

Newsletter, 5-III-2009

1. Slumdog Millionaire, Bollywood billionaires?

Bollywood's big boys expect the success of Slumdog Millionaire, which won eight Oscars at the Academy Awards ceremony today, to give film production houses a big opportunity to carve a niche market for films with Indian actors, stories, music and style that appeal to a larger audience in the US, instead of just the Indian diaspora.

2. Govt approves 29 FDI proposals of 616 crore (\$120 million)

The government on Wednesday approved 29 foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals worth Rs 616 crore including AAPC Singapore's Rs 365 crore hotel project. AAPC plans to set up a wholly-owned subsidiary in India for its hospital-ity venture, a finance ministry statement said.

3. Cost-cutting drives Japanese cos to India

With Japanese companies leaving no stone unturned in their pursuit to pare costs as they try to cope with a deepening global recession, Indian IT outsourcing firms may finally be able to crack this \$108-billion IT services market.

4. Centre clears ten SEZs, three petrochem hubs

The UPA government on Monday cleared a slew of proposals to boost big-ticket investments, even as it sought to play down concerns about the economy and held out the promise of more sops for embattled exporters.

5. 138 firms come out with flying colours

At a time when corporate India was struggling to post a modest growth in sales and stay away from net losses, 138 companies surprised all with their outstanding performances in all the three quarters of this financial year. The achievement: the full-year sales and net profit that the 138 companies recorded in 2007-08 came about in the first nine months of this financial year.

6. REVA all set to grow

Think electric vehicles and the first company that springs to the Indian mind is REVA. It was the first company in India which came out with a car running on electricity as opposed to diminishing natural resources. Things have progressed on a much larger scale since then and REVA has now spread across the world.

7. IT cos extend reach in Egypt

Egypt appears to be the new destination for Indian IT firms planning to expand their geographical presence. The Egyptian information and communications technology (ICT) segment, which has maintained a 20 per cent growth rate and attracted local and foreign investments of more than \$8 billion over the past three years, is attracting investments from Indian companies including Infosys, IBM Daksh and Firstsource to have global delivery centres in Egypt.

8. Indian pharma sector to remain stable, says Fitch

At a time when the international rating agency Fitch has downgraded its outlook for European and US pharma sectors, it expects the Indian pharma sector to remain stable during the current year 2009. Partially, this stability has been attributed to the very factors that have led the rating agency to forecast a negative outlook for the matured sectors in regulated markets of developed countries.

9. Govt clears way for KG gas supply to fertiliser cos

The government, last week, approved the priority list of 12 fertiliser firms which will receive gas from the D-6 block in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin. Reliance Industries (RIL), which operates the block, is learnt to have sent the draft gas sales purchase agreements (GSPA) to these firms for supply of the first 15 million metric standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) of gas from KG basin.

10. Japan keen to strengthen economic ties with India

With the global meltdown lengthening its dark shadows on the capital market and financial institutions showing diffidence to lend, the Government should take innovative investment strategy to keep the investment flow steady until economies recover.

11. Suzlon bags order from Australian firm

Suzlon Energy Ltd, the world's fifth largest wind turbine maker with 10.5 per cent of global market share, on Wednesday announced the signing of an agreement between its Australian operations arm, Suzlon Energy Australia Pty and AGL Energy Ltd of Australia for supply of 54 turbine units.

12. Cabinet okays Rs 9,565-cr (\$2000 million) road projects

The Government on Thursday approved infrastructure projects worth Rs 9,565 crore in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, entailing four-laning of National Highways in both States, and the development of a container terminal at Ennore Port.

13. IT infrastructure offshoring likely to touch \$6 bn this year

Even as top outsourcing customers are tightening their information technology budgets, they continue to outsource the management of their computer servers and desktops, according to experts tracking the industry. Remote Infrastructure Management Outsourcing (RIMO) has emerged as the growth engine for many Indian tech firms. According to Everest Research Institute, the RIMO market is expected to touch \$5.9-billion in 2009 and \$8.6-billion in 2010.

