

# INDO-AUSTRALIAN

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# B U S I N E S S

Bilateral Trade Magazine for India & Australia

Mar-Apr 2006 Vol.3 Issue 2

Rs. 100/- A\$ 15



## Now, the Big Leap!

**Inside:**

**Shift in Middleclass Power**

**CeBIT: Gen Next Tech**

**Go8: The Best**

**Melbourne: Legacy of  
C'wealth Games**

**Distributed by:**  
**New Media Communication Pvt. Ltd.**  
in partnership with **AUSTRADE & WATO**

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The news items and information published herein have been collected from various sources, which are considered to be reliable. Readers are however requested to verify the facts before making business decisions using the same.

**Printed & Published by**

**Veerendra Bhargava** and printed at M/s Young Printers,  
A-2/237, Shah & Nahar Industrial Estate, Lower Parel,  
Mumbai - 400 013. Tel: 9820289696 and published from  
B-302, Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol,  
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059.

Editor: Satya Swaroop

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## Dear Reader,

Greetings. Economic relations between India and Australia are at their healthiest best. Australian Prime Minister John Howard, during his four-day, three-city whirlwind tour of India in March this year put his perception of this country's economic progress in a clear perspective. He said: "The Centre of Gravity of Economic activity is shifting to India." Coming as it does, from a man of Howard's accomplishment and stature, the complement needs to be cherished. There is solid logic behind Howard's observation. India's economic progress has been remarkable, ever since the country opened up its economy in the early 1990's. Globalization of the Indian economy has paid rich dividends. The purchasing power of the middleclass, numbering about 300 million has vastly improved and this segment is looking voraciously for quality goods and services. And Australia is ideally poised to reap a rich harvest for itself and Howard minced no words in highlighting this aspect of mutual trade. It is a two-way affair and in 2004-05, touched a high of \$ 9.4 billion. The two countries have realized that the bilateral trade is yet to achieve its full potential. If that happens, in all likelihood, it should, it will be a big leap. And it will, if one follows the advice of Howard, that the business of promoting bilateral business between nations should be left to businessmen and government should only be a facilitator. This is precisely what the cover story is about the untapped potential of the Indo-Australian trade and industrial cooperation and how people-to-people interactions will boost it. One area, which has been steadily bringing the two countries closer, is education. In his address to the students and academic community at the Indian Institute of Technology in the southern city of Chennai, Howard pointed out that educational links between the two countries will further boost the already growing ties in the Information Technology related services. It is heartening to note that more and more Indian students are opting to study in Australian universities, but are they choosing their places of learning in a proper manner or being misled by counseling agents in India? This question is answered by Professor Hema Sharda in a write-up on the Group of 8 (Go8) universities, where education is of the highest quality. In order to encourage the inflow of Indian students into Australian Universities, the Australian government has stepped up the funding of scholarships for the Asia Pacific region. When it comes to fairs on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), now can measure up to CeBIT, which is hosting a mega event in Sydney in Australia from May 9 to 11. This fair is aimed at Australasia, and is in its fifth edition. Taking advantage of the CeBIT fair, the Australian government is hosting an event called e-Government Forum, in an attempt to make life easier for the citizen in matters involving their dealings with the state, such as tax, etc. Expert speakers are drawn from across the globe for exchange of ideas and for sharing their experience. The recently concluded Commonwealth Games in Melbourne as an event was a thumping success. The beautiful city retains the upgraded Infrastructure and other facilities, which no doubt, will improve the tourist traffic inflow into it. We present a feature on Melbourne. Before closing, we thank Prime Minister Howard for giving us an opportunity to present to His Excellency and members of his business delegation and other celebrities copies of Indo-Australian Business at a luncheon meeting in Mumbai. The Prime Minister was gracious enough to pose for a photograph, holding the magazine, which featured His Excellency on the Cover Page.

Wish you happy reading

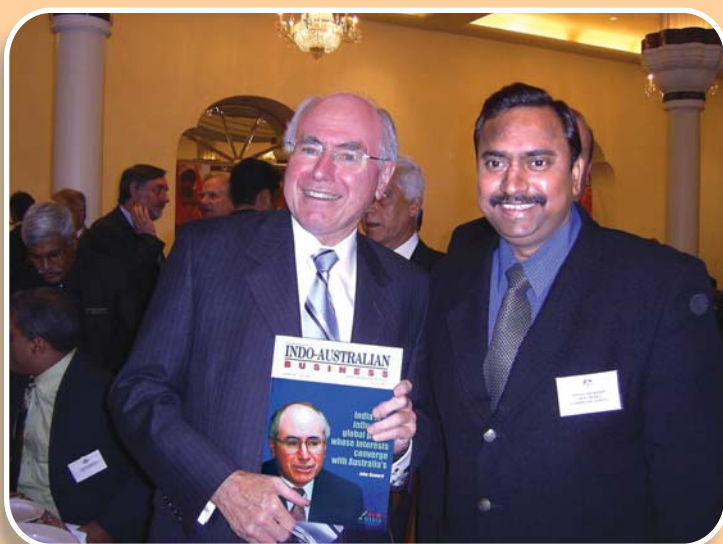
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**Satya Swaroop**

Managing Editor

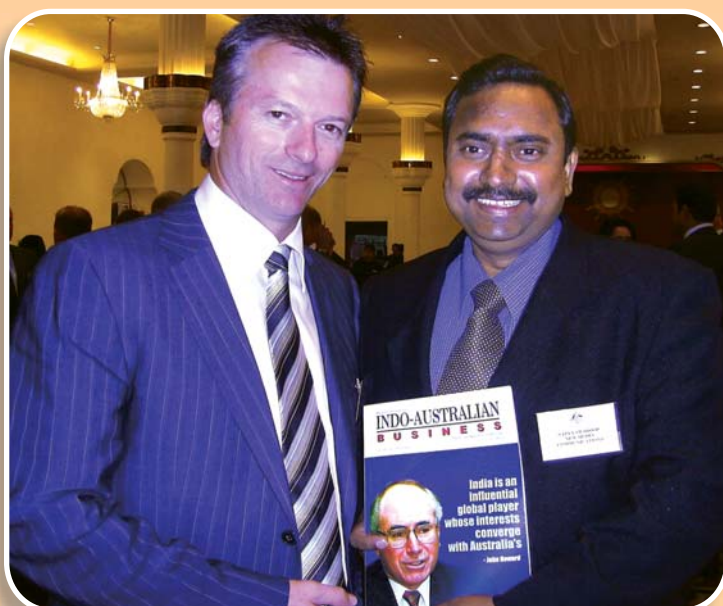
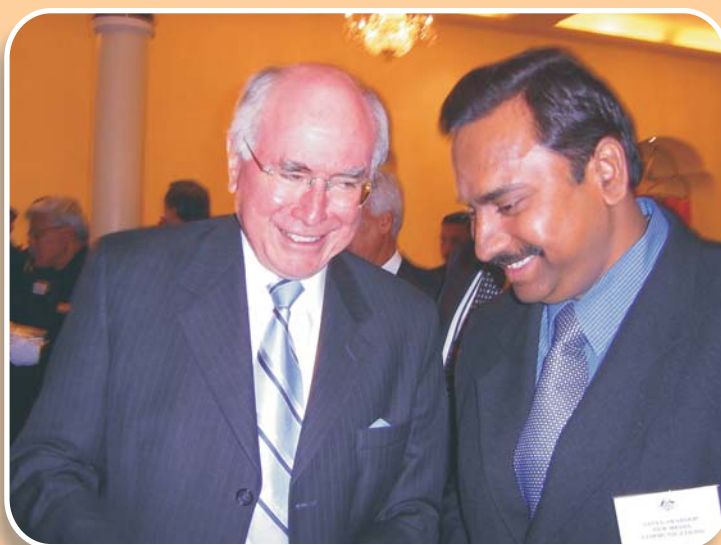
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▶ Prime Minister John Howard holding up Indo-Australian Business magazine which featured him on the Cover Page. Managing Editor Satya Swaroop looks on.

▶ Satya Swaroop briefing the Prime Minister about the publication, which is devoted to the promotion of Indo-Australian bilateral trade



▶ Satya Swaroop with Cricket Legend Steve Waugh

# Now, The Big Leap!



Prime Minister John Howard visited India in 1964 as a young law graduate on his way to England. After a successful career in politics, Howard visited India in 2001 as Prime Minister and followed it up five years later in March (5 - 8) 2006, in the same capacity. So, Howard has seen India wriggle out of its socialist shackles and hit the path of economic reforms to transform itself into an emerging economic power. In New Delhi, Howard held extensive talks with his Indian counterpart, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Howard, a great believer in reforms has greatly appreciated India's progress during his four-day visit to this country. Accompanied by a large delegation of businessmen from Australia, Howard addressed luncheon meetings with the captains of Indian industry in New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. In fact, at one such meeting, Howard said, "the centre of gravity of economic activity is shifting to India." The thrust of Howard's speeches at all the three cities had been similar- that governments as facilitators should leave the business of promoting business between nations to businessmen. He said the combined middleclass of both India and China constituting a vast segment of 400-800 million,

indicated a shift of middleclass power from the West to Asia. This class, potentially voracious consumers of both goods and services offered a great opportunity to Australia. During his stay in New Delhi, Howard and Singh exchanged views on a number of important bilateral and international issues, including trade in goods and services, investment, defence, security, education, science and technology, environment, civil aviation and sports. At the end of the talks, the two countries signed six agreements including a Trade and Economic Framework, an air services agreement, memorandums on cooperation in defence, customs and biotechnology and a letter of intent on the establishment of a strategic research fund. "Relations between Australia and India are evolving into a strong partnership and India is committed to working with Australia to upgrade our bilateral relations in all areas," Singh said. On His part, Howard said: "I have the feeling that the potential between our two countries is now being freed of earlier constraints and I am very hopeful and indeed I am personally very committed to ensuring that association grows very much in the years ahead."



**Australian Prime Minister John Howard delivered the following address at a business luncheon in New Delhi on March 6**

India's economic progress in the last decade or so has been nothing short of spectacular and it's commanding the attention of every country in the world. Now this hasn't happened by accident. The economic changes that have been undertaken started way back in the 1990s when the Indian economy began to open up and its leaders began to recognize that we had moved into a world of globalization.

