

**Think about it**

*You can never plan the future by the past.  
Edmund Burke-*



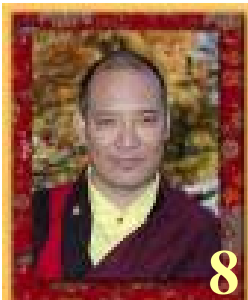
*Klaus Schwab*



*Nandan Nilekani*



*Amelie Mauresmo*



*Lama Tashi for Grammy*

## India on the move

### *World Economic Forum, Davos*

The curtains may have come down on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual meeting, but India's message to high-profile business leaders at the meet is still reverberating loud and clear – you simply cannot ignore Asia's third largest economy.

India projected itself as a fast growing economy, which presents enormous opportunities to countries as well as business community. To foreign investors, the message is – you can't afford not to invest in India. Various topics like global economic imbalances, free trade agreements in Asia, India's manufacturing competitiveness and fast growing potential had been discussed. Everybody recognized that India is moving in the right direction. The World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting 2006 closed with participants detailing new projects in disaster relief, hunger, anti-corruption, financing for development and public-private partnerships. The meet also stressed on the need for faster reforms, speedy infrastructure development and higher investment in farm sector to push up growth to 10 percent. Professor Klaus Schwab has been awarded an honorary knighthood, Jack Straw in recognition of his services to the environment and development, ShabanaAzmi for contribution to art and Muhammad Ali for his efforts to promote dialogue and understanding between the Muslim and Western worlds.

# SOCIETAL AWARENESS

## *Sania, Adoor among Padma Awardees*

- Tennis star Sania Mirza, eminent Gandhian Nirmala Deshpande, noted film maker Adoor Gopalakrishnan, prominent writer Mahasveta Devi, Ghazal singer Pankaj Udhas and herbal cosmetics queen Shenaz Hussain are among 106 prominent personalities named on January 25, 2006 for the Padma Awards for this year on the eve of the 57th Republic Day.
- In all, nine people have been chosen for Padma Vibhushan, 36 for Padma Bhushan and 61 for Padma Shri. No one has been named for Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian honour.
- Tennis sensation Sania Mirza has been chosen for Padma Shree while veteran actor AK Hangal and defence analyst Air Commadore Jasjit Singh are to be conferred Padma Bhushan. Infosys CEO Nandan Nilekani and industrialist turned aviation enthusiast Vijayapat Singhania have been chosen for Padma Bhushan in science and sports category respectively.
- Eminent scientist and father of the 'green revolution' Norman Borlaug, former Chief Justice of India Justice VN Khare, Jnanpith award winner literateur Mahasveta Devi, prominent architect Charles Correa and Gandhian Nirmala Deshpande are among nine personalities who would receive Padma Vibhushan at a function at the Rashtrapati Bhavan by President APJ Abdul Kalam later this year.

## *Kalam Presents Blueprint for Virtual University*

- President A P J Abdul Kalam on January 17, 2006 proposed an ambitious blueprint for a tele-education revolution in the country with Rashtrapati Bhavan as the nodal hub of the project to link all major universities across India.
- Speaking on the occasion of the 150th post centenary celebrations of the Calcutta University, Kalam announced the birth of the first virtual university at his new Delhi residence that aimed to network even small teaching centres in rural India.
- "I have interacted with students from top universities in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata and found that my virtual university grid has the capability to trigger academic excellence and National development at an unparallel scale by expanding education to the remotest corner of this country," Kalam said.
- "UGC and EDUSAT, ISRO's dedicated education satellite, were being convinced to provide connectivity while broadband and wireless connectivity would also be needed for the purpose," he said.