14. After Ford & Hyundai, GM to make India export hub

Taking a cue from Ford India, Hyundai and Maruti Suzuki, General Motors is planning to make India its hub for exporting engines, powertrains as well as cars to neighbouring countries, the US and Europe. Despite the slowdown and funds crunch, GM India hopes to match last year's growth of 10% even though the industry is expected to remain flat.

15. India less affected by financial crisis: UBS

UBS has upgraded India from moderate underweight to overweight as it feels that valuations have improved substantially and that the Indian economy is less affected by the global financial crisis than most other markets. The foreign financial major, however, does expect further weakness in the coming quarters.

16. Centre may inject \$2 bn/yr into drug research

The government plans to invest up to \$2 billion, or Rs 10,000 crore, annually to develop more effective medicines for diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis that hit thousands of Indians every year. Multinational drug makers with deep pockets are not interested in carrying out research for such afflictions prevalent among the poor in developing countries as medicines for these diseases do not fetch good profits.

17. India surpasses China on engineering goods

The African and Asean countries are shifting their focus from China to India for meeting major supply requirements of engineering goods and equipment. "Though these countries predominantly buy engineering goods from China, but last year they faced some difficulties, so now they want India to be developed as a major second supplier. India is not a small player in the global market".

18. Pharma retail market grows 15%

The domestic pharma retail market has started the year with a bang, recording nearly 15% growth in January. The market had grown by nearly 10% during January-December 2008, and over 13% in December alone. There was no major change in rankings of pharma companies in January in terms of market share, with Cipla garnering the largest, followed by Ranbaxy and GlaxoSmithKline at third position, according to consulting company, ORG-IMS. Piramal Healthcare was ranked fourth, followed by Zydus Cadila at the fifth slot in terms of market share.

19. BSNL launches 3G services in 11 cities

State-owned telecom operator Bharat Sanchar Nigam (BSNL) today commercially launched its third generation (3G) mobile services simultaneously from 11 cities, namely, Agra, Ambala, Jalandhar, Jaipur, Dehradun, Shimla, Lucknow, Ranchi, Durgapur, Haldia, Patna and soft launch in Jammu.

20. 500.000 jobs in 4 yrs in pharma industry: Paswan

"Vision 2020" for the pharmaceutical industry, prepared by the department of pharmaceuticals, promises to create 5 lakh jobs within 4 years by making India "one of the top 5 global pharmaceutical innovation hubs". This will involve an investment of Rs 5,000-10,000 crore, which includes substantial contribution from the private pharma industry under the public private partnership (PPP) model.

21. Vedanta to invest Rs 70.000 cr (\$16 000 million) in India; be world's 5th largest co

Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Group will pump in a whopping Rs 70,000 crore in India by 2011-12, a stride that will make it the world's fifth largest metal and mining entity rubbing shoulders with the likes of BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto. "We intend to invest Rs 50,000 crore in (the) aluminium sector and Rs 20,000 crore in other areas like copper, iron ore and zinc by 2011-12 in India," Vedanta Group Executive Chairman Anil Agarwal said.

22. Merger to create one of largest petrochemical firms: Mukesh Ambani

The merger of Reliance Industries with Reliance Petroleum will enhance value for shareholders of both the companies and is a major step towards creating one of the largest petrochemical firms of the world, RIL chairman and managing director Mukesh Ambani said.

23. AI to make Frankfurt a global hub

National carrier Air India has zeroed in on Frankfurt as its European hub for providing seamless 'scissor' connections between India and Europe and US. From March 29, AI will change the time of flights from India so that they reach Frankfurt almost simultaneously at about 6 am. Then passengers would be able to cross over to AI flights to Chicago or Newark or take a connection to anywhere in Europe.

24. Indian auto industry defies global slowdown

Passenger car sales numbers for February 2009 appear to have bucked all slowdown trends. Data released by Maruti Suzuki (MSIL), Hyundai Motors India (HMIL) and Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) depict a quantum leap on both exports and domestic sales fronts during February 2009.

25. Trai moves to ensure broadband speed

The regulator has fixed a minimum 'contention ratio number' of users who can share the same bandwidth. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) today issued guidelines to ensure that internet service providers and telecom operators provide the minimum required broadband speed to their customers.