I do want to touch very briefly on the point that was made at the beginning and the size of India's middle class because India's middle class is really about the most significant thing that's so far come along in the 21st Century and that is the rapid emergence of a global middle class. For the first time in the history of the world, the middle class's epicentre is going to be in Asia and not in Europe and North America.

Through all of human history until now, you spoke of a middle class and you talked of Europe, you talked of North America, you talked of Australasia and tiny pockets in South America and Asia and even tinier pockets in

Africa. But now and increasingly as the years go by, the two countries that will comprise a middle class that will match, and in time surpass that of Europe and the United States are of course India and China.

For the first time in the history of mankind we have a global middle class and that global middle class will predominantly, as the years go by, be made up of people from India and China and Japan. It used to be made up almost entirely of people from Europe, North America with a smattering from Australasia and parts of Asia and Africa. And that is neither a good thing nor a bad thing. It's just a reality. And what that means is that the opportunities for us, the opportunities for you are enormous.

Middle classes of 400-800 million people are, to say the least, potentially voracious consumers of both goods and services and the opportunity that that represents to a country like Australia is self evident. And of course, most importantly, the opportunities it represents to your countries, to the lifting of the living standards of your people and the capacity of a middle class of 200 or 300 million people to reach out and to meet the aspirations of the remaining 700 or 800 millions of your people are also enormous.





And the significance of that, not only for this part of the world, but the significance of that for a country like Australia is enormous, the significance of that for the countries of Europe and North America is also enormous. And India of course will play a growing and ever influential role and that of course is why the relationship between our two countries is of such enormous significance.

Australia seeks in every way a partnership with India where we can work together for peace and stability in the region. I welcome the growing defence links between our two countries. Our military traditions are not entirely dissimilar. They have some many common origins and in particular I welcome the fact that this afternoon after my meeting with the Prime Minister there will be a Memorandum of Understanding signed on defence cooperation. And this will be a formal expression of our mutual interest in working together more closely in defence matters.

India will be an observer at the Proliferation Security Initiative exercise in Darwin, Australia next month. I welcome that fact and I hope, in time, India may see the wisdom of becoming a member of the Proliferation Security Initiative. I welcome the attendance of India at the inaugural meeting in Sydney on the 12th of January this year on the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, which brings together India and China and Japan and Australia and the United States and Korea, a group of countries all committed to

reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but not necessarily all seeing that the complete realization of that goal can be achieved through the Kyoto approach.

Our bilateral trade, of course, has grown enormously. Our two-way trade in goods and services totalled \$9.4 billion last year. India is now Australia's sixth largest merchandise export market, and as an export destination has grown faster than any of our other top 30 export markets over the past five years.

Energy of course plays a critical role in our economic relationship and I know in your minds will be the agreement signed between the United States and India only three days ago regarding the nuclear industry. This will be an issue to be discussed



between myself and the Indian Prime Minister later today and I will be interested to hear more about that arrangement and I will be interested to hear the views that the Prime Minister may wish to put to me in relation to it.

Australia supplies 25 per cent of India's gold market, and Australian coal is used in more than 50 per cent of the steel that is produced in India. And with the large global increase in demand for energy, the international market for some resources such as LNG is extremely tight and I am encouraged that people from both India and Australia are working on these issues

and I note that the leader of the Australian delegation Mr Charles Goode of Woodside is with us today and his knowledge of those matters is very, very impressive indeed.

The establishment of the Australia-India Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals will be an important vehicle to address these issues. I am very pleased that this afternoon I will witness, with the Prime Minister, the signing of an Australia-India Trade and Economic Framework Agreement and this will provide an important basis for the facilitation and the future development of the trade and economic relationship and it will encourage closer strategic cooperation in many of the key economic sectors.

I have brought with me on this visit, or I have been accompanied, let me put it that way, on this visit by a very representative and senior group of Australian businessmen, that of course, represent the hope of the future so far as economic cooperation between India and Australia is concerned. There is only so much that governments can do unless businessmen and women from both countries make the appropriate decisions and give the appropriate business leadership, nothing is going to be achieved. But it is of course the role of governments to do everything they can to facilitate business development.

As I said a moment ago, the relationship is not just an economic one; its people-to-people contacts and cooperation across diverse aspects represent a very significant element of this relationship and developing contacts in education and in science is of critical importance. I should note that right at the moment, Professor Ian Frazer is currently visiting India and he is the current Australian of the Year and he is highlighting on his

visit Australian expertise in medical research. Professor Frazer has developed a vaccine against cervical cancer and this extraordinary achievement will benefit millions of women around the world, not least in developing countries.

And against this background, let me announce that the Australian Government will allocate \$25 million over the next five years to support bilateral research collaboration through the Strategic Research Fund and Exchange Scholarships.

I am also delighted to announce that we are signing a Biotechnology Memorandum of Understanding which will foster research cooperation in a field with significant potential

## Education

Australia is also becoming an increasingly favoured destination for Indian students. Over 25,000 students



studying in Australia in 2005, mainly postgraduate study by coursework, India is as mentioned earlier, now our second largest market for students. The numbers of Indian students coming to Australia has grown by about 35 per cent in the three-year period from 2002 to 2005.

## Tourism

India is now our second fastest growing inbound tourism market, and we expect that process to accelerate. And to facilitate this growth, I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government will allow Indian citizens to access our tourist e-visa scheme, with implementation to occur later this year.

With the rapid expansion of tourism and education links



between our two countries, I am pleased that I will be witnessing this afternoon the signing of the bilateral air

movie *Salaam Namaste*, which many of you have obviously seen and can pronounce the title better than I just did. The Indian entertainment industry is accessing Australia's expertise in film production and services and featuring Australian cities in its movies, which must now be very, very familiar to many Indian movie-goers.

And of course the Minister mentioned the Commonwealth Games which will start in Melbourne next week to be followed four years later by the Commonwealth Games here in New Delhi. And that great coming together of the young men and women of the Commonwealth is an event which is a reminder of the size and diversity of that organisation.

## Cricket



services agreement to which reference was made a few moments ago. This will allow an Indian carrier into the Australia-India aviation market either operating its own aircraft services or in cooperation with an Australian carrier under code share arrangements. It will provide greater commercial flexibility for airlines to undertake their operations and provide better services for passengers.

## Bollywood

It can only assist the understanding between



the peoples of our two countries when we have Australian TV stars featuring in Indian films, as was the case with the

I mentioned as other speakers inevitably do whenever there is a gathering of Australians and Indians the common link we have through sport and most particularly, cricket. It goes without saying that of all of the figures in that great game that graced the playing fields of Australia or India or England or indeed anywhere else, none acquired greater fame than Donald George Bradman. And that name still embodies a very special magic and it was truly remarked to me some years ago by another Indian Prime Minister that the best known Australian names in India are undoubtedly Bradman and Border and perhaps in more recent years the name of Steve Waugh could well be added to those two names. And equally from Australia's point of view there is

no better known Indian name than that of Sachin Tendulkar.

## Don Bradman Exhibition

But Bradman of course is universally recognised as the greatest player the game has produced and I'm therefore very proud to announce that the Australian Government will contribute \$1 million in sponsorship towards the Bradman Exhibition tour of India. This will be a unique display of Bradman memorabilia a display which is unparalleled in the cricketing world. The exhibition is being assembled specifically for the Indian public, so that as many people as possible in this cricket loving country will have the opportunity to see it first hand. The Exhibition will travel to New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata later this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, my objective today has been to try and put into proper context the relationship between our two countries. It is a relationship built on shared values, it's a relationship bound together by a common commitment to democracy, it's a relationship made easy by a common language, it's a relationship which is enriched and enthused by our common participation in a number of sports that we all love.



## Corporate Governance

But it's also a relationship which is built on a hard-headed assessment of our respective interests. We can benefit from a closer economic relationship. India has many assets that are of great benefit to Australia. It has superbly educated, intelligent people, not only in IT but in many fields of human endeavour. Australia likewise has high

quality, well-educated scientists and doctors and lawyers and accountants. We have very high standards of corporate governance. We understand the importance of the sanctity of private property and business dealings and both of our countries and most particularly the business communities of our two societies recognise that in a globalised world, investment goes to where the better

return exists and the security of your investment is most likely guaranteed. And both of our societies place an enormous premium therefore on high standards of corporate governance and the security of a mature legal system.

Circumstances have brought us together. We have an opportunity in the early part of the 21st Century to build that relationship and to build it in a partnership which brings together the areas of our economy which complement each other.





# 'The Centre of Gravity of Economic Activity is shifting to India'



**Australian Prime Minister John Howard delivered the following address at a business luncheon in Mumbai. On March 7.**

I am delighted to be here in the commercial and business capital of India to have an opportunity of sharing, for a few moments with you, the reasons why I believe that the links, commercial and otherwise, between our two societies stand on the threshold of greater depth and greater expansion in the years ahead. I want to particularly acknowledge the presence here today of all of the businessmen who have come from Australia at the time of my visit. I think it is important in relations between Australia and countries such as India to emphasize the fact that in the end, it is arrangements and investments and deals made at a business level in the private sector that determine the generation of wealth and determine the strength of trade and economic relations.

## **Australia's remarkable economic growth**

The role of government in our society in Australia is to help facilitate, create the right economic climate and then get out of the way and allow those who risk their money and who make the decisions to get on with what they do best. And I am pleased to report to our Indian guests that the health of the Australia economy is something of which all Australians can be particularly proud. We are now in the fifteenth year of uninterrupted economic growth.



We've had over the past few years an enviable series of economic statistics. We've seen our inflation remain at a very low level, we've seen our interest rates at historically low levels, we've seen unemployment fall to a 30-year low. At the end of this financial year the national Government will have no net debt, and when one looks at the averages of, I don't mind you applauding that, please go ahead. If you look at the average of the OECD which



is somewhere in the order of 48 to 50 percent, that is a remarkable performance.

## Growing number of the self-employed

Can I also say that one of the statistics of which I am especially proud is the fact that over the past 10-15 years, the number of self employed people has grown exponentially. People increasingly in Australia are starting their own businesses, women as well as men, particularly operating businesses from home. Both men and women are starting businesses and taking risks and investing and that is a response to a very strong economic climate. So that is the strength and the optimism of the country with which you, our Indian guests, will deal not only now but in the years ahead.

