

MEXICO, INDIA SIGN PACTS, AGREE TO DOUBLE TRADE

The President of Mexico, Mr. Felipe Calderon, accompanied by a large delegation comprising ministers, officials and over 100 businessmen visited India from 9th to 12th September 2007, where he met with India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The two countries signed three pacts, including an extradition treaty, a treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and an agreement on avoidance of double taxation. Both sides agreed to double bilateral trade to around \$4 billion by 2010.

Trade between India and Mexico reached \$1.8 billion in 2006, of which \$1.1 billion consisted of India's exports comprising a diverse basket of engineering goods, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, gems, jewelry and textiles. During the same period imports worth \$0.7 billion were received by India from Mexico, 90% of which was crude oil. India and Mexico were set to double their trade in the next three years, said Mr. Calderon while addressing chambers of commerce and industry in India.

Indian investment in Mexico has been rising steadily. Prominent Indian ventures in Mexico include two steel plants of the Mittal group and acquisitions of Mexican TV and pharmaceutical units by Indian firms Videocon and Dr. Reddy's Laboratories. Three months ago, President Calderon himself inaugurated a "global tech development center" set up by leading Indian IT firm Tata Consultancy Services in Guadalajara.

Source: Indo-Asian News Service, 11 September 2007

ZIMBABWE, IRAN REVIEW EXPANSION OF TIES

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran and his Zimbabwean counterpart President Robert Mugabe reviewed avenues to bolster bilateral relations in a meeting held in New York on 24 September 2007 on the sidelines of the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly. The two leaders underscored the need for the formation of a joint economic commission.

The two Heads of State also called for the further activation of developing country groups such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Group of 15 and the Group of 77 in order to develop and strengthen the United Nations.

Source: IRNA, 25 September 2007

BRAZIL, VENEZUELA TO SPEED UP JOINT PROJECTS

Brazil's President Lula da Silva and the President of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, met in Manaus on 20 September 2007 and signed a series of accords to speed up the projects that had been agreed upon earlier. These included two joint ventures between their state-run oil companies and a natural gas pipeline that would stretch across the Amazon rainforest. The leaders decided that officials from both their governments would be meeting every three months from now on, alternating between Brazil and

Venezuela. President Lula da Silva also explicitly stated that his country was working to ensure that Venezuela definitely gets full member entry into the Southern Common Market (Mercosur).

Source: Brazzil Mag, 21 September 2007

INDIAN FIRMS TO INVEST IN MALAYSIA, INDONESIA

Satyam Computer Services Ltd., a leading Indian consulting and IT services provider, announced on 10 September 2007 that it plans to make Malaysia its largest software hub outside India. The statement coincided with the inauguration of the company's 500-seat Global Solutions Center (GSC) in Cyberjaya, near Kuala Lumpur, by Malaysia's Second Minister of Finance, YB Senator Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop, Deputy Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, YB Dato' Kong Cho Ha, and Satyam Founder and Chairman Mr. B. Ramalinga Raju. The GSC employs 300 (mostly Malaysian) IT engineers, who support Satyam's ASEAN, Middle Eastern, and American customers.

Another Indian company, KS Oils Ltd, a leading rapeseed oil manufacturer, announced plans to buy palm plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia to meet growing edible oil demand in India. Its Managing Director, Sanjay Agarwal, said on 6 September 2007 that the company proposes to buy around 8,000 to 12,000 hectares of palm plantations in both these countries for which it had earmarked an amount of \$36.7 million.

Source: www.indianews.com, 10 September 2007 and www.indonesia.go.id, 18 September 2007

VENEZUELA-IRAN JOINT VENTURES CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY

The President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who arrived in Caracas on 27 September 2007 for a short visit, signed several more bilateral agreements to build joint projects in Venezuela and Iran with his Venezuelan counterpart President Hugo Chavez. On this occasion, the agreements they signed include the installation of nine corn-processing plants in Venezuela with Iranian technology, part of the new initiative of the Venezuelan government to increase the production of corn and corn flour in the country.

Another of the agreements is for the establishment of an industrial complex for the production of auto parts in the central state of Carabobo. The agreement was signed between the Iranian company Behsazin and the Venezuelan Ministry of Communal Economy with the intention of supplying the Venezuelan automobile industry with locally produced auto parts. A third agreement allows for the construction of two plants for the production of methane gas, one in Iran and the other in Venezuela.

Source: venezuelanalysis.com, 28 September, 2007

CHILE, INDIA SIGN AGREEMENT ON AIR CARGO TRANSPORT

Chile and India have reached an agreement on air cargo transportation that is expected to boost tourism between the two countries. The nations previously had a limited air cargo agreement but have now established an 'open skies' policy allowing unlimited numbers of cargo services between them. Firms will also be able to use any type of aircraft and have full traffic rights via any intermediary locations.

Jorge Frei, Secretary General of Chile's Civil Aeronautic Council, said that air operators were being given access to a "gigantic market", with India's foreign trade industry growing by 162 % last year. He went on to stress that the agreement will have a positive effect on tourism between the two nations. 'It will significantly liberalise air passenger transport, helping airlines to establish operations or sell fares to Chile or India, helping to encourage the arrival of tourists from India', Mr Frei said.

Source: Reuters, 6 September 2007

SEVERAL G-15 COUNTRIES TO COOPERATE ON TROPICAL FOREST MANAGEMENT

Indonesia, Brazil, Malaysia and Peru are among a group of countries that have adopted a joint statement to act together to protect tropical forests and prevent global warming. The countries passed the joint statement on 24 September 2007 in New York in a high-level meeting on climate change convened by UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-Moon. They resolved to enhance cooperation among countries blessed with a wealth of tropical rainforests. by intensifying collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

Around 20 countries, including the afore-mentioned G-15 countries, are home to 80% of the world's tropical rain forests.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 25 September 2007

KENYA, SRI LANKA TO BENEFIT FROM IRANIAN ASSISTANCE

Kenya and Iran have signed a memorandum of understanding on expansion of cooperation in the fields of housing and urban development. Iran's Minister of Housing and Urban Development Mohammad Saeedi-Kia and his visiting Kenyan counterpart, Mr. Soita Shitanda, signed the MoU in Tehran on 5 September 2007. According to the MoU, Iran and Kenya vowed to help each other in establishing direct contact between the two countries' various companies, organizations and investing foundations engaged in activities relating to housing and urban development. It also stressed that Kenya would make use of Iran's experience in

reconstructing rundown buildings in Kenya and the two countries would provide the necessary facilities for holding specialized exhibitions.

In another development, Iran has proposed the establishment of an oil refinery in Sri Lanka, during discussions between the presidents of the two countries in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. According to reports, the Iranian President described it as a gesture to give relief to countries adversely affected by the high price of oil.

Source: www.presstv.ir, 5 September 2007 and Tehran Times, 29 September 2007