31.1.2008. The present limit of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in aviation sector are as under:

Airports:

Greenfield Projects:

FDI upto 100% is allowed under the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation. Existing Projects: FDI upto 100% is allowed, however beyond 74% FDI, approval of FIPB is required and also subject to sectoral regulations notified by

24 hours is 65.6%

Routine Immunization

The full immunization coverage at the national level has also increased to 61.0% as per CES (Coverage Evaluation Survey) 2009 from 43.5 % in NFHS-3 (2005-06). Of the 23 states that have shown improvement in full immunization coverage when compared to NFHS -3 (2005-06), 9 states have shown improvement in full immunization coverage of 20 -30 %; and similarly in 6 states the improvement has been between 10-20%. The large states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Bihar, Assam, Karnataka, Maharashtra has shown improvement of full immunization coverage of more than 15 % as compared to NFHS-3. These improvements have been due to the various NRHM initiatives including strengthening of the immunization programme.

The findings of the survey are a testimony to the positive results of the RCH –II Programme and the efforts being made under National Rural Health Mission.

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Air Transport Services:

(i)Scheduled Air Transport Service/Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline – FDI upto 49% and investment by Non-Resident Indians (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and no direct or indirect participation by any foreign airlines.

(ii):Non-Scheduled Air Transport Service/ Non-Scheduled airlines, Chartered airlines and Cargo airlines: FDI upto 74% and investment by Non-Resident Indian (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and no direct or indirect participation by any foreign airlines in Non-scheduled and Chartered airlines. Foreign airlines are allowed to participate in the equity of companies operating Cargo airlines.

(iii)Helicopter services/seaplane services – FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and approval of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Foreign airlines are allowed to participate in the equity of companies operating Helicopter and Seaplane Services.

Other services under Civil Aviation Sector:

(i) Ground Handling Services: FDI upto 74% and investment by Non-Resident Indians (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and security clearance.

(ii) Maintenance and Repair Organizations – FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation.

(iii) Flying training Institutes and Technical Training Institutions – FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified

Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Air Transport Services:

(i)Scheduled Air Transport Service/ Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline – FDI upto 49% and investment by Non-Resident Indians (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and no direct or indirect participation by any foreign airlines.

(ii):Non-Scheduled Air Transport Service/ Non-Scheduled airlines, Chartered airlines and Cargo airlines: FDI upto 74% and investment by Non-Resident Indian (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and no direct or indirect participation by any foreign airlines in Non-scheduled and Chartered airlines. Foreign airlines are allowed to participate in the equity of companies operating Cargo airlines.

(iii)Helicopter services/seaplane services – FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route subject to sectoral regulations notified by Ministry of Civil Aviation and approval of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Foreign airlines are allowed to participate in the equity of companies operating Helicopter and Seaplane Services.

India's Golfer Arjun Atwal made history, as he became the first Indian to win on the PGA Tour

Earlier, Arjun Atwal had won on the European, Asian and nationwide tours. But this is the first time he won on a PGA tour, bringing laurel to the country.

Atwal is based in Orlando. He will get a two-year exemption on the US tour by the virtue of his win at Wyndham Championship. Atwal won the championship by one stroke.

The 37-year-old Arjun Atwal finished at 20-under-par 260 to beat American David Toms (64) by one stroke. He expressed joy

fied by Ministry of Civil Aviation and approval of DGCA.

Look East Policy of the Country

The ‘Look East Policy’ of the Government has been evolving since the early 1990s and has significantly deepened India’s engagement with the countries of East and Southeast Asia. India’s trade and Investment with that part of the world has been enhanced significantly. India had signed a ‘Trade in Goods’ agreement with ASEAN in 2009, which became operational from 1 January 2010. India has concluded a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the Republic of Korea (RoK), which is also being implemented from 1 January 2010.

India and China have established a Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and have enunciated a Shared Vision for the 21st Century. There are regular high-level political contacts between the two countries. The two sides have established a dialogue architecture to discuss the entire range of bilateral relations. The functional cooperation between the two countries is expanding in all areas. During the visit of Commerce and Industry Minister to China in January 2010, the two countries signed a MoU on Expansion of Trade and Economic Cooperation. An Agreement on the Establishment of the Direct Secure Telephone Link between the Prime Minister of India and the Chinese Premier was signed during the visit of the External Affairs Minister to China in April 2010. Both sides have agreed that they are committed to resolving outstanding differences, including on the Boundary Question, through peaceful negotiations, while ensuring that such differences are not allowed to affect the positive development of bilateral relations.

Joint Education Council between India and Australia

The India-Australia Education Council is to bring together government, academia, business and industry of both the countries to enhance bilateral collaboration in the education sector. The subject of safety and well being of students of both the counties is being taken up during bilateral meetings at various levels. An Indian delegation led by the Minister of Human Resource Development visited Australia from 6th to 10th April 2010 held extensive discussions with various dignitaries from the Federal Government of Australia as well as State Governments of Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria regarding the safety and well being of Indian students in Australia. The Minister urged the Australian authorities to take stringent measures to stop such attacks and also to apprehend the culprits in recent incidents. The Australian Government has undertaken various measures for protection and safety of Indian students including introduction of an International Students' Care Service, deployment of additional forces, amendments in sentencing laws and empowering police forces to combat violence and antisocial behavior. The Premier of New South Wales also assured the Union HRD Minister of early establishment of help line for international students, including Indian students, to access in distress.

and happiness over his success and vowed to keep up the momentum in future.

2nd round of Israel-Palestine peace talks in Sharm el-Sheikh

Isarel and Palestine will hold second round of peace talks in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh on 14th and 15th September in the presence of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will lead the negotiations with Clinton in Sharm-el Sheikh, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Abbas and Netanyahu relaunched their direct peace talks at a Washington summit Thursday last after a 20-month hiatus.

Clinton will be assisted by US Special Envoy for Mideast Region George Mitchell during the talks and the Secretary of State would visit Jerusalem the next day for further talks, the State Department announced in Washington.

The last direct peace talks between Palestine and Israel ended in December 2008, when Israeli forces invaded Gaza to halt Hamas rocket fire on Israel.

The Palestinian authority for borders has announced the Rafah border will be closed during the minor Bayram from Friday next until Sunday night.

The border will be reopened on 13th September.

The Authority said the closure came upon a request from Egypt as the officers at the borders will be on vacation.

Editorial & Corporate Office
Sector 15, Nayabans, NOIDA
RNI
UPENG/2008/26617
Publisher, Editor & Owner
D.S.Rajput
Year 2, Vol. 1, Issue 109, 5 - 12
September, 2010
Place of Publication &
Registered Office
331/240 A, Stainly road
Nayapura,
Allahabad (N.P.)
Printing Press and address
Academy press, Daraganj,
Allahabad (U.P.)
website:
developindiagroup.com
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developindiamediagroup@gmail.com
developindia2011@gmail.com
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Editorial No. -
8800506832