## 14<sup>th</sup> largest economy

Australia, of course, has a population of only 20 million people. I can also give you another statistic. We are 53rd in population size of the countries of the world but our economy is the 14th largest and that is evidence of the way in which we have been able to punch and trade above our weight around the world. Australia, of course, in the past few years has derived enormous benefit from our trade links with other nations in the Asia Pacific region. Japan remains Australia's best customer. China has risen very sharply, particularly as a purchaser of our gas and coal and iron ore and Korea has also been a very welcome and a very strong purchaser of much of our energy product.

## Historical ties with India

India historically has had a very close relationship with Australia but it has been a relationship built more on history and commonality of culture and language and institutions rather than on the strength of the economic links. But that has begun to change, and change very significantly in recent years. Of the 30 major export destinations from Australia, the growth in Australia's exports to India has been greater than any of the other 29. So the pace with which our relationship has begun to pick up in recent years is worth noting. I have included in this delegation representatives of the education sector and I welcome in particular the Vice Chancellor of Melbourne University. And I mention that to make the point that India is now our second largest source of overseas students, and Australia, I understand, is the number three destination choice of Indian students going abroad after

the United States and the United Kingdom. And given the background in relation to the links with those two countries, that is a remarkable achievement.

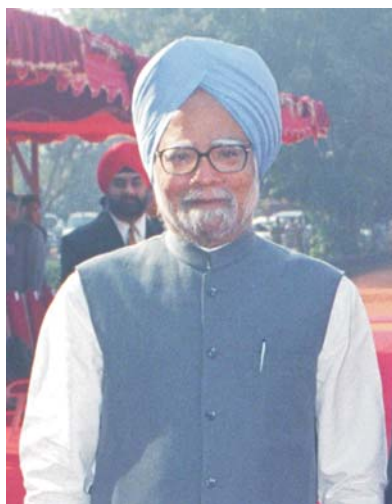
## The Future

The most remarkable thing about India of course is that India is a major contributor, indeed a pivotal partner, in the emergence of this remarkable economic development of the 21st Century and that is a truly global middle class. When I was much younger, when you learnt about the economics of the world, you learnt about the structure of society around the world. You associated the middle class with the nations of Europe and North America with just small fragments from Asia, and Africa and South America and of course Australasia. That of course has now all changed.

India has a middle class of 250 million, China the same. In ten years time, the middle classes of India, China and Japan together will equal or exceed those of North America and Europe. I say that as a flat statement of fact. I am neither applauding it nor condemning it because we are all part of this planet, we're all part of the globe and we all must share it and live in harmony. But it does mean that the centre of gravity of economic activity is profoundly shifting to this part of the world and right at the centre of that is India. And from my point of view, as Prime Minister of Australia, I want Australia to remain very much at the centre of it. And that means maintaining not only our very strong relations, traditional relations with our existing big trading partners and I pay tribute to the contribution that Japan and Korea and China and many others have made to the current strength of the Australian economy, but I also want to see that Australia is very much a part of that global middle class and is a participant and a partner and a friend of India. We have a lot going for us in the relationship. The barrier of language is not there and the common institutions and the relatively common legal systems are of enormous advantage. And the diversity of the business delegation that has come on this visit is, I hope, a message to the business community of India that we in Australia are serious. We're serious at a government level; we're also very serious at a commercial level. And we are keen as a government to do everything that we can to promote that relationship.

## India's bold economic reforms

So my friends, there is every reason for us to be optimistic about our shared future. India's economic strength coming off the base of very courageous economic



reforms, many of them initiated by the current Prime Minister of India when he was Finance Minister in the early 1990s. India's economy has been liberalized, it's more welcoming to foreign investment, it has reduced its tariffs, it has floated its exchange rate, it's done all of those

things that countries must do if they are to take advantage of the globalized economy in which we all operate. And anybody who understands the economics of the 21st Century knows that we cannot go back.

## Advantages of globalization

We are forever a globalised, economic environment and the countries that will succeed are those countries that can take advantage of that globalised environment. They can compete effectively, can find market opportunities, can appreciate that exploiting the opportunities of globalisation is something that is done across all of the industry sectors. And many of the best demonstrations of Indian expertise of course have been in the service sector and of the contribution of Indians to the information technology industry. I come to this city, I'm reminded of the extraordinary contribution of India to film and other aspects of entertainment, not only here in this country but around the world and there's been a very, very special link between India and Australia in relation to that. And I'll have the opportunity later today of meeting some of the Indian actors and actresses that have been a very, very important part of that process.

So I do speak as an optimistic proponent of the cause of



closer relations between our two countries. Not only the links in the great game of cricket, but of course links in other sports where Australians and Indians regularly compete against each other and I have to say that I am absolutely delighted that that great Australian cricketer and former captain Steve Waugh is with us today. I would like to acknowledge Steve's presence as somebody who has brought enormous pleasure to Australians and has been an absolute role model to Australians and cricketers around the world with his commitment not only to the game, but to the cause of relieving suffering in this country.



This is a very exciting time to be involved in the Australian-Indian partnership. You cannot but feel that this country is experiencing a quantum leap in terms of its economic activity, its outlook on the rest of the world, its commitment to solving the challenges of the world in the early part of the 21st Century. And I am delighted as Prime Minister of Australia to be here with my fellow countrymen in the business community offering our partnership, our commitment and our shared endeavour to build a better world including a better relationship between Australia and India.



# Educational links will further boost IT tie-ups

**Australian Prime Minister John Howard delivered the following address at the IIT, Chennai on March 8.**

The Madras Institute of Technology is certainly one of the premier educational institutions in India and has world acclaim as a centre of technology and the Memorandum of Understanding that will be signed in a few moments is a further earnest of the growing cooperation between Australia and India and most particularly, cooperation in areas of technology, most specifically, information technology. It builds on an existing level of cooperation.

There are some 18 Indian IT corporations operating in Australia. And it further builds on the very strong educational links between our two countries. India sends more postgraduate students to Australia than any other country in the world and Australia is now nudging the United Kingdom and is, as the second largest destination, or most favoured destination of all Indian students, and number three, behind the United States and the United Kingdom. And the significant

thing is that the rate of growth of the student flow from India to Australia is quite remarkable and there is no reason why that should not continue. The easy association between our two countries, the growing commercial links, the greatly enhanced political dialogue, the extraordinary growth of the Indian economy, all of these things bode well for an increase in the flow of students coming to India.

It is very important to acknowledge as I do that Indian students and researchers are reaching in areas such as satellite technology, vaccine technology and information technology in a way that is setting an example to the rest of the world. I'll be delighted in a little while to meet Ms Maria Srinivasan who is the Endeavour Asia Scholar from

Madras and she will take up here scholarship in the social sciences in Australia later this year.

Australia of course has a very strong heritage herself in scientific research and I take this opportunity of reminding my Indian friends of that this morning lest it be thought that this is in any way one-way traffic. We have seen nine Australians that won Nobel Prizes in sciences, and for a





nation of 20 million people, that is no mean achievement. Most recently Professor Barry Marshall and Dr Robin Warren won the 2005 Nobel Prize in physiology and medicine. And right at the moment, the current Australian of the Year Professor Ian Frazer of Queensland who has developed a vaccine to prevent and treat cervical cancer is visiting India.

I announced two days ago the establishment of a strategic research fund for exchange scholarships worth some \$25 million and also on the same day a biotechnology memorandum of understanding between our two countries. Now this visit of mine has given me an opportunity to emphasise to the Government and the people of India the commitment of Australia to be a partner for India, along with many other countries in the extraordinary economic and social journey that your country is now travelling. The potential that India has to grab a significant and constructive role in the future of the world and not only the future of this region is without limit and I have been deeply impressed as have all members of a very senior business delegation travelling with me, we've been deeply impressed at the progress made by India, the determination of the people of India to play that very constructive and cooperative role in the future of the region and the future of the world.

## Chennai Consulate

Australia's own links with India are well known and often spoken of. They are links of language, of history, of



shared institutions, of shared sporting endeavour and shared sporting competition. And as a further token of the Australian Government's commitment to build on the relationship I want to announce this morning that Australia will establish an Australian Consulate General here in Chennai and the person appointed to this post will perform the roles of both Consul General and Austrade Trade Commissioner for South India. This consulate will substantially enhance the services provided by the Australian Government to increasing numbers of Australian visitors, particularly in business, to South India. And this post is emblematic of the growing commitment of Australia not only to India generally, but most particularly, to South India.

## MoUs on educational exchange

I commend this Institute for its excellence, I commend it for what it has produced, who it has produced and I hope the MOUs that are signed this morning will add further to the academic exchanges between our two countries. We are very proud of the quality of Australian tertiary institutions and Professor Peter Coaldrake from Queensland will be signing one of the MOUs and amongst the travelling parties are other senior academics within Australia from other universities and I am especially delighted that this morning, this visit brings together some of the great educational institutions of our two countries.

I wish the Madras Institute of Technology well. I know it will play a major role in the unfolding story of the remarkable contribution of modern India to the 21st Century. ■



# Indo-Australian Cooperation in Energy & Minerals



## Arrow Energy in tie-up with GAIL to explore Indian gas fields

Australian coal seam gas producer Arrow Energy has announced that it intends to form a joint venture with Indian energy gas transmission and marketing company GAIL (India) Ltd to accelerate its Australian coal seam gas projects and seek new opportunities in India.



Arrow Chief Executive Nick Davies said the Memorandum of Understanding would be finalized over coming months, but the agreement should see GAIL invest a substantial amount in Arrow's Australian operations. GAIL had previously announced an ambition to spend up to A\$500 million in Australia to grow its business.

"Through this agreement we will have an injection of funds and the use of GAIL engineers on secondment, allowing us to rapidly accelerate our Australian development projects."

"It is likely that any investment by GAIL will be made across the entire value chain including investment in both exploration and future production projects," said Davies.

Partnering with GAIL will assist Arrow to find export opportunities while the company ramps up its gas production through multiple projects.

As part of the agreement, GAIL will identify export markets for gas-to-liquids or compressed natural gas. While coal seam gas has excellent prospects in Queensland because of favourable geology, the market is finite. By partnering with GAIL, Arrow will be able to accelerate its sales platform beyond the current market.

The agreement brings together GAIL's India-specific knowledge and market position with Arrow's coal bed methane (CBM) technical and development experience. Arrow will assist GAIL in exploration and development of coal seam methane projects in India where there is both strong demand and high prices for gas.

