



INDIA NEWS

NO. 8

August 2011

Fete de Geneve 2011

The Fete de Geneve, 2011 where India was the "Guest of Honour Country" was inaugurated on 4 August 2011. Hon'ble Minister for Tourism from Kerala, Mr. A. P. Anil Kumar was present on the occasion. Mr. Pierre Maudet, Mayor of Geneva, Mr. Pierre-Francois Unger, Vice-President of the Geneva Canton, Ms Chitra Narayanan, Ambassador of India to Switzerland, Mr. Jean-Pierre Jobin, President of Geneva Tourism & Convention and Mr. Chrisitan Coloquohoun, Managing Director Geneva Festival, addressed the audience which comprised of Swiss and Indian dignitaries including officials from the local Foreign Office, diplomatic corps from Berne and Geneva, executive members of Indian Associations in Switzerland and officials from the Embassy in Berne, Permanent Mission of India to the UN Offices and Consulate General of India, Geneva respectively. The inauguration was followed by a 90-minute Indian cultural programme showcasing dances from various parts of India. The cultural event was attended by over 4,500 people.

The "Village of India" at the Festival was inaugurated on 5 August 2011 jointly by Dr Mukul Sangma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Mr. Nasir Wani, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism of J & K, Mr. Nawang Rigzin, Hon'ble Minister of State for Tourism of J & K, Mr. A. P. Anil Kumar, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism from Kerala, Mr. Ranjit Prathap Kamble, Minister of State for Tourism from Maharashtra, Ambassador Ms Chitra Narayanan, Mr. Pierre Maudet, Mayor of Geneva, Mr. Pierre-Francois Unger, Vice-President of the Geneva Canton, Mr. Vignon, President of Geneva Festival. In the evening, a cultural programme followed by dinner was

hosted by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi. A "Road-show" on promoting tourism to India from Europe and a Seminar 'Scaling New Heights' on tourism exchange between India & Europe was jointly organised by India Tourism and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) respectively.

During the Festival, various States displayed their tourism products and handicrafts in their respective stalls at Village of India. Department of AYUSH organised Yoga classes every morning. It also featured a massage counter in the Village for the benefit of the public. Several cultural performances were held during period of the Festival.

Indian participation at the Festival concluded on 14 August, 2011. Mr. R.H. Khwaja, Secretary (Tourism) participated in the formal closing ceremony which featured Sufi Recital - Dama Dum Mast Kalandhar (Langas and one Rajasthani Song) and Manipuri dance followed by Kite Flying and Drums.

Government of India's participation in the Festival was organised by the Ministry of Tourism in close collaboration with the Embassy of India, Berne, Consulate General of India, Geneva, Confederation of Indian Industries and various States Tourism Departments.

Exports rise 46% in June

Merchandise exports in June grew spectacularly for the third month in a row by rising 46.4 per cent to \$29.2 billion, driven by high-end products such as engineering goods. This is despite experts doubting the sustainability of such high growth due to uncertainty in the global markets. Exports rose 45.7 per cent to

\$79 billion in the first quarter of 2011-12. What was encouraging was that the growth in exports was broad-based. Engineering goods, electronic items, basic chemicals, plastic items and mineral ores were the main drivers. In the last financial year, merchandise exports had grown 37.55 per cent to \$246 billion compared with 2009-10, while imports were up 21.6 per cent at \$350 billion. The Government has set a target of \$500 billion worth of exports by 2014 and doubling of India's share of global exports by 2020.

FDI inflow rises to 39-month high in May 2011

According to the latest data released by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow rose by more than 100 per cent to US\$ 4.66 billion in May 2011, up from US\$ 2.21 billion a year ago. This was the highest monthly inflow in 39 months. During April and May 2011-12, FDI inflow had risen by 77 per cent to US\$ 7.79 billion, from US\$ 4.39 billion during the same period last year. The Government has attributed the rise in FDI to a series of steps initiated over the last few months such as consolidation of the guidelines and liberalising the norms for sectors like seeds and limited liability partnerships.

18 million tourists visited India in 2010

Foreign tourist visits to the country registered a 24.2 per cent growth in 2010. The number of foreign tourist visits (FTVs) during 2010 was 17.9 million as compared to 14.4 million in 2009 and 2008. The top 10 States in terms of number of FTVs (in millions) during 2010 were Maharashtra (5.1), Tamil Nadu (2.8), Delhi (1.9), Uttar Pradesh (1.7), Rajasthan (1.3), West Bengal (1.2), Kerala (0.66), Bihar (0.64), Himachal Pradesh (0.45) and Goa (0.44). The contribution of the top 10 States was about 90.3 per cent of the total number of FTVs in the country during 2010. The per-

centage shares of the top 5 States were Maharashtra (28.5 per cent), Tamil Nadu (15.7 per cent), Delhi (10.6 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (9.4 per cent) and Rajasthan (7.2 per cent).

Mobile transactions to soar in India: BCG

Payments and banking transactions through mobile phones in India are expected to touch \$350 billion by 2015, according to The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), a global management consulting firm. This will provide banks, telecom operators, device makers and service providers an opportunity to earn fee income of \$4.5 billion, it said. Banks and mobile phone companies have already started preparing themselves to seize a share of this business. The country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), has joined hands with Bharti Airtel. The biggest private lender, ICICI Bank, has formed a partnership with Vodafone for mobile banking ventures. Axis Bank and Idea Cellular have also set up a similar venture. India has a little over 500 million mobile phone subscribers, compared with 240 million individuals with bank accounts. There are 88,000 bank branches, 70,000 automated teller machines and 20 million credit cards in the country. The business opportunity in mobile payment services has also lured phone manufacturers. Nokia recently teamed with Union Bank of India and Obopay to offer mobile banking services. BCG expects government payments through mobile-based transactions to touch \$40 billion by 2015. The largest share is expected from remittances of urban workers to their families in rural centres, expected to be \$70 billion annually in the next four years. These transfers are currently done through money orders and couriers, which are more expensive and time consuming, BCG said.

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