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India Focus


Finance Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram

this issue

BILATERAL

Tata, Singapore Airlines incorporate airline venture

PTI: November 10, 2013 15:19

Gearing up to launch a full-service airline on domestic and international routes, salt-to-software conglomerate Tata Group has incorporated its proposed aviation venture, Tata SIA Airlines Ltd, as a public limited company with the filing of all requisite documents and details with the Corporate Affairs Ministry.

The new company is a joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines, with Tata Sons Ltd holding a majority stake of 51 per cent in it, while the Singaporean aviation major holds the remaining 49 per cent.

As per information available with the Corporate Affairs Ministry, the new company was incorporated on November 5 with a total paid up capital of Rs. 5 lakh and has been registered in New Delhi.

The incorporation documents have been signed by three directors - Prasad Menon, Kersi Rustom Bhagat and Mukund Govind Rajan. ***Cont on P. 6***

TOP NEWS » ECONOMY

GDP growth seen between 5-5.5 per cent in 2013-14: P Chidambaram

Reuters : Nov 15, 2013

India is likely to achieve an economic growth of between 5-5.5 percent in this fiscal year, the finance minister said on Friday, despite wide expectations of growth slipping below 5 percent by private economists.

"I am confident that the greenshoots that are visible here and there will multiply and that the economy will revive, there will be an upturn in the second half of this year," P. Chidambaram said while speaking at a bankers' conference. "It's quite possible that the estimates made by the Reserve Bank (of India) or the Prime Minister's economic advisory council or the government about growth being between 5 and 5.5 percent will be realised," he said.

Chidamabram also pledged to meet the country's fiscal and current account deficit targets, as fears of U.S. Federal Reserve reducing its stimulus fuel concern India's vulnerability to foreign sell-offs

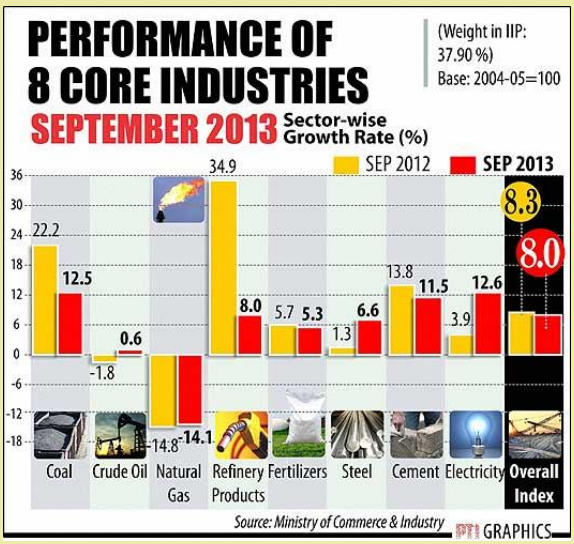
Infrastructure sector grows by 8 pct in Sept, highest in 11 months

PTI : New Delhi, Thu Oct 31 2013

Reflecting pick up in industrial activity, the Infrastructure sector industries recorded 8 per cent growth in September, highest in the past 11 months.

The eight infrastructure industries grew mainly due to expansion in crude oil, steel and electricity production.

The growth rate of the core industries is higher than the previous month, August 2013, when these sectors grew by 3.7 per cent. However, it is lower than 8.3 per cent that was recorded a year ago in September 2012. The core industries, which also include coal, natural gas, petroleum refinery products,



fertiliser and cement with a weight of about 38 per cent in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), have grown at 3.2 per cent during the April-September period of this fiscal, 2013-14, compared to 6.6 per cent in the first six months of 2012-13.

Crude oil, steel and electricity output grew by 0.6 per cent, 6.6 per cent and 12.6 per cent respectively during September, according to the official data released here today.

Experts said though the growth rate in September is high, there is a need to carefully watch the coming 2-3 months.

"One should not be in a hurry to say that this figure is reflecting revival. If the similar trend will continue for another 2-3 months then we can say. But it will have a positive impact on IIP numbers for September," CRISIL Principal Economist D K Joshi said.

The IIP numbers for September are likely to be announced on November 12. Factory output slowed down sharply to 0.6 per cent in August mainly on account of contraction in manufacturing and mining.

Coal production growth rate slowed to 12.5 per cent, while natural gas output dipped (-) 14.1 per cent. Growth in petroleum refinery products declined to 8 per cent in September, as against 34.9 per cent in the same period previous year. Fertiliser and cement production growth also slowed to 5.3 per cent and 11.5 per cent.