"India is currently only meeting about half of its potential gas needs. Some of that is from domestic production and some is being imported as liquefied natural gas from the Middle East at high cost," Davies commented.

There is the potential for Arrow and GAIL to jointly bid for CBM exploration blocks in the next round of CBM acreage releases in India, where significant tax concessions are offered for emerging CBM players.

Arrow and GAIL believe this planned cooperation will lead to a wide range of opportunities for both companies - in India, Australia and, potentially, elsewhere.



## Upcoming Events

Australia and India have expanding interests in trade and investment in the energy and minerals sector. The following is the calendar of events.

### June 2006, Australia Indo-Australian Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals

The Australia-India Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals (JWG) was established in 1999 and its aim is to facilitate the exchange of information on energy and minerals policies and issues, promote trade and investment in the resources sector, enhance long-term bilateral cooperation, and stimulate the development of commercial relationships to the benefit of India and Australia. The 4th Meeting of the Australian-India Joint Working Group on Minerals and Energy meeting took place in New Delhi on 8-9 June 2005 and the next meeting will be hosted by Australia in Melbourne. The Joint Working Group delegations comprise both official and business representatives.

### 19-21 June 2006, Darwin, Australia SEAAOC Conference

The Northern Territory Government and the Institute for International Research are currently developing the SEAAOC conference, Northern Australia's largest and longest established global petroleum conference, on June 19-21 2006 at the Sky City Resort, Darwin.

Annually featuring in excess of 300 industry players from the Australian and Asian petroleum value chain including key global oil, gas and LNG buyers, SEAAOC is a leading business and networking event for the industry.

### 12-14 July 2006, New Delhi, India Oil and Gas Exploration Opportunities in Australia 'Roadshow'

Now an annual event on the Indo-Australian energy calendar, the roadshow is held to promote Australian oil and gas exploration acreage within India. The roadshow comprises a seminar which provides further information on the process by which Indian corporation

may obtain exploration acreage in Australia as well as information on the geological make-up of that acreage. Following the seminar, one-on-one meetings are available on request to Indian corporations

interested in oil and gas exploration opportunities in Australia. Australia's 2006 offshore acreage release takes place on 5 May 2006.

### 22-25 November, 2006, Kolkata, India International Mining & Machinery Exhibition (IMME 2006)

Organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and supported by Ministry of Coal, Ministry of Mines, and Coal India Ltd, IMME is a major bi-annual event on the resources calendar in India. Australia is expected to field a large delegation.

### 14- 15 February 2007, Perth, Australia Austmine 2007 Conference and Exhibition

Plans are well underway for the Austmine 2007 Conference which is being held in the same week as the APEC 2007 Mining Ministers meeting in Perth. The event will be a follow up the inaugural Austmine conference in 2005 which was a resounding success, attracting over 250 delegates drawn from over 20 countries.

The Austmine 2007 Conference will be a major event on the Australian mining industry's calendar in 2007, and will once again be supported by the Australian Government through the Austrade global mining network. The event will showcase Australia's leading innovation and experience in developing new technologies and services for the international mining industry.

The Austmine 2007 Conference is expected to attract top decision makers from the global mining corporates, Australian mining companies, financiers and investors, as well as mining technology and service providers from across Australia. ■







# The Go8 of Education: Australia's Best

By Prof. Hema Sharda, University of Western Australia

In a relatively short time Australian Universities have emerged as a major provider of educational services to students from the Indian sub-continent. Today, export of education contributes over \$5 billion in foreign currency to Australia's economy. To sustain and expand this growth industry, it is heartening to see that Australian universities are committing substantial resources at understanding the needs of our full fee paying students and are aiming for quality processes and continuous improvement in all areas of services. All universities now have their international strategy in place that states clearly their vision, aims and objectives for the internationalisation of education.

With increasing numbers of overseas students choosing to study in Australia, both in UG and PG courses, the issue of cross-cultural teaching and learning is becoming increasingly important.

Today most universities have up to 20 percent overseas student enrolments in their UG and PG courses. One can also add to this number newly arrived migrant students who have different cultural backgrounds. It is not uncommon to see classes with more than 30-40 percent



of students coming from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that a different cultural background and a new environment often causes learning and adapting problems in the university life.

Cultural differences and the informality of relationship between the staff and students are identified as the most difficult hurdles to overcome by overseas students. What brings so many Indian students to study in Australia? I think there are strong 'Push and Pull' factors which are responsible for it. The 'Push' here refers to the adverse or inadequate education opportunities in their home country while 'Pull' refers to the favourable living conditions and quality of education opportunities in Australia. On return

the job opportunities for overseas students also increase tremendously with an Australian degree. A desire for western living that provides independence and exposure to western culture also brings many affluent Asian students to study abroad.

Internationalisation of Australian education offers many benefits to Universities. Besides direct economic gain, benefits also include international level recognition for Australian teaching and research. The students benefit from studying with a culturally diverse groups, by sharing their experiences, cultural knowledge, and by developing links and friendships. These links and friendship in future

Also they are not as commercial in their approach to marketing as the rest of the Australian universities. As a result many Indian students don't even know that G08 is a brand name in Australia like the MIT and Harvard are in the US and Cambridge and Oxford in the UK.

The Indian agents work on a commission and it is common knowledge that lesser known universities are heavily relying on Indian enrolments for their survival and they give higher commission to the agents for promoting their courses and subsequently the university. The agent network is complicated and sometime can be unethical in there approach to counselling students.



Indian students do not have access to full information from government sources as Australia did not create strong presence of Government bodies like British counsel or AEI in New Delhi is playing that role but is limited in its resources and reach.

## So what is G08 Australia?

The Group of Eight represents Australia's leading universities or in my words it can be termed IV league Australia.

Membership of the group consists of the

vice-chancellors (presidents) of: The University of Adelaide, The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, Monash University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney and The University of Western

What makes G08 a brand name in Australia

## Why are they special: Go8 univerities?

Because, they:

- Receive over 70 percent of national competitive research grants and conduct over 60 percent of all Australian university research;

result in global sharing, and exhachange of knowledge and skills on projects of mutual benefit.

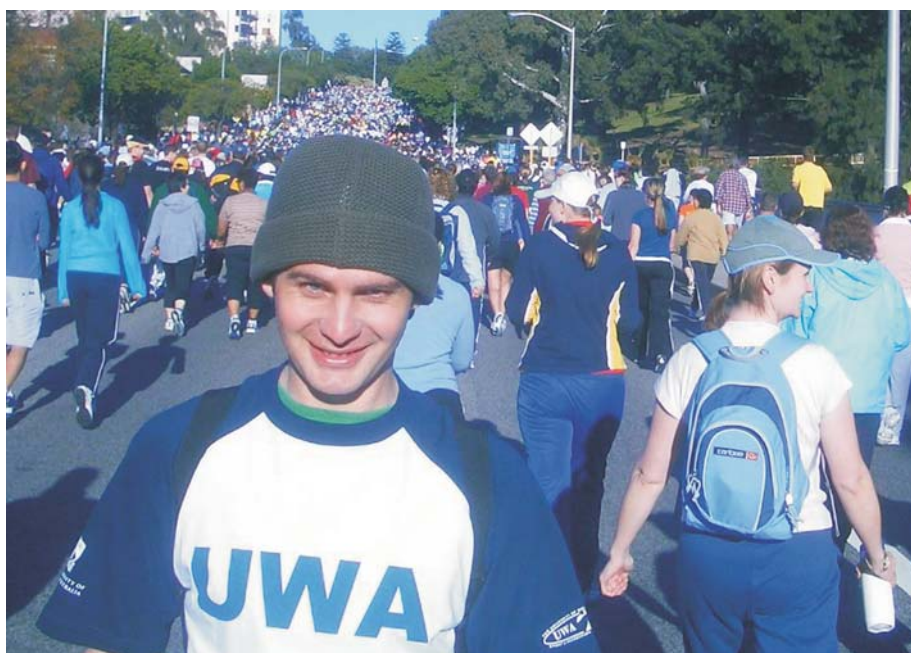
**Having established that internationalisation is beneficial to both students and the universities then which university to choose becomes an issue.**

I must say that Indian education market is dominated by private agents acting as main source of information for Indian students. Although many agents represent most universities the bias towards sending students into non-Go8 universities continues. There are primarily two reasons for it. Firstly G08 Universities have failed to establish a brand name advantage they deserve and secondly the Go8 tend to have stricter and higher selection criterion and stringent admission processes.

- Have nurtured all of Australia's Nobel Prize winners educated in Australia;
- Employ more than 80 percent of Australian university researchers awarded Citation Laureates by the Institute for Scientific Information;
- Are partners in more than 80 percent of the Australian Government's Co-operative Research Centres (CRCs) and attract over 50 percent CRC funding provided to universities;
- Are the host institutions for three quarters of the prestigious Federation Fellowships awarded to Australia's

Research Facilities;

- Generate the majority of the spin off companies from Australia's universities, several of which are listed on the Australian Stock Exchange and the NASDAQ;
- Hold over 90 percent of US patents for inventions generated by Australian universities.
- Were all ranked in the top 100 universities of the world in the Times Higher Education Supplement 2004 rankings and were all ranked in the top 250 by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University Institute of Higher Education in 2005



## The goals of the Group of Eight

The Group of Eight seeks to:

- Enhance the contribution of Australia's universities to the nation's social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being and prosperity;
- Extend the contribution of Australia's universities to the generation and preservation of the world's stock of knowledge;
- Strengthen Australia's capacity to engage in and benefit from global developments; and
- Expand opportunities for

best researchers;

- Produce over 60 percent of Australian university research publications and two-thirds of patents;
- Generate over 80 percent of the most highly cited Australian university publications;
- Contribute over 70 percent of the Fellows of the four Australian learned academies;
- Dominate university links with industry attracting over two thirds of industry research funding, and undertake over 50 percent of applied research and 60 percent of experimental development;
- Attract nearly 60 percent of competitive International Postgraduate Research Scholarships;
- Host more than half of Australia Major National

Australian students, regardless of background, to participate in world class higher education

I hope this bit of information will guide Indian students in choosing the right universities to study in Australia. The best students must apply to Go8 as agents will always push you in the universities where they are likely to get more commission. So responsibility lies on our students to get all facts about the university status there standing in Australia and the reputation of the programs before joining. Because once you join a university you cannot change till one year of course completion. Without personal effort at finding information about Universities good students would continue to go to the second best universities in Australia. My advise is simple, why go to second best if you can qualify for the best. ■



# Fund to Promote Indo-Australian Research Projects

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has announced a new A\$25 million bilateral research program with India and new Endeavour India Research fellowships.

achievers in business, industry, education and government from Australia and India at their counterpart organisations.