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### *World's First Pluto Mission Lifts Off*

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- The world's first mission to Pluto blasted into space on January 19, 2006 on an unmanned Atlas 5 rocket to begin a 9 1/2-year journey to the only unexplored planet in the solar system. After two days of delays due to poor weather and a power outage, the 197-foot-tall (60-metre-tall) rocket, built by Lockheed Martin Corp., lifted off at 2 p.m. (1900 GMT) from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.
- The launch team remained on edge until 45 minutes later when the plutonium-powered spacecraft finally and successfully separated from the Atlas' second and last upper-stage rocket booster. The engine firings made the probe, called New Horizons, soar at 10 miles (16 km) per second, or 36,000 mph (58,000 kph) -- the fastest man-made object ever to leave Earth's orbit.
- If the Apollo astronauts had been launched at that speed, the trip to the moon would have taken about nine hours instead of three days, according to Colleen Hartman, NASA's associate administrator for space science.
- Even so, the grand piano-sized New Horizons will still need to bounce off Jupiter's gravity field, in a 'slingshot' maneuver that will give it added velocity, to make its 3 billion mile (4.8 billion km) journey to Pluto in less than a decade.
- High winds at the Florida launch site forced the first scrub of the launch of the New Horizons spacecraft on Tuesday, followed on Wednesday by a storm-triggered power outage at the mission control center in Laurel, Maryland.
- With an unprecedented five solid-fuel strap-on boosters, the largest expendable rocket in the U.S. fleet sent the relatively small spacecraft hurtling into the sky and it quickly disappeared over the Atlantic Ocean.

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### *Shabana to Receive Crystal Award*

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- Shabana Azmi was felicitated with the prestigious Crystal award on January 28, 2006 in Davos. The World Economic Forum has instituted this award.
- The WEF honours personalities who, in addition to having won international recognition through their artistic achievements, have also made an outstanding contribution to cross-cultural understanding.
- Shabana Azmi said that it was huge honour to receive this award, considering the earlier recipients. Some celebrities who have received this award are Sidney Potter, Lionel Richie, Pt Ravi Shankar, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Peter Gabriel Quincy Jones and Richard Gere.

# INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

## *Jet Announces Sahara Takeover for \$500 Million Cash Deal*

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- Naresh Goyal promoted carrier Jet Airways (India) Ltd is slated to become the biggest domestic carrier in the country after it completes a full-fledged merger with the second big league private airline, Sahara Airlines Ltd (SAL) promoted by Lucknow-based Subrata Roy.
- In a joint statement released by Roy, CMD of Sahara Airlines, and Goyal, Chairman of Jet Airways, both airlines announced the execution of a share purchase agreement for acquisition by Jet of the entire capital of Sahara Airlines for an all inclusive enterprise value of around \$500 million or about Rs 2,300 crore in an all-cash deal.
- Though the deal was approved by each of the companies in their board meetings on January 20, 2006, the joint statement said that the deal was inked on the night of January 18, 2006, by two senior executives of the company, reportedly said to be senior VP of Sahara Airlines, Alok Sharma, and executive director of Jet, Saroj Dutta.
- The deal is being seen by aviation experts as a landmark deal that will completely change the dynamics in the domestic aviation market. “What will be interesting to note is the impact of the acquisition on Jets’ fleet expansion program and the way it will rationalize its international and domestic route expansion,” said an aviation expert.
- Jet Airways fleet is a mix of owned and leased aircraft totaling about 55 aircraft comprising the Boeing 737 series up to 800 and A330-200, while Sahara Airlines’ entire leased fleet strength comprises about 25 aircraft and a couple of helicopters.

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## *Nasscom, ISA Sign MoU for Cooperation*

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- Indian software association NASSCOM and Irish Software Association (ISA) on January 19, 2006 signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support development of the software sector in both the countries and cooperation in issues of mutual interest.
- Under the agreement, the two associations will promote learning and best practice from the software industries in both the countries through internet.
- Besides, the Nasscom and ISA would assist each other's members in developing contacts in their own jurisdictions and set up a small steering committee with representation from each association on an agreed periodic basis to identify possible areas of cooperation or business opportunities for member companies.

