

Think about It

The wisest mind has something yet to learn.
-George Santayana



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Gandhi, the Global Leader

Along with his 136th birth anniversary, it is Mahatma Gandhi's global identity that was celebrated on October 2 2005 for he had always considered himself a citizen of the world.

“My religion has no geographical boundaries. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself,” he said.

“Most religious men I have met are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man,” he has famously said.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Indian freedom fighter and the country's first Education Minister, in his “India Wins Freedom” said that Gandhi was universally acknowledged as the greatest man of his age because despite affecting the destiny of the whole sub-continent, he neither held high office nor was a statesman.

Because he possessed such an enlightened and secular world view, Gandhi unhesitatingly advocated the causes of Hindu-Muslim unity, social progress, religious tolerance, spread of modern knowledge, individual liberty and above all, educational reforms.

“Duties to self, to the family, to the country and to the world are not independent of one another. One cannot do good to the country by injuring the world at large. In the final analysis, we must die that the family may live, the family must die that the country may live and the country must die that the world may live. Therefore, self-purification is the first step.” Gandhi has said.

Will Durant, in an article in The Manchester Guardian, wrote: “Perhaps Gandhi failed as saints are likely to fail in this very hostile, selfish and Darwinian world. But these very failures are the eternal successes attained by saintly people as they can never stoop to the detestable levels of this materialistic world in which each one is running after the God of Mammon.”

SOCIETAL AWARENESS

Tremor Wipes out Several Villages

- Thousands were feared dead across the Himalayan region straddling Pakistan and India on October 8 2005 after a major earthquake tore up villages and triggered landslides.
- The earthquake, with a magnitude of 7.6, struck at 0350 GMT and was centered in forest-clad mountains of Pakistani Kashmir, near the Indian border, about 95 km northeast of Islamabad.
- The first quake was followed over the next nine hours by 11 hefty aftershocks with magnitudes of 5.4 to 6.3, which shook buildings in the Afghan, Indian and Bangladeshi capitals, Kabul, New Delhi and Dhaka and were felt across the region.
- The U.S. Geological Survey described the quake as ‘major’, saying it took place at a depth of 10 km, and that the strongest aftershock was at a depth of 20.3 km.
- UNICEF estimated that 30,000 to 40,000 people might have been killed in the temblor in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir.
- The aid agency Oxfam said it became clear that the worst-hit area was Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, where 5 out of 7 districts in an area long disputed by Islamabad and New Delhi were severely affected.
- Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that damage was also heavy in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani Kashmir.
- The landslides also blocked a 300-km highway that connects Srinagar, the summer capital of Indian Kashmir, to the rest of India to the south.
- The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road linking Indian and Pakistani Kashmir -- reopened earlier this year to traffic for the first time in nearly 60 years -- was also blocked.

Akash Missile Test Fired Twice

- Akash, India's surface-to-air missile was test fired twice at the integrated test range at Chandipur-on-sea, 15 km from Balasore, on October 3 2005.
- “The multi-target missile with a striking range of 25 km was directed at an object attached to a Pilotless Target Aircraft (PTA) on both occasions,” defence sources said.
- The sleek 5.6 meter long missile, with a launch weight of 700 kg and capability to carry a warhead of 60 kg, blasted off from a mobile launcher at 12.50 pm.
- “It was fired at the target for the second time at around 1 o'clock,” the sources said.

Australian Pair Wins Nobel Prize for Ulcer Work

- “Australians Barry J Marshall and Robin Warren won the 2005 Nobel Prize in medicine for their work on how the bacterium helicobacter pylori plays a role in gastritis and peptic ulcer disease,” the Swedish Nobel Assembly said on October 3 2005.
- “Warren, a pathologist from Perth, Australia, observed small curved bacteria colonizing the lower part of the stomach in about 50 percent of patients from which biopsies had been taken,” the Nobel Assembly said. “He made the crucial observation that signs of inflammation were always present in the gastric mucosa close to where the bacteria were seen.”
- Marshall became interested in Warren's findings and together they initiated a study of biopsies from 100 patients.