"The establishment of the A\$20 million Australia-India Strategic Research Fund will increase significantly Australia's science and technology engagement with India, and will promote multi-disciplinary research collaboration between the two countries," Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training Julie Bishop said.

The A\$5 million fellowships are comprised of:

Endeavour India Research Fellowships (A\$3.5 million), providing top researchers from India an opportunity to undertake short-term postgraduate and postdoctoral research in any field of study in Australia, and Australians to do the same in India; and

Endeavour Executive Awards (A\$1.5 million) providing professional development opportunities for high

Ms Bishop also welcomed the signing of a Biotechnology Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries which will facilitate increased research cooperation in this significant field of science. "These initiatives demonstrate the importance the Australian Government places on our education, science and technology relationship with India."

"The result will increase the links between Australian and Indian scientists and their research institutions, to the benefit of both nations. The Government is committed to strengthening and expanding its relationship with India and I look forward to the future growth of this partnership," Ms Bishop said.

The establishment of the Fund and the signing of the biotechnology agreement follows a meeting between India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Prime

Minister Howard who has just visited India.

There is already a very solid relationship between India and Australia in the field of education. India is the second largest source country for international students in Australia, and Australia is the third most popular destination for Indians seeking education abroad.

Links between Australian universities and Indian institutions continue to develop. For example, Monash University, in collaboration with BHP Billiton, is partnering with the Indian Institute of Technology Mumbai (IIT Mumbai) to establish a joint institution for scientific research. The University of New South Wales has also formalised a partnership with IIT Mumbai to develop collaborative research programmes in computer science.

## Research Funding to Fight Bird Flu

Research projects aiming to prevent, detect or control avian influenza and other respiratory disease outbreaks are set to receive A\$6.5 million in research funding from the Australian Government. Announcing the funding recently, Minister for Health and Ageing Tony Abbott said the 33 projects are expected to lead to important advances in Australia's pandemic planning.

"Grants to the Universities of Sydney and New South Wales of about A\$450,000 and A\$250,000 respectively will enable work on rapid, cost-effective improvements in diagnostics that can be used to determine whether people with respiratory infections do in fact have the avian flu virus, or another type of infection. The Westmead Millennium Institute has also been awarded A\$118 000 to develop a rapid diagnostic test for monitoring the development and transmission of drug-resistant influenza," Abbott said.

The University of Queensland (UQ) will also receive almost A\$300,000 to look at new ways of managing and supporting frontline health workers in an infectious disease outbreak.

The UQ project will explore the important public health role of pre-hospital emergency medical services in containing and managing an influenza outbreak in Australia.

Another UQ project, performed by Professor Anton



Middelberg of the Australian Institute for Bioengineering and Nanotechnology will look at simplified ways of producing mass vaccines quickly and safely.

"We are looking at applying existing technology to safely manufacture pure protein and assemble the vaccine particles in manufacturing reactors."

"If successful we will be able to quickly, safely and reliably produce enough vaccine for the Australian population using our existing national bio-manufacturing capability," Professor Middelberg said.

Since the emergence of avian influenza in Asia in 2003, the Australian Government has so far committed a total of A\$555 million on avian influenza and pandemic preparedness measures. ■

## Australian VCs Bag Big Silicon Valley Funds

The 2006 Melbourne International Venture Capital Conference held recently heard that Australia's venture capital market, while small, is starting to attract the attention of the big 'Silicon Valley' funds, but that more still needs to be done to turn overseas eyes towards Australia's innovative venture capital market.

Key speakers outlined Australia's strengths - its stable government and financial markets, English-speaking and highly educated workforce, robust legal and intellectual property protection and its proximity to large Asian markets - and said Australia must sell these strengths to the world, and encourage knowledge-based

companies to establish operations in Australia as the venture capital industry becomes increasingly global.

The conference heard that US venture capitalists have successfully invested in Australian companies such as Hitwise, LookSmart, Dilithium Networks, Fultec, Phenomix and Smart Drug Systems, and that Silicon Valley venture capitalists are becoming increasingly global in their outlook in the current business cycle. They are attracted by Australia's expertise in semi-conductors, software, optical, wireless LAN, immunology, oncology and stem cell research. ■





# An Event of GeNext Tech & Solutions

CeBIT Australia is Australasia's leading Information & Communications Technology (ICT) event for the business marketplace is opening in Sydney for three days from May 9 to 11. The fair covers the entire spectrum of technology and the key elements that make up the ICT products and services marketplace. This is the only Australian event where one can explore the full range of next generation global technologies and solutions.

After 4 successful years, CeBIT Australia has established itself as the leading event for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in Australasia, covering the entire spectrum of ICT in one place, at one time. No other event in Australasia attracts the quality and quantity of business visitors that CeBIT Australia does.

Growing stronger every year, with more than 28,000 visitors in 2005, CeBIT Australia is projecting more than 30,000 for 2006. CeBIT Australia is geared for buyers who do not have enough time to visit ten niche shows a year, but want to see the latest technologies available to improve their business at one single event. Visitors come to source, to test and to buy solutions in their specific fields of interest. At the same time they learn all about what is new and cutting edge in the field of ICT. This is why most CeBIT exhibitors keep coming back year after year, with bigger and better stands.

## Marketing

CeBIT Australia operates a very targeted marketing campaign aimed at attracting the right audience. It specifically markets every technology category represented on the floor, and focuses on the relevant level of people across the various industries.

- Over 600,000 personalised invitations mailed to business professionals across all vertical markets or Advertising in the leading business, technology and trade media
- Media relations generating press coverage both domestic and international or International promotion

through the organisation's global network of 73 offices or Continuous updates via CeBIT Australia Website (over 15,000 hits a day close to the event) and the digital newsletters

- Support from Australian and international governments
- Partnerships with key industry and business associations
- Active co-operative marketing campaign with exhibitors and partners including direct mail, website listings and newsletter articles

Visitor industries: Accounting, Banking, Finance, Defence, Education, Engineering, Government, Graphic Design, Hospitality, ICT Channel, ICT Services/ Vendor, Manufacturing, Media, Professional Services, Retailing, Security, Software, System Integration, Telecommunications/ Service Provider.

## Matchmaking

CeBIT Australasia has a sophisticated online exhibitor listing and business matchmaking service to make the right match for the visitor. An advanced exhibitor directory and an online search engine enables visitors to identify the exhibitors they want to meet, based on their industry, product category or business objectives. Once visitors have identified which exhibitors they want to see, they can easily set up appointments to meet with these exhibitors, using the online matching service provided by CeBIT Australia. This makes a visit to CeBIT Australia even more valuable for the visitors and ensures that the exhibitors have the right people at hand to do some actual business.

## Highlights

In response to industry demand, CeBIT Australia 2006 will incorporate the CeBIT Strategy Forum, a one-day conference addressing the hottest business issues for top level Management today. Speakers will address breakthrough technologies and their value for business and organisations. Relevant case studies from different industries will be represented to illustrate and evaluate

implementations of the solutions showcased. Emerging technologies will be presented, with discussion on how they will shape the strategies of the future. The CeBIT Strategy Forum will inspire all high level managers to power up their business using technology. The Forum will take place on May 9, at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, and will be attended by more than 500 Senior Managers from Australia and abroad.

## Future parc

Fostering commitment to further Australia's Research & Development industry, future parc is a special display area, which highlights the potential to transfer technological research, ideas and development into commercialisation. It is the perfect platform for research institutions, technology incubators and other innovation greenhouses to share knowledge and exchange ideas, leading to the next generation of technology breakthroughs.

## Tech Seminars

New in 2006 will be the CeBIT Tech Seminars. A series of technical seminars addressing a number of cutting edge technologies to educate, entertain and inspire visitors to make an informed buying decision about technology that can truly enhance their business. Speaking opportunities exist for all registered exhibitors, giving them the chance to showcase their technology on a larger platform to a targeted audience. The CeBIT Tech Seminars will be held in two theatres on the exhibition floor at the rear of Halls 3 and 5, and will be open to all visitors. Each day will host specific themed segments, designed to create a greater focus on the different areas of technology at CeBIT Australia: The themes will cover:

- Software • IT Hardware • Digital Media • Wireless & Mobile Technologies • RFID • VoIP & Triple Play
- Security & Cards • Storage • Enterprise Solutions

## International Business

CeBIT Australia continues to attract increasing numbers of international exhibitors with over 120 companies bringing business to Australasia in 2005. CeBIT's international country pavilions offer the opportunity for visitors to get face-to-face with technology innovators from around the world. As Australasia's leading ICT event, CeBIT Australia attracts a large number of international visitors and delegations, looking for products and partners, as well as investigating opportunities in the Australasian market.

## The power of exhibitions

Exhibitions give the visitors an opportunity to interact directly with their target market. CeBIT Australia attracts a

large and high quality audience offering the visitors the best in potential leads and business. The exhibitors know the value of their participation and it benefits them more than any other marketing activity:

- This is where decision makers go to see new solutions and the latest technology
- This is where exhibitors can interact directly to create new business

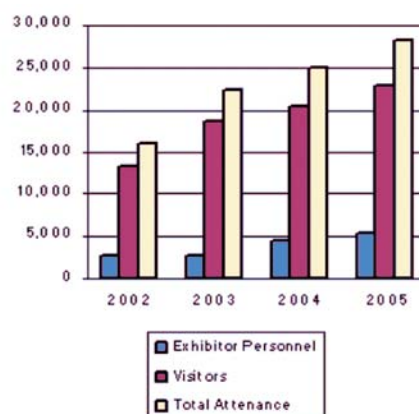
Exhibitions offer the opportunity for the visitors to invite potential and existing clients to your stand, assisting your company to establish and strengthen its relationships. Exhibitors use CeBIT Australia and the atmosphere it creates as a platform to themselves and to showcase their strengths to the people that matter most to the business. Exhibitions are a place to network with potential partners, associations, trade organisations and governments. They are all there at CeBIT Australia: one's competitors and one's potential partners, governments and all the leading associations.