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### *Europe Overtakes US as Top PC Market: Survey*

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- Global shipments of personal computers rose 15.3 percent in 2005 with Dell extending its lead over Hewlett-Packard and Europe overtaking the United States as the largest market, a survey showed on January 19, 2006.
- Worldwide sales of personal computers (PCs) rose to 218.5 million units in 2005 from 189.5 million in 2004, according to preliminary data from market research group Gartner.
- Shipments in Europe, Middle East and Africa grew 17.1 percent to 72.7 million units, overtaking the United States which grew 7.5 percent to 67 million.
- The fastest growth in 2005 was in Asia Pacific and Latin America where units' sales increased 26 percent to 42.8 million and 14.7 million respectively.
- Dell continued to grow more than the industry average, as its worldwide PC shipments grew 18.6 percent in 2005. Its global market share ended at 16.8 percent, up from 16.4 percent.
- Global number two Hewlett-Packard lost a little bit to its closest rivals as its market share slipped to 14.5 percent in 2005 from 14.6 percent in 2004.
- Third placed Lenovo from China, which took over IBM's PC operations, increased its market share to 6.9 percent from 6.8 percent, and Acer from Taiwan expanded to 4.6 percent market share from 3.4 percent in 2004.

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### *India, Saudi Arabia Sign Strategic Energy Pact*

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- India and Saudi Arabia on January 27, 2006 agreed to enter into a strategic energy partnership based on “complementarity and interdependence” that would ensure increased crude supplies and formation of joint ventures in upstream and downstream projects.
- In an agreement, called the ‘Delhi Declaration,’ signed by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, the two sides have agreed to ensure “reliable, stable and increased” volume of crude oil supplies through “evergreen” long-term contracts.
- While the Saudis have agreed to increase investments in India in oil refining, marketing and creation of storage facilities, it has also been agreed that the two sides would cooperate in setting up ventures for gas-based fertilizer plants in Saudi Arabia.
- The joint ventures between Indian and Saudi companies would be both in the public and the private sectors and projects could be set up in third countries as well.
- The two sides have also agreed to explore the prospects of cooperation in the health sector, including health services, exchange of health personnel, health education and pharmaceuticals.

# SPORTS AND GAMES

## *Federer Wins Australian Open*

- Top seed Roger Federer overcame an early scare to ease past Marcos Baghdatis 5-7, 7-5, 6-0, 6-2 on January 29, 2006 to win the Australian Open for the second time while capturing his seventh Grand Slam title.
- Federer won 11 games in a row between the second and fourth sets then broke Baghdatis' serve to seal victory and become the first man since Pete Sampras in 1993-94 to win three consecutive Grand Slams.
- Federer won Wimbledon and the US Open last year and if he wins the French Open final in June, he will become the first man since Australian Rod Laver in 1969 to hold all four Grand Slam titles.
- The 24-year-old Federer also joined American Richard Sears and Briton Will Renshaw as the only men to win their first seven Grand Slam finals. Sears and Renshaw both achieved the feat in the 1880s.

## *Bhupathi-Hingis Pair Bag Mixed Doubles Title*

- Mahesh Bhupathi's juggernaut continued to roll on and the Indian with comeback star Swiss Martina Hingis, won the mixed doubles crown at the Australian Open Tennis Championships on January 29, 2006. It was Bhupathi's 10th Grand Slam title in his career.
- Bringing smiles back to the Indian fans, the Indo-Swiss pair demolished Daniel Nestor of Canada and Russia's Elena Likhovtseva 6-3, 6-3 in the final.
- It was Mahesh's sixth mixed doubles title – third on the trot. Last year he had won the Wimbledon and the US Open with Mary Pierce and Daniela Hantuchova respectively.
- For Hingis, it was a fairy-tale return. Hingis also made it to the last eight in the singles event.
- This was Martina Hingis' 15th Grand Slam title, while Bhupathi also took his tally to 10. He became the first Indian to win a Grand Slam title, when he lifted the French Open with Rika Hiraki of Japan in 1997. He then paired with another Japanese Ai Sugiyama to lift the US Open in 1999 and then partnered Likhovtseva to win Wimbledon in 2002. Bhupathi has also won four men's doubles Grand Slam titles.