IAEA, El Baradei Win Nobel Peace Prize

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Mohamed ElBaradei, an Egyptian, won the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize on October 7 2005 for their efforts to limit the spread of atomic weapons.
- The prize, named after Swedish philanthropist Alfred Nobel, is worth \$1.3 million (730,000 British pounds) and is due to be handed out in Oslo on December 10 2005.
- The 2004 prize went to an African, Kenyan environmentalist Wangari Maathai. In 1995, British ban-the-bomb scientist Joseph Rotblat won with his Pugwash organization. And in 1985, the award went to a U.S.-Soviet group of doctors, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

'Game Theory' Duo Wins Nobel Prize for Economics

- An American and an Israeli won the 2005 Nobel Prize for economics on October 10 2005 for their work on the ‘game theory’ analysis of strategic options, which can help resolve conflicts in trade and business -- and even avoid war.
- The royal Swedish academy of sciences awarded the 10 million-crown prize to Thomas Schelling and Robert Aumann for work that has found uses in “security and disarmament policies, price formation on markets, as well as economic and political negotiations”.
- Aumann, 75, teaches at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Schelling, 84, teaches at the University of Maryland.
- ‘Game theory’ is the science of strategy, which attempts to determine what actions different ‘players’ - be they trading partners, employers and unions or even crime syndicates - should take to secure the best outcome for themselves.

INDUSTRY

Hero Honda Rides into a New Segment

- Hero Honda, the ‘World No.1’ two-wheeler manufacturer, on October 5 2005 announced yet another significant milestone in its long and illustrious journey - its first scooter – ‘Pleasure’. In keeping with its agenda of innovation, Hero Honda also unveiled ‘Achiever,’ its new offering in the 150 cc segment, further adding muscle to its already strong product portfolio.
- Hero Honda, which revolutionised the Indian two-wheeler industry with the first 4-stroke 100 cc motorcycle (CD-100) more than two decades ago, is set to unleash ‘Pleasure’ in the market by mid-November.
- One of the most fuel-efficient in the scooter segment, the 100cc Pleasure has distinctive features, including an ABS body, Variomatic transmission and high pulling power. It also comes equipped with the tuff-up tube - a technology which offers an immediate remedy in case of a tyre puncture by secreting an anti-puncture sealant gel. With such diverse features, Pleasure will help Hero Honda cater to a wider customer base, thereby strengthening its undisputed leadership position in the two-wheeler industry. Self-start will be offered as a standard feature in the scooter.

Progeon, Indiagames among 19 Emerging Indian Companies in Asia

- Nineteen companies from India, including Progeon, Bharti Telesoft, Applabs Technologies and Indiagames figure in the top 100 upcoming private technology companies in Asia identified by US magazine Red Herring, in its first comprehensive survey of the region.
- The survey, which also included Japan, was aimed at identifying top private technology companies in Asia, which are in the growth path, after the start-up initial stages.
- “The selection reflects the vigour of creativity and entrepreneurship in India... The companies ranged from traditional IT services to animation to communications,” Joel Dreyfuss, Editor-in-Chief, Red Herring, said .
- The other Indian companies in the prestigious list are Axis Software, Bahwan Cybertek, Comat Technologies, Strand Genomics, DQ Entertainment, E2labs Information Security, Huaya Microelectronics, Jataayu, Ittiam Systems, Pinstrom, Navin Communications, Paprikaas Animation Studios, Pramati, Skelta and Tejas Networks India.

Four Indians among Asia's 25 Powerful Business Leaders

- Four Indians, including Ratan Tata and Mukesh Ambani are among Asia's 25 most powerful business leaders listed by the October issue of 'Fortune' magazine.
- Ratan Tata, the Chairman of the Tata Group, is ranked 12th and Mukesh Ambani of the Reliance Industries comes 17th on the list headed by Samsung Electronics CEO Jong-Yong Yun. The other Indians featuring in 'Asia 25' are Infosys CEO Nandan Nilekani (rank 13) and Wipro Chairman Azim Premji (rank 19).
- Ratan Tata was not on the list last year while Nilekani has moved up to 13 from 23 and Mukesh Ambani has dropped to 17 from 13 and Premji from 10 to 19.
- 'Fortune' says at 67, Ratan Tata "shows no signs of slowing down". "In the past year, he has been busy buying companies in Korea, Singapore, and Africa."
- Nilekani is described as "one of the architects of India's IT revolution" who earned himself a starring role this year in American journalist Thomas Friedman's bestselling book 'The World is Flat' as the man who first suggested that the world is being flattened by new technologies.
- The list also has Toyota's Katsuaki Watanabe, LG electronics CEO, Kim Ssang Su and Sony CEO, Howard Stringer.