CeBIT Australia is a tradeshow and conference strictly for business. Our exhibitors focus on technology solutions for the corporate market. Whether you're a C-level executive, IT professional, software developer, or business line manager, one day at CeBIT will keep you informed of the latest and best practices in integrated business technology solutions.

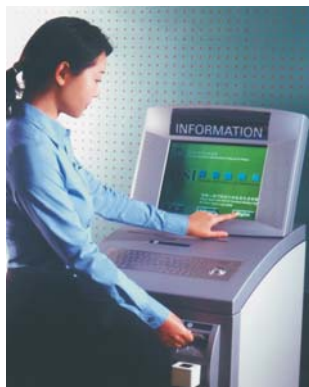
At CeBIT Australia, one will be able to experience and compare the latest products and solutions, be part of cutting edge conference programs led by top industry experts and build relationships with industry visionaries, influencers and peers.

## Exhibition Statistics

|                      | 2002   | 2003   | 2004   | 2005   |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Exhibiting Companies | 384    | 427    | 521    | 603    |
| <b>Attendance</b>    |        |        |        |        |
| Exhibitor Personnel  | 2,715  | 2,759  | 4,553  | 5,267  |
| Visitors             | 13,155 | 18,499 | 20,525 | 22,949 |
| Total Attendance     | 15,870 | 22,258 | 25,078 | 28,216 |







# Australia Hosting e-Government forum to improve governance

Australia is hosting a unique event, namely e-Government on May 10, coinciding with CeBIT

Australasia 2006, in Sydney.

The event e-government is a forum where top officials will explain the Government's e-strategy and how it is building the country's ICT capabilities. International case studies will be presented at the forum, along with implemented solutions. The event will also provide a clear picture of the government direction, its policies on health and human services,

One of the key speakers at the forum will be Special Minister of State Gary Nairn, who has recently launched the new e-Government strategy for the coming five years. Aiming to improve the Australian people's contact with the government, to reduce cost and cut red tape, the plan is ultimately creating a more efficient government. At the e-Government Forum he will share with the visitors his vision on responsive Government.

The Participants will include (From Government): Director Generals, CIO's, CFO's, Mayors/ Councilors, Department Heads, Heads of IT, Heads of Purchasing, Business and General Managers, Record Managers and Consultants. And from (industry): Network and wireless providers, Telecommunication companies, Security and Storage companies, Supply Chain solutions providers, Business Intelligence solutions providers, Outsourcing experts, Open Source providers, CRM system providers, Human Resources systems and solutions providers and consultancies.

The key topics to be discussed at the e-Government Forum are as follows:

## e-Government Policy Directions

### e-Government overview

Special Minister of State, Gary Nairn, has recently launched the new e-Government strategy for the coming five years. Aiming to improve the Australian people's contact with the Government, reduce cost and cut red tape, the plan is ultimately to create a more efficient Government.

### What do we really want from e-Government?

William Heath will discuss whether existing measures available give an adequate idea of our progress towards "responsive" or "transformational" government, and asks to what extent we are yet fully aware of our real destination. He discusses the growing professionalism of the government IT community, how e-enabled public services can best draw on creativity, how they can be solidly based on a foundation of trust, and the challenge and opportunity of engaging with critical friends and preparing for emerging new feedback mechanisms.

### Responsive Government - A New Service Agenda Ann

Steward is responsible for implementing the Australian Government's new e- Government Strategy over the next five years. The Strategy recognises that the decentralised nature of the Australian Government presents specific challenges. Ms Steward will talk about the identified challenges that need to be dealt with through cooperation and sharing based on a plan that aims to realise the potential of e-Government.

### The Wireless Revolution and e-Government

#### The Wireless Revolution

Outlining the significant developments, problems and solutions in wireless, Professor McGeehan will cover his involvement in the design of the mobile phone, the introduction of broadband services, and his involvement in the future of wireless LAN technology. A true pioneer showing how ideas change our world

### The Intelligent Access Program - GPS tracking and heaving vehicle traffic throughout Australia

There has been considerable reform in the practices of heavy vehicle transport on Australian roads. Chris Koniditsiotis will talk about the Intelligent Access Program, a voluntary program which provides heavy vehicles improved access to the Australian road network, in return for monitoring of compliance with specific access conditions by vehicle Telematics solutions.

### The Galileo Project: The next generation in GPS

The Australian industry is keen to explore commercial

applications for Europe's new, pinpoint-accurate, civilian global navigation satellite system, Galileo, that will provide greater availability, accuracy and reliability than the GPS system while being compatible and interoperable with it. The potential is enormous in the safe management of traffic, but uses for Galileo will be limited only by industry's imagination.



## Telework amid natural disasters, epidemics or terrorist attacks

Terrorist attacks, pandemics, cyclones, cyber attacks, strikes, labour disputes, floods and other challenges - the list is almost endless. There will always be emergencies and we need to be prepared. Business Continuity Planning is well developed in Australia but its scope is limited and its application is often narrowly defined - good for terrorist attacks but not necessarily appropriate for other threats in the workplace. Whether or not your business feels imminently threatened by any of these, history proves that emergencies are both unpredictable and inevitable. Telework offers a potential option for addressing threats such as these - this presentation looks at the threats, possible ways of addressing the problems by promoting telework, and the barriers to greater adoption of this revolutionary work practice.

## Smart approaches to e-Health and Human Services

### German Electronic Health Card

Australians could save millions on postage and billions of dollars preventing fraud and identity theft. The introduction of the health and welfare card concept has produced considerable debates. The Government is looking to issue up to 20 million smart cards that would allow patients to easily obtain refunds by swiping their health card in the EFTPOS machine at the doctors. Hear how internationally the introduction of the e-Health card is managed.

### Connected Government

Combining five Human Services organisations, including Centre Link and Medicare, under one umbrella was a huge challenge. Geoff Leeper will speak about the key achievements and lessons learned in providing online service delivery to Australian citizens - offering more efficient and seamless services and resulting in a big increase in the digital contact people have with the government. He will also share how this knowledge and

experience is used in cross-government links to other government departments like the Australian Taxation Office.

## Virtual Health Services

The Virtual Services Project (VISP) project from Southwest Alliance of Rural Health will be the first implementation in Australia of multi-agency virtual service delivery over a converged broadband network. This will enable disadvantaged rural and regional communities to access specialist health care services and other support services locally. The VISP is significant because it will attempt to change the pilot projects that SWARH has been conducting into core health service delivery strategies for regional communities

## Private and Public Sector co-operation: e-Health

The health system today faces significant pressures including increasing costs, ageing population, maturing workforce, and focus on quality/safety improvements. It has become widely recognised that better use of information technologies is a key enabler to address these issues in health. This talk will give examples of health IT projects for both Government and healthcare providers and how this can be implemented via public private partnerships

## e-Security and Identification

### Identity Management in the Australian Government

Identity Management is a hot and sensitive topic - in an era where data travels wirelessly and at great speed, security and prevention of fraud have become key. Dr Dianne Heriot, Attorney-General's Department, will speak about identity management approaches being undertaken by the Federal Government and across Governments, also in relation to exchanging information and doing transactions with the private sector.

## The Excellence in e-Government Award 2006

Special Minister of State Gary Nairn has announced the launch of the e-Government Award at CeBIT Australia 2006. The inaugural Special Minister of State's Excellence in e-Government Award (e-Award) will recognise and reward the most successful and outstanding project in e-government, based on the impact it has had on the lives of Australian citizens, the community and business. It will be judged by a panel of experts in the e-government field. The e-Award will be presented at CeBIT ICT Celebration Dinner to be held at the conclusion of the e-Government Forum on May 10. ■



# e-Government strategy will make life easy for citizens

The Australian Computer Society (ACS) has welcomed the Federal Government's strategy for e-government, "Responsive-Government, A New Service Agenda" as a strong step forward in enhancing and streamlining government services and reducing the complexity of dealing with government.

ACS President Philip Argy said that making it easier and more convenient for citizens to deal with government was an important objective.

"The new initiatives are likely to help create significant advances in process re-engineering across the public sector; providing efficiency gains on top of the improvement in service delivery," said Argy. "The ATO's eTax initiative is particularly important - more than 1.2 million Australians lodged their tax return using eTax in 2005.

"With strong privacy protection processes built in, the e-government initiative should allay the concerns of those who worry about data matching and Big Brother. It is clear from the plans that users will have control over which government agencies are permitted to share their information. We are also pleased with the Government's assurance that the new initiative won't disadvantage those without access to technology, as existing service delivery modes will be maintained. However, with Internet access points at public libraries and similar locations, we would urge the public to use the online portal at every opportunity to save time and inconvenience when dealing with governments," said Argy.

Recent reports by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Information Technology and the Arts indicate that ICT innovation is underpinning productivity in all sectors of the Australian economy and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future. Argy congratulated Special Minister of State Gary Nairn, for highlighting the opportunity for small ICT businesses to benefit from the export potential of any innovative solutions they might develop in supporting the e-government initiative.

"It's good to see the government striving to take a leading role in using ICT innovation. The government is the largest consumer of ICT products and services in

Australia, and investment in innovation of this nature will lead to beneficial spin offs across entire economy," said Argy. "This plan provides the opportunity to develop fully integrated, whole of government services that can span federal, state and local government operations and drive linkages between public and private sector service provision. While changing one's address for electoral purposes can be achieved by a one-stop shop process, this is one of the few examples to date of the co-operation that is possible. The example, however, is one that exemplifies the potential benefits to citizens from this kind of initiative.

"Government services will be able to be personalised and delivered from the perspective of the users rather than from that of government departments. One hopes that [www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au) will soon become one of the top websites in the country," said Argy, noting that the Bureau of Meteorology is already one of the top sites in recent polls.

About the ACS: ACS is a recognised professional association for those working in Information and Communications Technology, seeking to raise the standing of ICT professionals and represent their views to government, industry and the community. A member of the Australian Council of Professions, ACS is the guardian of professional ethics and standards in the ICT sector, committed to ensuring the beneficial use of ICT for all Australians. It provides both members and non-members with opportunities for professional education, networking and certification, as well as enabling them to contribute to the development of their profession. About the ACS Foundation: An ACS initiative, the ACS Foundation was established in August 2001, to encourage both private and public sponsorship of IT higher education and research projects. By increasing funding opportunities for industry to contribute to education programs, the Foundation seeks to create a highly skilled workforce, able to effectively access research and industry-specific training. The only national scholarship facilitator focused exclusively on the IT industry, the ACS Foundation receives funding from IT companies, industry associations, Government bodies, individuals and ACS itself. ■

# 'CollabIT' to boost ICT avenues in three states



The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) is working with three Australian states-New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria to step up business opportunities for the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry through an innovative programme called CollabIT.