For the April-September period, crude oil production has declined by (-) 1.3 per cent as compared to a contraction of (-) 0.8 per cent. Similarly the output of natural gas in the six month period contracted by (-) 16.5 per cent as compared to decline in production by (-) 12.5 per cent in the same period last year.

Petroleum refinery production expanded by 5.3 per cent during the period, as against 27 per cent in April-September 2012. During the first half of this fiscal, cement output too slowed down to 4.5 per cent compared to 9.1 per cent.

The production of coal also slowed down to 2.3 per cent as compared to 9.4 per cent. During April-September, however, fertiliser production grew by 2.5 per cent compared to (-) 5.6 per cent in the same period last fiscal.

Steel and electricity generation grew by 4.5 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively during the period.

FDI in India jumps 35 pc to $13.6 billion in January-July 2013

By PTI | 31 Oct, 2013

NEW DELHI: Foreign direct investment in India has increased by about 35 per cent to USD 13.6 billion during the first half of 2013 with merger and acquisitions accounting for the bulk of inflows, says an UNCTAD report.

During January-June 2012, the country had received USD 10.1 billion of foreign direct investment (FDI). The report, released today, said that foreign fund inflows into India has pushed the total figures for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

"An increase in flows to the SAARC is accounted for mainly by the rise in flows to India," it said while releasing the FDI estimates.

FDI through mergers and acquisitions has registered a growth of 65.7 per cent during the first half of 2013 to USD 1.8 billion as against USD 1.1 billion in January-June 2012.

Among BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) members, India stood at fourth position, above South Africa, in terms of FDI inflows.

China (USD 67 billion) retained its second position after after the UK, among the world's largest recipients of FDI in this period. Russia with USD 56 billion is at the fifth position, Brazil (USD 30 billion) at eighth. South Africa has received only USD 3.3 billion during January-June 2013.

India targets $2.3 billion asset sales in PSUs by year-end

Reuters : New Delhi, Mon Nov 11 2013

India has revived plans to sell stakes in two state-owned companies to raise about $2.3 billion to boost public finances, aiming to push through a sale by mid-December to take advantage of a share market rally.

Two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said investor roadshows will be launched in the United States on Tuesday for a 10 per cent stake in state refiner Indian Oil Corp (IOC).

The government's Department of Disinvestment (DoD), which oversees stake sales in state companies, has also completed most of the overseas roadshows to sell a 5 percent stake in state miner Coal India, which could fetch about $1.5 billion, the sources told Reuters. The department hopes to launch the stake sales in the two state companies before December 15, they said, after which overseas investors typically start to wind down for Christmas and New Year holidays.

"We would like to launch both before mid-December, but not sure if we will be able to do that," one of the sources said. The government's planned sale of stakes in Indian Oil and other state companies including Coal India is critical to relieving pressure on public finances that could put the country's investment-grade credit rating at risk.

"IOC (Indian Oil Corp) roadshows are starting from the 12th (of November), even though it is a difficult issue to market because of the sector problems," the source said, referring to losses that state oil retailers incur because of selling diesel, kerosene and cooking gas at state-capped rates.

The sources declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter. DoD officials, as well as officials at Indian Oil and Coal India could not be reached for comment.

The divestment department is keen to push through the stake sales to take advantage of a share market rally that sent India's benchmark stock index to a record high this month on the back of strong foreign inflows. The index is up 6.4 percent this year.

The Indian Oil investor roadshows will be held in New York and Boston. The Indian cabinet cleared the sale in August.

At current market prices, the 10 percent stake sale in Indian Oil could fetch New Delhi around $800 million. The government owns nearly 79 percent in Indian Oil, and 90 percent in Coal India.

So far, officials have pitched the Coal India offering to investors in the United States and Britain, and will proceed to Australia and South East Asia this week, a third source said. Roadshows for local investors will be held after that, he added.

Exports up 13.47 pc to USD 27.27 bn in October

Reuters | New Delhi | Updated: Nov 11 2013

India's exports rose by 13.47 per cent to USD 27.27 billion in October while imports dipped by 14.5 per cent, helping narrow the trade deficit.

Imports stood at USD 37.8 billion, leaving a trade deficit of USD 10.56 billion as against USD 20.2 billion in October 2012, official data showed.

"This is a consistent growth in exports... The US is doing extremely well and Europe is also doing well," Commerce Secretary S R Rao told reporters here.

Gold and silver imports in October dipped to USD 1.3 billion from USD 6.8 billion in the same period last year.