26. Tata Comm launches Ethernet services in UAE

Tata Communications, a Tata Group company marked its entry into UAE by launching a range of dedicated Ethernet services in association with leading telecommunication service provider of UAE, Etisalat.

27. Moser Baer PV to enter US, expand in Europe

Moser Baer PhotoVoltaic (MBPV) plans to enter the US market and expand its presence in Europe by the end of the year. Europe is the major market where MBPV has a \$350-400 million (Rs 1800-2,100 crore) business for three of its technologies — crystalline (best suited for cold climate), thin-film (appropriate for warm climate) and concentrator (for places getting direct sunlight).

28. 18000 freshers to join Infosys by July

Software Major Infosys today said all 18,000 students selected by it from various Engineering colleges across the country in 2009-10 would join the company in July this year. 'We have made offers to 18,000 students from different campuses for the 2009-10 batch. They will be joining us in July this year'.

29. 'Offshoring model more relevant than before'

At 38, Francisco D'Souza is among the youngest CEOs of global technology corporations. He was part of the team that founded Cognizant Technology Solutions (CTS) in 1994. A person of Indian origin (PIO), he was born in Nairobi and has lived in 11 countries. In an interview with TOI, Frank, as he is called, talks to TOI about the challenges that CTS faces. Excerpts

30. Tata Motors showcases 3 models at Geneva show

Tata Motors has showcased three models at the Geneva Motor Show – the Tata Nano Europa, the international version of its low-cost car Nano; the Tata Prima, a concept luxury sedan; and the Tata Indica Vista EV, an electric vehicle based on the new generation Indica Vista hatchback.

31. Govt clears port, highway projects of worth Rs 5,220 crore

A panel chaired by Ashok Chawla, secretary, department of economic affairs, which cleared the projects, said the largest project by cost was in Tamil Nadu--four laning of Trivandrum-Krishnagiri part of national high way 66 at Rs 1,075 crore. Tamil Nadu will also widen parts of NH 45 at a cost of Rs 813. Maharashtra will widen Pune-Sholapur high way at RS 810 crore and Talegaon-Amravati highway at Rs 611 crore. Bihar will widen the Muzaffarpur-Sonbarsa high way at Rs 933 crore, the ministry said.

32. After M&M, Honda to build boats in India

First Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) and now Honda, the Indian boat building market is suddenly seeing strong currents. The Japanese auto major, through its Indian subsidiary Honda Siel India (HSIL), is planning to foray into the Indian boat manufacturing market and is conducting feasibility studies for the purpose.

33. Tata JV, JSPL bag \$18bn coal-to-liquid projects

The government is understood to have awarded a coal block each to Tata Sons-Sasol joint venture and Jindal Steel and Power for converting coal to liquid petroleum, entailing an investment of \$18 billion. The two projects would result in production of 160,000 barrels of crude oil a day.

34. HCL receives Rs 393cr order from NIC

IT major HCL Technologies bagged a Rs 393 crore order from National Insurance Company (NIC) for providing end-to-end IT services and operations management. The service contract is for seven years. During the seven year engagement, HCL would be responsible for setting up and managing a new enterprise wide IT landscape for NIC, the company said in a statement.



35. Bookings for Nano will start from March 23

Tata Motors has advanced the booking date for its Nano, touted as the world's cheapest car, in India by three weeks, while it plans to launch the car in the European markets in the next two years. "We plan to bring Nano to Europe because we think there is a market for low-cost cars in Europe," Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata said at the 79th Geneva Motor Show.

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A **AAPI** é a Associação de Amizade Portugal-Índia, criada com o objectivo fomentar as relações entre Portugal e Índia no que respeita à integração e promoção de intercâmbios permanentes e recíprocos entre pessoas e interesses dos dois Estados, privilegiando a consolidação e estímulo das sinergias culturais e económicas.

Para concretização das suas funções e apoio às mesmas pode a Associação participar em iniciativas conjuntas com outras associações de forma a congregar esforços para a realização de fins compatíveis e, ou, constituir e participar em empresas juridicamente autónomas.

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