In the Northern Sydney business precinct in New South Wales, more than 100 SME ICT businesses expressed interest in participating in the launch event - held recently at the Trade & Investment Centre, Sydney - all keen to participate in CollabIT.

CollabIT is designed to provide like-minded companies with the opportunity to form collaborative networks to source new markets and increase sales.

As AIIA's Chief Executive Officer Rob Durie said, "By bringing together the diverse range of ICT capabilities into business networks, AIIA's small to medium enterprise (SME) members can pool their resources to bid for ICT contracts normally out of their reach.

"CollabIT will help AIIA members and other interested parties to not only establish partnerships with similar small Australian companies, but also to forge alliances with multinational corporations, tap into their substantial resources and access new markets."

John Dean, AIIA's Local Industry Policy Manager and CollabIT organiser added, "AIIA has already established the CollabIT program in Victoria and Western Australia. The launch into the Northern Sydney and surrounding business precinct was the next initiative in our strategy to expand the 'collaborative networks' concept nationally. It was great to see so many interested participants at today's session, all of whom are keen to further the growth of what is already a thriving SME ICT network."

The flexible CollabIT framework has been designed to

encompass industry sub-sectors, such as health, integrated transport systems and mining technologies, thus helping to build partnering opportunities across all ICT industry 'touch points'.

CollabIT is part of AIIA's vision to create a globally competitive ICT industry, and as Rob Durie commented, "The ICT industry is a driving force behind the Australian economy's productivity growth, contributing \$36.2 billion, or 4.6 per cent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product.

"CollabIT is just one of the many initiatives that AIIA has developed to boost the growth of this vital sector of Australia's economy."

AIIA and the West Australian Government are also working together to increase business opportunities for the local information and communication technology (ICT) industry.

AIIA's program, CollabIT, will provide like-minded companies with the opportunity to form collaborative networks, or clusters, to source new markets and increase sales.

AIIA's Chief Executive Officer Rob Durie said, "CollabIT will help AIIA members and other interested parties to not only establish partnerships with similar small Australian companies, but also to forge alliances with multinational corporations, tap into their substantial resources and access new markets."

Initial feedback suggests that interested companies are

looking to jointly tender with other ICT companies as a major business growth strategy.

Market intelligence, futures thinking and co-operative trade show participation also feature strongly in the potential areas of industry collaboration.

Tony Rosser, Chairman of AIIA's West Australian branch, says: "CollabIT will allow SMEs to identify skills and synergies, and share their knowledge and resources for mutual benefit.

"AIIA welcomes the opportunity to work with the Department of Industry and Resources to deliver this exciting program. The Western Australian Government is clearly demonstrating its willingness to work with industry to secure growth opportunities for the local ICT sector."

The Association has already established a CollabIT program in Victoria, and will work with ICT companies in most other states to expand the collaborative networks nationally.

CollabIT is part of AIIA's vision to create a globally competitive ICT industry, Rob Durie says.

"The ICT industry is a driving force behind the Australian economy's productivity growth, contributing 4.6 per cent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product. CollabIT is just one of the many initiatives that AIIA has developed to boost the growth of this vital sector of Australia's economy," Durie concludes.

The AIIA and the Victorian Government are also working together to increase business opportunities for ICT companies.

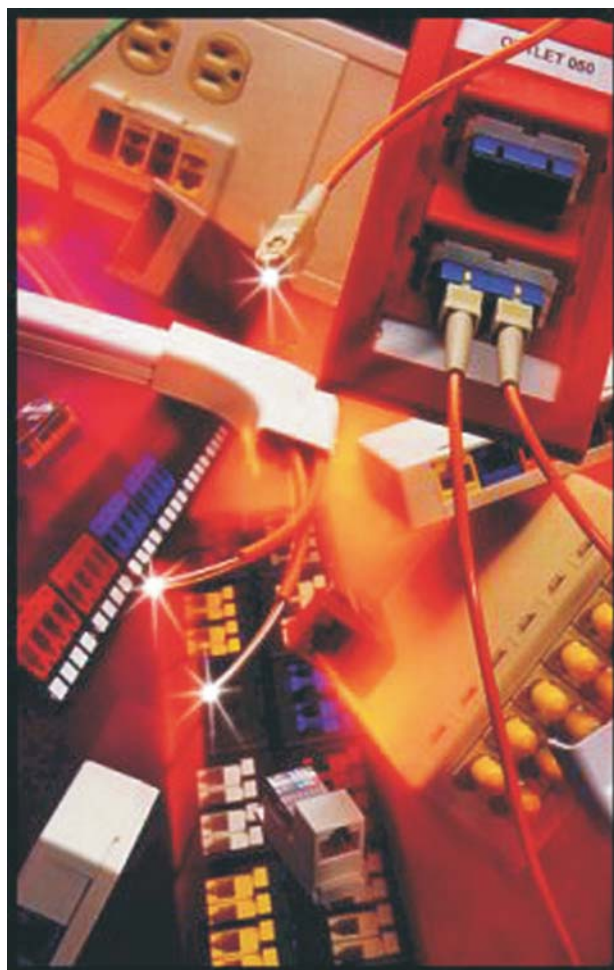
Working in partnership on a new collaborative ICT industry project, AIIA and Multimedia Victoria will offer like minded companies the opportunity to form collaborative networks, or clusters, to partner for new markets and increase sales.

Initial research has revealed that nearly 80 percent of the companies who have registered to participate in the program are looking to jointly tender with other ICT companies as a major business growth strategy.

AIIA Chief Executive Officer, Rob Durie said, "Using AIIA's innovative partnering program, CollabIT, AIIA members will not only be assisted to establish partnerships with similar small Australian companies, but to also forge alliances with multinational corporations to tap into their substantial resources to access new markets."

Market intelligence, futures thinking and cooperative trade show participation also featured strongly in the potential areas of industry collaboration.

Rob Durie said that CollabIT was part of AIIA's vision to



create a globally competitive ICT industry.

"AIIA welcomes the opportunity to leverage our close relationship with Multimedia Victoria to deliver this innovative program. Yet again, MMV are leading Australia in their willingness to work with industry and secure growth opportunities.

"Over the next four months, AIIA will work with ICT companies in most other States to expand this exciting program.

"CollabIT will allow SMEs to increase their opportunities by identifying skills and synergies and sharing that knowledge and resources for joint activities," Mr Durie said.

## About AIIA:

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) is the leading national body representing suppliers of information technology and telecommunications goods and services. AIIA has over 370 member companies generating combined revenues of more than \$40 billion, employ over 100,000 Australians and have exports in excess of \$2 billion. [www.aiia.com.au](http://www.aiia.com.au)



**M**arketing professionals in the ICT industry have listed brand positioning as their primary marketing challenge in 2006. Results from the Australian Information Industry Association's (AIIA's) first Marketing Benchmarking Survey indicate a strongly competitive market, but one in which economic outlook and market restrictions were not obstacles to gaining market share.

Instead, 30 per cent of survey respondents nominated brand positioning as their primary marketing challenge this year, with 52 per cent placing branding on their list of top three challenges, followed by increased competition and lead management (both 34 per cent). These challenges were consistent across small, medium and large organizations.

## Brand positioning main marketing challenge

According to Kathryn Porritt, AIIA's General Manager Marketing and Business Services, the survey reinforces the general feeling that there is little market resistance to ICT in general, but much marketing effort is spent on encouraging the customer to "buy from us".

"Today, branding is not simply the focus of marketing and PR initiatives, but an integrated part of an ICT enterprise's business strategy, customer relationship management focus and employee retention strategy," says Ms Porritt, "These survey results reflect the emphasis that ICT companies are placing on branding.

"Maturing and sophisticated buyers, along with technology convergence are fostering a highly competitive environment," Ms Porritt says. "Responses indicate that there is plenty of ICT business out there, but that companies are in fierce competition for customer attention. As the buoyant economy continues to boost ICT growth, it's more a matter of which company can best position their product or service in the customer's mind and turn that positioning into sales."

In particular, the survey reveals that ICT marketing is focused on direct contact with the market compared with other sectors in the economy, with events, trade shows and corporate hospitality often attracting 15 per cent or more of a single budget.

"While marketers in many other industries assign a

significant percentage of marketing expenditure to advertising, ICT marketers spend more of their marketing budgets on personal relationship building," Ms Porritt says.

Tricia Deasy from Australian Survey Research, the research company that helped design the benchmarking study, said that the most important objectives for most companies are customer retention and acquisition, increasing market share and measuring market results.

"This indicates a strongly competitive market where ICT companies are working with current products and an



existing customer base, rather than focusing on developing new products or markets," Ms Deasy says.

The Marketing Benchmarking Survey is AIIA's first review of the Australian ICT industry's marketing functions.

Findings are based on information from AIIA member organizations across the breadth of the industry, with survey participants from a wide cross-section of organizations in terms of size, number of employees, sub-industry and revenue.

The annual survey will be used by AIIA member companies to develop marketing strategies and benchmark their activities against best practice in the industry. The next survey will be released in October 2006.

"We are confident that AIIA's Marketing Benchmarking Survey will become an invaluable tool for ICT marketers from both small and large companies," Ms Porritt says. "It outlines the trends for the industry as a whole and in segments to ensure marketers have access to the most relevant data for budgets, up-selling the marketing function and for marketing planning activities." ■

# ICT Driving Economic Growth

Economic research that emphasises the significant contribution of information and communications technology (ICT) to Australia's strong productivity performance in recent years has just been released. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) also released its first serious analysis of the contribution of ICT to the economy, further demonstrating the significant contribution that technology is making to Australia's economic strength.

Australian Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Helen Coonan, has commented on the significance of her Department's reports *Estimating Aggregate Productivity Growth for Australia: The Role of Information and Communications Technology and ICT* and *Australian productivity: methodologies and measurement*. "This research provides further evidence that the importance of ICT to Australia's impressive economic performance has been previously understated," Senator Coonan said.