Forbes List: Infosys, Wipro, ICICI Fabulous Firms

- Software giants Infosys Technologies and Wipro along with ICICI Bank are the three Indian companies that figure in the list of 50 fabulous Asian firms compiled by Forbes magazine.
- Companies with at least five billion dollars in revenue or market value were considered for the list and some 500 made the grade and met the magazine's definition of 'big'.
- Out of them, 50 were chosen on the basis of the best aggregate score for long-term profitability, sales and earnings growth as well as projected earnings and stock price gains.
- Infosys Technologies, according to Forbes, has a market value of 14.7 billion dollars and its sales are put at 1.6 billion dollars. The corresponding figures for Wipro are 11.7 billion dollars and 1.9 billion dollars. But, ICICI Bank with market value of 8.1 billion dollars has sales worth 3.9 billion dollars. But none of these could find a place among the top 10.
- The first place goes to Toyota Motors of Japan, which has a market value of 146.2 billion dollars and sales worth 173.1 billion dollars. China's petroleum company Petro China with market value of 143.9 billion dollars and sales of 46.9 billion dollars finds the second place followed by Australian materials outfit BHP-Billion with market cap of 93.3 billion dollars and sales worth 29.6 billion dollars.

SPORTS AND GAMES

List of Winners at the 2005 ICC Awards

- List of winners at the second annual ICC awards presentation on October 11 2005: Cricketer of the year - Jacques Kallis (South Africa) and Andrew Flintoff (England) Test player of the year - Jacques Kallis (South Africa) One-day international player of the year - Kevin Pietersen (England) Emerging player of the year - Kevin Pietersen (England) Umpire of the year-Simon Taufel (Australia) Spirit of cricket award – England
- World XI Test team of the year - Virender Sehwag (India), Graeme Smith (South Africa), Ricky Ponting (Australia, captain), Jacques Kallis (South Africa), Brian Lara (West Indies), Inzamam-ul-Haq (Pakistan), Andrew Flintoff (England), Adam Gilchrist (Australia), Shane Warne (Australia), Chaminda Vaas (Sri Lanka), Glenn McGrath (Australia), 12th man Anil Kumble (India)
- World one-day international team of the year - Marvan Atapattu (Sri Lanka, captain), Adam Gilchrist (Australia), Rahul Dravid (India), Kevin Pietersen (England), Inzamam-ul-Haq (Pakistan), Andrew Flintoff (England), Andrew Symonds (Australia), Daniel Vettori (New Zealand), Brett Lee (Australia), Naved-ul-Hasan (Pakistan), Glenn McGrath (Australia), 12th man: Jacques Kallis (South Africa).

Sania Mirza Jumps to 31 in WTA Rankings

- Sania Mirza has jumped six places to climb to a career-best 31 in the latest WTA rankings after her semi-final appearance at the Japan Open.
- Sania, who picked 311 points last week in the \$170,000 Japan Open, has a total of 966.50 WTA points to her credit. The 18-year-old had vanquished higher ranked opponents including top seed Vera Zvonareva in the Tier III Championship but ran out of steam in the semifinals, losing to France's Tatiana Golovin 2-6, 4-6.
- Sania's climb up the ladder continued in the doubles also where she moved 14 places to reach 114. Paired with Israel's Sahar Peer, Sania had made it to the semifinal of the Japan Open which saw her WTA points go up to 343.50.
- She also became the first Indian sportswoman to feature on the cover of Time magazine and is being included in its 2005 list of Asia's heroes.

Women's World Boxing Championships: Merycom Retains Title

- Indian M C Merycom stamped her authority once again at the highest level by dismantling her North Korean opponent to clinch gold for the second consecutive year at the third Women's World Boxing Championships at Podolsk, Russia.
- With this, India finished their fine run at the championship with five medals - one gold and four bronze.
- In finals on October 2 2005 , the stocky Manipuri lass lived up to expectations as she showered punches on Jong Ok, the North Korean. By the time the referee stopped the bout, the Indian had garnered 28 points as against 13 by her opponent.
- The Manipuri Arjuna awardee had won her second Asian title at Taiwan in September.