In April-October, exports grew by 6.32 per cent to USD 179.38 billion, while imports during the period contracted by 3.8 per cent to USD 270.06 billion. Rao expressed confidence that the country would achieve the USD 325 billion target for the current fiscal.

BANKING/FINANCE

RBI unveils norms for foreign banks to set up wholly-owned units

The Hindu Business Line: November 07, 2013

Mumbai: Foreign banks that want to set up operations in India will have to do so through an independent subsidiary. This means they cannot operate as a branch of the parent bank.

The Reserve Bank of India has announced new guidelines with a view to ring-fence the local operations of foreign banks from adverse developments in their home countries.

However, the RBI will allow some foreign banks to operate in India as a branch of their parent bank.

The wholly-owned subsidiary (WOS) model will be compulsory for banks which have complex structures, are perceived as systemically important and belong to jurisdictions which give preferential treatment to deposits of home country.

Currently, foreign banks as a group are entitled to open 12 branches in India every year, according to WTO commitments. India has usually allowed a higher number.

The new dispensation will probably help foreign bank branches proliferate — provided, of course, their countries have reciprocal arrangements for Indian banks in their territories.

Old foreign banks that set up shop prior to August 2010 (such as Citibank, HSBC, Standard Chartered and DBS) will have the option to continue operating as a branch of their foreign parent, but they will be "incentivised" to convert into WoS.

To prevent foreign banks from dominating the banking system, the RBI said that it will put in place certain restrictions. Requiring foreign banks to get RBI's prior approval before getting liquidity infusion from their parent bank would be one such condition.

The initial minimum capital for a WoS will be Rs 500 crore, which foreign banks would need to bring upfront; this applies to even existing foreign banks which wish to convert.

Further, the RBI said that the WoS will be required to meet Basel-III requirements (9 per cent Tier-I capital) right from Day One. For the first three years, the WoS will have to maintain Tier-I capital at 10 per cent.

The Priority Sector Lending (PSL) requirement will be 40 per cent for WoSs, such as domestic scheduled commercial banks. Existing foreign bank branches converting into WoS will be given "adequate" time to comply with the PSL targets.

Branch Operations

On opening of new branches, the RBI has sought to bring the WOSs on a par with domestic banks.

They will be allowed to open branches in Tier 1-centres without taking prior permission from the RBI provided at least 25 per cent of their branches are opened in un-banked rural centres (Tier 5 and Tier 6).

Board of Directors

The RBI also mandated that at least a third of the directors should be independent of the management of the subsidiary in India, its parent or associates. It also wants at least a third of the directors to be Indian nationals resident in India.

RBI allows investors to invest in credit enhanced bonds up to $5 bn

Business Standard: November 12, 2013

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to allow various investors to invest in the credit enhanced bonds up to a limit of $5 billion within the overall limit of $51 billion earmarked for corporate debt, said RBI on Monday.

These investors include Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) registered Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs), Qualified Foreign Investors (QFIs) and long term investors registered with Sebi – Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs), multilateral agencies, pension/ insurance/ endowment funds and foreign central banks.

Earlier RBI had said that these parties may purchase, on repatriation basis, government securities and non-convertible debentures (NCDs) / bonds issued by an Indian company subject to norms and limits as prescribed by RBI and Sebi from time to time. The present limits for investments by FIIs, QFIs and long term investors registered with Sebi in government securities and corporate debt stands at $30 billion and $51 billion, respectively.

Inflows through dollar special swap windows touch $17.5 bn: RBI

PTI : Mumbai, Mon Nov 11 2013

The Reserve Bank today said it has received USD 17.5 billion so far through the two special windows for swapping foreign currency non-resident (banks) deposits and overseas foreign currency borrowings by banks.

The central bank operationalised these special windows on September 4 to prop the rupee. which had fallen close to 30 per cent between April and August. The window will remain open till November 30.

The special widow allows banks to swap the fresh FCNR (B) dollar funds, mobilised for a minimum tenor of three years and over, at a fixed rate of 3.5 per cent per annum for the tenor of the deposit.

The RBI also allowed banks to borrow up to 100 per cent of tier I capital from overseas, which can be swapped with the central bank at a concessional rate of 100 basis points below the ongoing swap rate prevailing in the market.

The rupee has gained nearly 11 per cent from September till date on account of higher dollar inflows and other measures taken by the RBI and the government.

On November 6, the RBI said that it had received USD 15.2 billion from the special concessional window.