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### *Australian Open: Maiden Grand Slam Title for China*

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- China's Yan Zi and Zheng Jie won the country's first-ever Grand Slam title on January 27, 2006, grinding down top seeds Lisa Raymond and Samantha Stosur to win the Australian Open women's doubles title.
- It was a come-from-behind victory for the 12th seeds and the perfect Chinese new year present for a country considered by many to be the future of tennis.
- It was the first time anyone from China has won a Grand Slam final in any discipline and capped a breakthrough 12 months in which Yan and Zheng won two other doubles titles at Hobart and Hyderabad last year.
- They reached the semifinal or better at seven tour events last year, cementing China's growing reputation as a tennis force following Sun Tiantian and Li ting's historic Olympic doubles gold at Athens in 2004.
- Along with Sun and Li, Yan and Zheng, who began playing together in Shanghai in 2001, are rising stars, and not just on the doubles circuit. Each of them won a Tour singles title last year.

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### *Sehwag Hits Fastest Century Ever by Indian Opener*

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- Virender Sehwag broke Sunil Gavaskar's 23-year-old record by completing the fastest Test century by an Indian opener in 93 balls through a lofted off drive off Pakistan leg-spinner Danish Kaneria before bad light halted play in the first Test at the Gaddafi Stadium on January 16, 2006.
- Sehwag, unbeaten on 96 off 89 balls, scored a single in Shoaib Akhtar's opening over of the morning before smashing Kaneria's first ball over mid-off to reach the milestone with the help of 21 fours.
- The record by Gavaskar, who had reached his hundred against Clive Lloyd's mighty West Indian team in 1983 at New Delhi's Ferozeshah Kotla ground, came off 94 balls.

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### *Randhawa, Atwal Move up in Golf Rankings*

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- Arjun Atwal climbed four notches on the world golf rankings while Jyoti Randhawa, gaining one spot, remained the highest placed Indian golfer.
- Arjun Atwal, who finished 42nd at the Sony Open, moved up four places to 157 in the latest rankings, which had Randhawa at 120th.
- Promising Indian golfer Shiv Kapur slipped one rung to 187 while Jeev Milkha Singh climbed one spot to 374. Tiger woods' continues to head the rankings ahead of Fiji's Vijay Singh.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## *Indian Buddhist Monk Nominated for the Grammys*

- A tribal Buddhist monk from Arunachal Pradesh could well rock the world if he walks away with a Grammy award in February.
- Ngawang Tashi Bapu's album 'Tibetan Master Chants' has been nominated in the Best Traditional World Music category for the 48th Annual Grammy Awards to be given away in Los Angeles on February 8, 2006.
- "I am very excited and also surprised at being nominated for a Grammy. I hope the world rocks with me while chanting the hymns," Bapu told IANS at Gaden Rabgyaling monastery in Bomdila.
- Popularly known as Lama Tashi, 38-year-old Bapu's 'Tibetan Master Chants' is a unique collection of 12 Buddhist religious hymns rendered in a sonorous voice and using just the traditional gong and a cymbal.
- The Monpa tribal monk, originally hailing from Thembang village that borders China, will leave for Los Angeles Feb 2 to attend the Grammy awards function.
- A revered Buddhist scholar and officially recognized as a "chant master" by some of the best-known monasteries in India, Bapu had earlier performed on stage alongside singers in the US.
- For the moment, this unassuming monk with a maroon robe could well be the cynosure of all eyes at the Grammy awards function where he will rub shoulders with other nominees like Mariah Carey, Green Day, U2 and Bruce Springsteen.

## *Shyam Benegal, Sachin Khedekar given Netaji Awards*

- Filmmaker Shyam Benegal and actor Sachin Khedekar were among those awarded the Netaji Awards 2006 on Subhas Chandra Bose's 109th birth anniversary celebrations on January 23, 2006.
- Honored posthumously along with Benegal and Khedekar - the actor and director, respectively of the biopic 'Bose - The Forgotten Hero' - was Habibur Rehman, an associate of the freedom struggle hero.
- 'Bose - The Forgotten Hero', released in May last year, was the culmination of more than three years of effort to trace the life of Netaji from his escape from Kolkata in 1941 till 1945.
- Netaji Research Bureau director Sugata Bose and chairperson Krishna Bose also spoke on the occasion.