World Men's Hockey Team Ranking: India at Sixth

- India is ranked sixth in the International Hockey Federation's (FIH) world men's hockey team ranking, a place below arch-rivals Pakistan and a notch above Asian Games champions South Korea on the leader board which is headed by Australia.
- After a penalty stroke victory over Egypt in the final of Africa Cup, South Africa broke into the top 10. Egypt was sent to 15th spot.
- Top 20: 1. Australia; 2. Netherlands; 3. Germany; 4. Spain; 5. Pakistan; 6. India; 7. Korea; 8. Argentina; 9. New Zealand; 10. South Africa; 11. England; 12. Belgium; 13. Malaysia; 14. Japan; 15. Egypt; 16. Canada; 17. Poland; 18. France; 19. Chile; 20. Scotland.

Randhawa Ends 51st, Woods Wins Title

- Jyoti Randhawa failed to make any upward movement in the final round as his five-over 75 saw him finish 51st with a total of nine-over 289 at the American Express Championship at Harding Park golf course in San Francisco.
- The former Asian tour no. 1 earned USD 40,500, which will be sufficient enough to lock up his card on the European tour for the 2006 season.
- Tiger woods won the title after a play-off victory over John Daly. It was Woods' 10th individual victory from 19 appearances in the WGC. Woods shot a three-under 67 on the final day and was tied with Daly at 10-under 270.
- Meanwhile, Simon Yates, another Asian tour member also settled for a five-over-par 75 and tied 43rd place. He found the consolation in a cheque of USD 46,000.

THE STOCK MARKET

Company Profile: Infosys Technologies Ltd

- Infosys was incorporated on July 2, 1981, as a private ltd company. It became public limited company on June 1992 and subsequently the name was also changed to Infosys Technologies Ltd.
- It became the first Indian company to be listed on American Stock Exchange.
- Infosys is one of India's leading information technologies (IT) services companies. It is mainly engaged in custom software development, e-commerce, maintenance, re-engineering services and internet consulting as well as dedicated offshore software development centers for certain clients.
- The company also provides testing services, operations and business process consulting, business process management, systems integration, and infrastructure management services.
- The company also develops and markets certain company owned software products.
- The company is having its Headquarters in Bangalore and has 17 offshore development facilities located throughout India.
- The company has a software development space of 12,72,000 square feet in India, 54000 square feet outside India and 14,85,000 square feet of space under construction.
- Infosys has approximately 15,000 employees in over 30 offices worldwide.
- Infosys Technologies Limited provides consulting and information technology services primarily in North America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region.
- Infosys, India's No. 2 software services exporter, grew nearly 50% in 2004, to \$1.59 billion in revenues. And it's well on its way to cross \$2 billion this year.
- Progeon, the unit that manages business processes, is doubling every year and expects to reach \$80 million in sales this year.
- US magazine Red Herring, in its first comprehensive survey of the region has figured Progeon in the top 100 upcoming private technology companies in Asia.
- Now, Infosys has its eye on China. Of the 12,600 people it will hire this year, nearly 1,000 will be at its Shanghai offices.

ENTERTAINMENT

MIFF 2006 to Showcase Best Documentaries from SAARC Nations

- A showcase of films from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries will be the highlight of the ninth edition of Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) for documentaries and short fictions to be held from February 3, next year.
- “Entries from Bangladesh have been received while those from Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal are expected by the time the last date of entries closes on October 20,” films division sources said.
- At the eighth MIFF held in Mumbai in February 2003, a few films from Pakistan were screened.
- This time, apart from foreign films, a special package of films from the North East, as a part of an effort to make the neglected region an integral part of the National mainstream, is also a new feature of the latest seven-day MIFF.
- The festival, which attracted nearly 3,500 delegates from India and abroad and screened as many as 600 documentaries and short fiction films from 40 countries last time, will be held at the same venue - P L Deshpande Kala Academy at Prabhadevi, Central Mumbai.

'Harry Potter' Sales Hit the 300 Mn Mark Worldwide

- With the publication of ‘Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince’ in July, the sales of the Harry Potter series have crossed the 300 million mark worldwide.
- The popular series by author JK Rowling, which narrate the tales of a schoolboy wizard, have been translated into 63 languages, most recently into Farsi.
- “We are delighted to announce that worldwide sales for the Harry Potter series by JK Rowling have now exceeded 300 million copies,” a spokesperson for Rowling's literary agent Christopher Little said.
- As Rowling is now set to write the seventh book in the series, her fourth film in the series, ‘Harry Potter And The Goblet of Fire’, is set for release in November.