Many analysts have pegged inflows from these instruments to be in range of USD 20 to 25 billion.

BUSINESS

Indian textiles surge, regain No. 3 slot in the US market

Indian Express. 5th November, 2013

India has clawed back into the list of top three apparel and textile exporters to the key US market during the first seven months of 2013, after being pushed out of the top five last year.

Riding on the competitive advantage of a weak rupee and improving signs of a pick-up in the US economy, India's textile and apparel exports to the American market was pegged at $3.73 billion during the first seven months of 2013, right after China and Vietnam, according to the US Department of Commerce's Office of Textiles and Apparel (OTEXA) data.

Among the top 10 textile and apparel suppliers to the US, India's growth in export value during this period at 4 per cent was higher than the 3 per cent growth in overall imports into the US and was also third when the top 10 are stacked up in terms of growth rate, after Vietnam's 13.5 per cent and Bangladesh's 9 per cent.

Of the total textile and apparel exports of $3.73 billion, apparel accounted for the bigger chunk — over $2 billion — as against the value of non-apparel exports (or home textiles) at $1.73 billion.

In the last five years, in both the US and the EU markets — which account for over 80 per cent of the textile and clothing exports from the country — India's main growth had been coming from home textile supplies, which include intermediates such as yarn, fabric and made-ups.

Better performance in the value-added apparel segments is being seen as a big positive during this year. Data for imports into the US market during the first nine months of calendar 2012 had showed that shipments from India were down 1.45 per cent at $4.53 billion as compared to the same period of 2011, the biggest fall among the major suppliers to the US market.

India was down to the sixth position then. Bangladesh too had seen a drop, but the fall was a lower 1.25 per cent, with exports at $3.65 billion during the period, even as Vietnam was up 5.35 per cent to clock shipments of $5.74 billion. China was down marginally by 0.46 per cent during the nine months, but was still going strong at $30.53 billion. In the EU market, India was a distant fourth in terms of supplies, and clocked lower growth than Bangladesh and Pakistan, both of which have concessional duty access to the EU members.

The pick-up in performance visible in the export performance of Indian apparel and textiles is also matched by a revival of sorts visible in domestic sales, according to DK Nair, secretary general of industry body CITI (Confederation of Indian Textile Industry). The turnaround in the performance of textile and apparel exports comes after India's lacklustre performance in much of the last half a decade.

Germany farm gear maker to turn India an export hub

The Hindu Business Line: November 01, 2013

New Delhi: German farm equipment maker Lemken GmbH, which specialises in pre-harvesting implements such as reversible ploughs, plans to

make India its export hub to cater to markets in Asia and Africa.

Lemken, which set up a manufacturing unit in Nagpur with an investment of Rs 60 crore last year, expects to start exports to south China and African countries from next year, said Anthony Van Der Ley, CEO, Lemken GmbH.

The 232-year-old German firm also plans to set up a small design team of about eight engineers in India taking advantage of the engineering skills here to customise its products for the local market.

"We are looking at India from a long-term perspective and the market here holds a major potential," Ley said.

In its first year of operations, Lemken India sold over 350 hydraulic reversible ploughs, which cost around Rs 1.8 lakh each, almost three times higher than mechanical ploughs. Lemken's equipment is used along with tractors.

The company is targeting to sell 1,000 ploughs next year and also plans to introduce other equipment such as disc harrow, which is used to cut, mix and mulch soil and seed drills among others.

"We use a highly specialised alloy boron steel that enhances the life of our equipment to a great extent, making it more expensive than conventional ones," said Arvind Kumar, MD and CEO of Lemken India Agro Equipment Pvt Ltd. Currently, Lemken's products are sold in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab, while the company is looking at other States such as Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.

Kumar said the Government should look at extending subsidy, being offered to farm equipments, to technology-intensive farm implements, such as hydraulic reversible ploughs to give a push farm mechanisation.

India could be major manufacturing hub for JC Bamford Excavators

The Hindu Business Line: November 01, 2013

UK-based construction equipment maker JC Bamford Excavators Ltd is set to expand its product portfolio in India to cater to the domestic and export market.

The company, the world's largest manufacturer of backhoe loaders, is adding manufacturing capability with a view to making India a major manufacturing hub for fully-built equipment, engines and parts. India has emerged as a strategic location for the potential it holds, as well as to serve markets such as South Africa and Malaysia, said Anthony Bamford, Chairman of JC Bamford.

"India accounts for a significant chunk of the business and this is expected to go up as infrastructure growth picks up," he said.