# SPECIAL NEWS

## *Hacking Guru to Decode the Human Mind*

- Hacking computers is passé. Hacking guru Ankit Fadia is now all set to decode the secrets of human mind.
- After coming out with several books on computer hacking, including Unofficial Guide to Ethical Hacking, Describing computer security as an issue of global concern, the widely reported computer wizard said the menace can be restricted only with ethical hacking and analyzing threats.
- Apart from ethical hacking, awareness and training can also help curb the menace, says Ankit who points out that the practice of commonly hacking e-mails and gathering information about terrorist activities worldwide is also a form used for restricting terrorism.
- ‘Hacking Mobile Phones’, another book written by Fadia is probably the first book ever written on this novel topic, aims to educate and prepare mobile phone users against a whole new generation of mobile phone-related security loopholes, vulnerabilities and attacks.
- Fadia’s next book is aimed at cracking the complexities of human mind.
- “After discovering thousands of methods of getting into computer systems, web-sites and mobile phones, my aim to apply my expertise in studying the human mind. However, this requires much focus on psychology than commonly followed computer logic,” the 20-year-old technocrat said.
- He said that the book would be more like a business guide, which would explain how human mind responds to numerous patterns of voice, situations, social or personal emotions.
- Besides, it would also explore the possibility of reading one’s mind through this technique, just like hacking a computer.
- Fadia, came into spotlight in November 2001 when he was consulted by a classified intelligence agency to break an encrypted message sent by one of the mercenaries of Osama bin Laden.
- He has authored seven books on ethical hacking so far.
- He presently owns a computer security consulting, training and publishing company in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which has around 10-15 clients in Asia-Pacific.
- He is also planning to begin his certified computer hacking course across the country.

# NEWS IN NUTSHELL

- Former Union Minister and veteran Congress leader Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav died at a private hospital in Delhi on January 18, 2006 following a cardiac arrest.
- Nitish Kumar has been successful in getting the approval of his cabinet for the proposed fifty percent reservations for women in the panchayats in Bihar.
- Nation building was the slogan of the 82nd AICC plenary held at Rajiv Nagar at Hyderabad from January 21-23, 2006 which outlined the new approach of the Congress on politics, economy, agriculture, poverty alleviation and foreign relations.
- The Supreme Court, on January 20, 2006 reiterated its guidelines on imposing the death penalty only in the rarest of rare cases, asking the judiciary to consider the aggravating and mitigating circumstances while awarding the sentence.
- The kingpin of the multi-crore fake stamps and stamp paper racket Abdul Karim Telgi was on January 17, 2006 convicted by a special court for his role in a 1995 case of selling fake stamps worth Rs 17 lakh.
- Two-wheeler manufacturer Hero Honda has launched its first scooter 'Pleasure' exclusively designed for female customers on January 22, 2006. Hero Honda also opened 22 'just4her' outlets for the 'Pleasure' model across 20 cities in the country, exclusively for women customers.
- Toyota Kirloskar Motor Ltd on January 21, 2006 resumed production at its plant in Bidadi, after getting a positive response from workers following the lifting of its lockout.
- Microsoft has launched its MS helpline services on January 13, 2006. So, the next time your computer hangs on Microsoft Windows operating system, give a ring to 1600 111100, MS's toll free number for all customers and partners in India.
- Yamaha Motor India Sales, a 100 per cent subsidiary of Yamaha Motor Company Ltd, Japan, launched Crux, a 106-cc four-stroke bike on January 16, 2006. It plans to garner a larger share of the country's motorcycle market with a slew of launches.
- OIL and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on January 19, 2006 signed a memorandum of understanding with Shell Exploration Company B.V. for wide ranging co-operation in hydrocarbons value chain.

# STUDENT'S VOICE

## *Topics for Debate*

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- Does society have a right to put someone to death?
  - Computers should replace teachers.
  - The Olympics are a waste of money.
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