SPECIAL NEWS

India Begins Trial Run of Hydrogen Use in Vehicles

- India on October 9 2005 began pilot testing use of hydrogen in vehicles with the inauguration of the first hydrogen-CNG dispensing station in Faridabad
 - Initially, five percent hydrogen will be mixed with CNG for use in four vehicles and the percentage would be gradually increased to reach the optimum level.
 - “This is a historic day. It is for the first time in the history of India that hydrogen has been mixed with CNG for running automobiles,” Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar said at a function held at Indian oil’s R&D Centre in Faridabad. He said that use of hydrogen and other alternative fuels like ethanol and bio-diesel was essential to reduce India’s dependence on crude oil imports to meet its fuel requirements.
 - Presently, India imports 76 percent of its crude oil requirement and this is likely to rise to 85 percent in the next 20 years.
 - On this occasion, an MoU was also signed between a village panchayat in Haryana and an UK firm ‘D1’ for production of bio-diesel from jatropha. Aiyar said the village panchayat will grow jatropha and send the seed to D1 for production of non-edible oil which would be mixed with diesel. IOC and other oil companies will purchase bio-diesel from D1 at Rs 25 per liter for mixing it with diesel.
 - Aiyar said that like the hydrogen-CNG mix vehicle, IOC was also pilot testing running vehicles on bio-diesel. Commercial use would begin once its economics were established.
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IITs Rated Third Best in the World

- The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have been ranked the third best technology universities in the world for 2005, according to the prestigious Times Higher Education Supplement (THES).
- The publication, which is highly respected and read in the world of academia, said: “Our peer review of the world’s top technology universities shows that in 2004, the high praise for the Indian Institutes of Technology was no fluke.”
- “Up to third position in 2005 from fourth place last year, the IITs are a source of Indian national pride as well as innovation and wealth,” it said.
- Among science universities, the IITs have been ranked 36th in the world. The THES table shows that the technologists review panel regards Imperial College London as the UK’s hottest university, ahead of Cambridge University.
- The ranking is dominated by the US - it appears 26 times in the top 101 institutions in the list.

NEWS IN NUTSHELL

- ONGC and Mittal Steel Company signed two agreements formally launching the joint ventures-- ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd (OMEL) and ONGC Mittal Energy Services Ltd (OMESL) on October 11 2005.
- Microsoft Corporation India has joined hands with the International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and Nasscom Foundation to set up the country's first rural knowledge centre (RKC) at Adakkal near Hyderabad.
- Mobile phone chip designer Arm has claimed to have developed the latest generation of processors that will power future mobile phones. Researchers have said that the processors with the Cortex A8 design will have more than one billion transistors on board, and will be many times more powerful than the ones being used now.
- Microsoft Corporation plans to release a low-cost version of its Windows software for India in an attempt to check high piracy levels, the legal affairs head of the world's largest independent software maker said.
- The 2006 World Cup Organizing Committee (OC) on September 30 2005 confirmed that German President Horst Koehler is to act as patron of the World Cup tournament.
- Adam Gilchrist scored Australia's fastest limited overs century to help his country wrap up their one-day series against the World XI with a 55-run victory on October 7 2005.
- India and Pakistan's cricket teams on October 1 2005 have been appointed spokespersons for the International Year of Sport and Education, 2005 for having, as the UN put it, overcome "regional tension and encouraging peaceful relations".
- Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria has become the 18th World Chess Champion.
- Lindsay Davenport claimed the 50th singles title of her career on October 9 2005 by defeating Amelie Mauresmo of France in the final of the Filderstadt Grand Prix.
- Australia completed a clean sweep of their one-day international matches against a World XI with a crushing 156-run victory in the third and final game on October 9 2005.

STUDENTS VOICE

Topics for Debate

- Should governments take steps to keep their threatened languages alive?
 - Should the pharmaceutical patenting system be liberalized?
 - Are out of town shopping malls and hypermarkets a positive development?
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For further information:

ICFAI National College
8-2-228-231, 5th Floor,
Mirra Trade Center,
Punjagutta, X-Roads
Hyderabad - 500 082, India.
Ph.: 040-23430400, 478 **Fax:** 040-23430229
Email: academics@incindia.org
Website: www.incindia.org