New plants

As its new plants get commissioned in Rajasthan next year, the company is looking at rolling out more products from India. Apart from backhoe loaders, where it is the market leader, JCB India manufactures excavators and compactors. One out of two construction equipment sold in India is made by JCB, according to the company. It plans to widen it range, specifically in telescopic handlers, forklifts and excavators.

Referring to the potential for construction equipment in India, Bamford said the nation's infrastructure segment is facing challenging times as the economy is passing through a tough cycle. But there is huge potential for growth. From a global investor perspective, Bamford said there seems to be some vacuum in terms of overall policies and their implementation in India. While the Finance Minister and the RBI have done well, there could be a phase of tepid growth due to elections next year, he added.

"At JCB, we are optimistic the Indian economy and the construction sector will get better. While most economies around the world struggled during the 2008-09 global economic crisis, India handled it the best," he said.

JCB India expects construction, road building, earth moving and waste management to drive demand for its equipment.

Bamford expressed confidence JCB will grow at a higher pace than the country's economy.

BILATERAL

Tata, Singapore Airlines incorporate airline venture..*Cont from P.1*

The incorporation follows approval from the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) late last month for the proposed investment of $49 million by SIA in the joint venture, where Tatas are making initial investment of $51 million as per their shareholding structure.

Earlier, the JV got approval from the Corporate Affairs Ministry to use the name 'Tata SIA Airlines Limited'. ..*Cont on P.9*

Notifications

Reserve Bank of India

Foreign investment in India - participation by SEBI registered FIIs, QFIs and SEBI registered long term investors in credit enhanced bonds

http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=8563&Mode=0

Notification governing money changing activities – Location of Forex Counters in International Airports in India

http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=8417&Mode=0

Investments by Non-resident Indians (NRIs) under Portfolio Investment Scheme (PIS) Liberalisation of Policy

http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=8325&Mode=0

Overseas Direct Investments

http://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=8305&Mode=0

Central Board of Excise and Customs

Notification seeking to levy definitive antidumping duty on resin or other organic substances bonded fibre boards etc

http://www.cbec.gov.in/customs/cs-act/notifications/notfns-2013/cs-add2013/csadd-18-2013.htm

Circular regarding import of pets as baggage

http://www.cbec.gov.in/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circ13/circ15-2013-cs.htm

Notification seeking to further amend notification No. 30/98-Customs (N.T.), dated 2nd June, 1998, so as to raise the value limit of Jewellery allowed duty free to an Indian passenger who has been residing abroad for more than one year.

http://www.cbec.gov.in/customs/cs-act/notifications/notfns-2013/cs-nt2013/csnt25-2013.pdf

Notification regarding increase in basic custom duty on all types of crude edible oil

http://www.cbec.gov.in/customs/cs-act/notifications/notfns-2013/cs-tarr2013/cs02-2013.htm

Income Tax Department

Circular on application of profit split method

http://law.incometaxindia.gov.in/DIT/File_opener.aspx?page=CIR&schT=&csId=a4641a4f-a3e3-4a9f-91d9-4035af1daa95&crn=&yr=ALL&sch=&title=Taxmann%20-%20Direct%20Tax%20Laws

FORTHCOMING EVENTS >>>> *INDIA*

Reverse Buyer Seller Meet at India International Coir Fair

Date: 25-26 November, 2013

Venue: New Delhi

Organizer: The Coir Board (http://www.coirboard.gov.in/index.html)

Details: The event will showcase the entire gamut of products of the Indian coir sector. The Reverse Buyer Seller Meet forms the most important component of IICF 2013 and will include display of products, presentation, one-on-one meeting, business negotiations etc. In this regard the Board proposes to mobilize prominent buyers of coir products in Singapore to attend the RBSM and is willing to reimburse the economy excursion class airfare to participating delegates in addition to local hospitality.

ELECRAMA-2014

Date: 8-12 January, 2014

Venue: Bangalore International Exhibition Centre, Bangalore

Organizer: The Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers' Association

Contact: www.elecrama.com

Details: The exhibition is supported by the Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Ministry of Power, and Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. ELECRAMA showcases products and technology through the entire voltage spectrum, from 220 V to 1200 kV, conforming to global standards and specifications. ELECRAMA-2014 is designed to maximise event experience by its multilateral approach, through a range of concurrent events that brings together a wide gamut of industry stakeholders.

India International Handwoven Fair

Date: 12-14 March, 2014

Venue: Chennai Trade Centre, Chennai

Organizer: The Handloom Export Promotion Council (www.hepcindia.com)

Contact: www.iihfchennai.com

Details: During this 4th edition of IIHF, 200 domestic manufacturers/exporters from all over India producing handwoven products and 150 buyers from around the world would be participating. Products ranging from home textiles, made-ups, silk products, floor coverings, woolen handlooms, fashion accessories etc would be displayed. The Council would like to invite buyers to attend this event & selected buyers will be eleigible for the following complimentary package

- Restricted economy class onward and return airfare
- Hotel accommodation for three nights during the fair

TENDER NOTICES >>>> *INDIA*

Tender invitation for the following stores

1. **Wideband Power Sensors**
2. **Peak Power Meter**
3. **Pulse Analyzer Software**

Microwave Tube Research & Development Centre, URL : www.drdo.org

Closing Date : 20th November, 2013

Tender invitation for Procurement of Kelly Swivel.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation limited , URL : https://etender.ongc.co.in

Closing Date : 16th December, 2013

Tata, Singapore Airlines incorporate airline venture..*Cont from P.6*

The process of incorporating a new company for this joint venture started with registration of the name, followed by submission of various other documents, including the article of association, and details of the company's board of directors, share capital, business areas etc.
Tata SIA Airlines is among the first major companies to be incorporated under the new Companies Act, 2013.
The two partners are making an initial investment of $100 million to launch the airline, which may take off next year after getting all the clearances required.
This is the third attempt by the Tatas and SIA to enter the Indian civil aviation sector.
The Tata group has a long history of association with civil aviation in India.
J R D Tata had started Tata Airlines in 1932, which was later, in 1946, renamed as Air India and was subsequently nationalised in 1953.
In February this year, the Tatas also announced a partnership with Malaysia's AirAsia for a low-cost carrier in India, wherein Arun Bhatia's Telestra Tradeplace is third partner. Tata and Singapore Airlines have assured the government that control of their proposed venture would always remain in Indian hands, while seeking approval to offer full-service passenger services on both domestic and international routes.
The initial board of the new carrier will have three members, which would be later expanded to six members with six nominees of the Tata Group. The JV would also provide air transport carriers for both passengers and freights as well as supporting services to air transport, like operation or airport flying facilities, radio beacons, flying control centres and radar stations.

India's Mars Orbiter launched successfully

IBEF: November 06, 2013

New Delhi: India's Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), also known as Mangalyaan, lifted off successfully from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota at 2.38 pm on Tuesday. It is India's first interplanetary mission to planet Mars and if successful, would make Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) the fourth space agency to reach Mars after Roscosmos, NASA and ESA. The project, costing Rs 450 crore (US$ 72.6 million), is the cheapest and low cost mission to Mars and at the same time establishes India's self-reliance in the area of space technology in the world.

It is important to note here that this was the first time that an Indian spacecraft had been sent out of the Earth's gravity. The mission would demonstrate the technological capability to reach Mars orbit and carry out experiments. The Polar Space Launch Vehicle (PSLV)-C25 placed the Mars Orbiter spacecraft very precisely into an elliptical orbit around Earth. The spacecraft is set to travel for 300 days, reaching Mars orbit in 2014. The instruments on board are aimed at taking 360 degree panoramic pictures of Mars and asses minerals on the planet.

Events

*High Commissioner inaugurates A*STAR Workshop*

*High Commissioner Ms. Vijay Thakur Singh inaugurates the Agency for Science Technology & Research (A*STAR) workshop in Singapore on 14th November. A*STAR held a joint workshop. with India on 14-15 November 2013 at Biopolis, Singapore. The theme for the symposium was Advances in Chemistry, Biology and Medical Technologies. Associate Professor Tan Sze Wee, Deputy Executive Director of Biomedical Research Council, A*STAR also spoke at the event. The symposium had leading experts in the field from India and Singapore as participants.*

The 44th Edition of International Film Festival of India -2013 (IFFI-2013)

The 44th edition of International Film Festival of India -2013 (IFFI-2013) will be held in Goa from 20th -30th November, 2013. IFFI is the largest and most prestigious film festival in the country. One of the main features of this festival is the 'International Competition Section' for feature films for Directors from all over the world. The total prize money is US$ 1,85,000/- approximately. A set of regulations and entry forms for the Festival may be accessed at www.iffi.nic.in. For details, Mr Shankar Mohan, Festival Director(IFFI) may be contacted at Telephone 91-11-26490457/ Fax 91-11-26497214 email: iffifilms@gmail.com.

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