The *Estimating Aggregate Productivity Growth for Australia* report suggests that ICT is providing significant returns on investment to Australian companies. According to the report, investment in ICT returns around 40 percent in additional value to industry. This builds on earlier research showing that technology, including ICT

contributed up to 85 percent of productivity growth in the manufacturing sector and up to 78% of productivity growth in the services sector over the last two decades.

The research is being recognised by the international community and has been cited by the OECD in its ongoing work on productivity growth.

"Improving productivity is essential to maintaining Australia's international competitiveness right across the economy," Senator Coonan said.

"Understanding that the effective use of ICT is adding value and growing productivity, is critical to the ongoing success of a range of industry sectors," she added.

The ABS has also released its first serious analysis of the contribution of ICT to the economy further demonstrating the significant contribution that technology is making to Australia's economic strength.

According to the ABS, in 2002-03 ICT accounted for A\$36.2 billion or 4.6 percent of GDP, 13.8 percent of total investment by Government and industry, and made a greater contribution to the economy than either the agriculture, forestry and fishing, defence or education industries. ■

## Australia steps up Scholarship funding for Asia-Pacific

There is good news for diligent students wishing to study in Australia but are daunted by the cost of education in that country. Australia proposes to increase the number of scholarship to students in Asia. Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer, and Minister of Education, Science and Training Ms. Julie Bishop have announced that Australia will double the number of educational scholarships it offers in the Asia-Pacific region under its new programme, to be called Australian Scholarships. The scholarship is expected to provide nearly 1.4 billion Australian dollars worth funding over five years for more than 19,000 scholarships.

The initiative will bring together Australian Development Scholarships (ADS), managed by Australia's international aid agency, AusAID, and Endeavour scholarships, offered by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). A new component, of Australian Scholarships, the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) will target future leaders in the region for advanced study.

## AIIA to broaden research to help SMEs realize potential

Australia's leading information, communication and technology industry body, the Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) is to broaden its research activities as part of its plan to realise the potential of Australian ICT small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The research is a key element of AIIA's program to assist the growth of local ICT companies. AIIA is engaging consultants to develop an industry profile which, when completed, will provide valuable information to AIIA and local industry participants on the emerging risks and opportunities for ICT SMEs.

The project will include a review of available research, questionnaires and a series of interviews with local industry companies as well as other key industry and Government stakeholders.

Among the issues which require better understanding are the drivers and barriers facing the local industry. These will include business issues such as research & development, commercialisation, incentives for early stage investors, venture capital availability, access to appropriate skills, assessment of market and trade export opportunities, government procurement,

partnering/clustering potential and general information on types of government export assistance and grants to support market access.

The Chief Executive Officer of AIIA, Rob Durie said today that the project is in line with AIIA's objective to create jobs and opportunities by helping local ICT industry companies achieve their growth potential.

"If we want to maximise the contribution ICT makes to productivity growth in Australia, it is important that Australia becomes a net producer of ICT goods and services, not just a user," Mr Durie said.

"While this study represents only the first stage of our program, a key element will be the identification of barriers to growth and of opportunities which can be generated for the local industry," he said.

"To develop and grow ICT businesses into global ventures, Australian businesses must create networks of companies which collaborate in the development of international markets.

"This research will go a long way towards helping industry to achieve that objective," Mr Durie said. ■

Downer feels that scholarships have a proven record in promoting political and economic reform as well as enabling regional leaders to develop enduring connections with Australia.

"This initiative revives the spirit of the Colombo Plan," he said. "It demonstrates the high value Australia places on building relationships with countries within the region."

On the other hand Ms Bishop feels that these scholarships also enhance Australia's reputation as a provider of high-quality education for international students.

"Australia is committed to fostering closer ties through education and through study exchange programmes," said Ms Bishop. From May 2006, DEST will provide up to 9,700 scholarships under an expanded Endeavour Programme. AusAID will provide 6,600 scholarships through the Australian Development

Scholarships program and 3,200 Australian Leadership Awards.

The Australian Leadership Awards will focus on current and future leaders in business, education and government within the region. While the Endeavour Scholarships will provide international education experiences across the vocational and technical education and higher education sectors, as well as post-doctoral research and professional development opportunities in Australia and overseas.

The Australian Development Scholarships programme supports development needs in recipient countries. The total cost of Australian Scholarships will be \$1.387 billion.

For detailed information on Australian Scholarships log on to: [www.australianscholarships.gov.au](http://www.australianscholarships.gov.au) ■



## Business Investment up 21.5 pc

The results of the December quarter 2005 Survey of New Capital Expenditure, released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in February 2006, show continuing strength in business investment in Australia. In nominal terms, businesses invested more than A\$19 billion in the December quarter to bring total investment for 2005 to a record A\$64.4 billion (an annual average increase of 21.5 percent).

In volume terms, total new capital expenditure increased by 9.2 percent in the December quarter to be 22.5 percent higher through the year. Both categories of new capital expenditure have grown very strongly over the past year, with spending on buildings and structures increasing by 38.7 percent and spending on equipment, plant and machinery increasing by 16.4 percent.

The growth figures, released in the National Accounts data of 1 March 2006 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), show that GDP increased by 0.5 percent in the December 2005 quarter to be 2.7 percent higher than a year ago.

Profits increased by 1.4 percent in the quarter to be 12.1 percent higher than a year ago. The profit share of GDP was 26.9 percent, and remains near record high levels. The outlook for business investment is supported by strong corporate profitability and balance sheets and high levels of capacity utilisation.

Across the sectors, there is a continuing momentum to take advantage of low interest rates, high levels of profitability and a solid domestic economy. Very strong growth in the demand for Australia's bulk commodity exports has been an important contributor to business investment growth in recent years. The mining industry has undertaken more than A\$13.2 billion of new capital expenditure in the past year alone and about A\$30 billion over the past three years. This is leading to an increase in the volume of exports of Australia's bulk mineral commodities and further increases are in prospect.

While mining investment has grown by 68.4 percent through the year to the December quarter in volume terms, substantial growth has also been recorded in other industries. Private investment in the manufacturing sector has grown by 28.4 percent over the past year.

Very strong business investment is laying a foundation for future economic growth in Australia. The mining sector has invested around A\$31.6 billion in additional equipment, buildings and structures over the past three years, and other sectors have also invested strongly. With unemployment at low levels, business investment and measures to increase productivity and labour force participation will become increasingly important as drivers of growth. ■

## IMF predicts Australian economy will continue to perform strongly

In its latest World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund expects the Australian economy will continue to perform strongly, growing by 2.9 percent in 2006 and 3.2 percent in 2007. The IMF believes unemployment should remain at around its current low level over this period, and inflation to remain moderate.

The IMF praises the state of Australia's public finances, noting that Australia continues to demonstrate an 'enviable' record of fiscal prudence with the budget remaining in surplus and public debt ratios staying on a firm downward track.

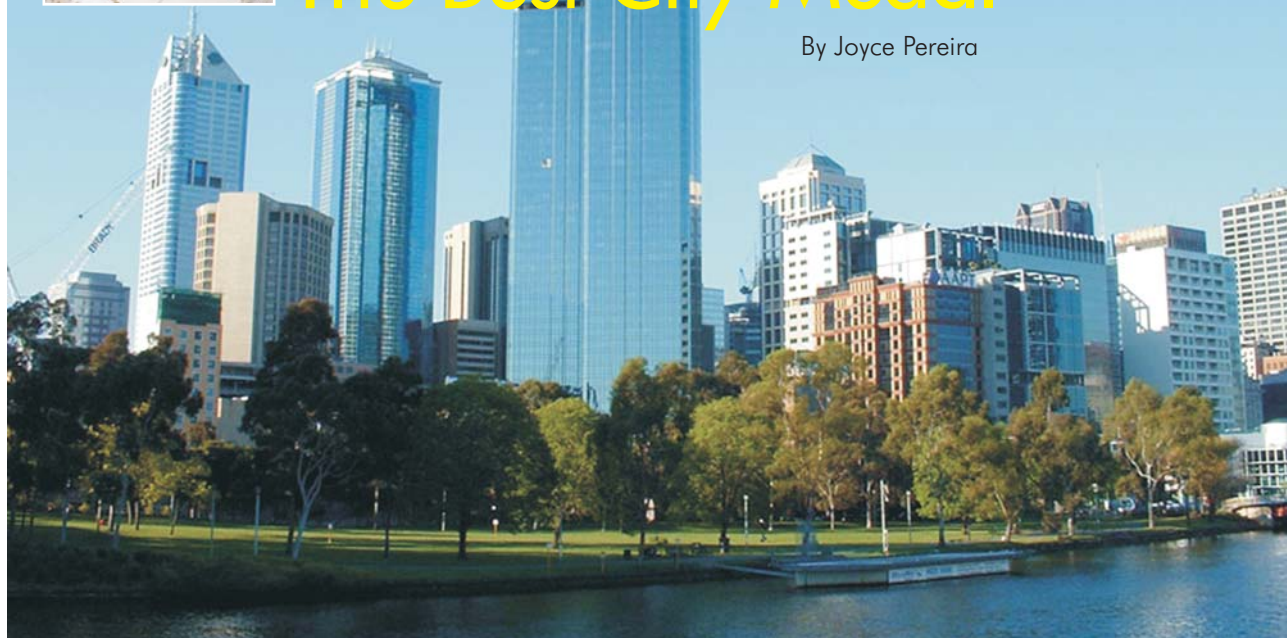
Favourable global conditions should continue to support Australia's economy. The IMF has strengthened its forecasts since the September 2005 World Economic Outlook and is forecasting global growth of 4.9% in 2006 and 4.7 percent in 2007. While high and volatile oil prices remain a significant risk to world growth, the Fund notes that higher oil prices have not yet significantly impacted on inflationary expectations. The Fund highlights the importance of credible monetary policy frameworks in keeping inflationary expectations in check and the need to improve the supply-demand balance in oil markets. ■



Joyce Pereira

## C'wealth Games' Legacy Lives On Melbourne Wins The Best City Medal

By Joyce Pereira



The Commonwealth Games are over. But the games' legacy, namely goodwill, is left behind for the host city, Melbourne. The City is gathering memorabilia from the games to preserve them as memories.

Lord Mayor John So said the city council was collecting Games items for its art and heritage collection, which already contained precious items from the 1956 Olympics.

"The Commonwealth Games have been a remarkable success and the memories for all those who attended sports and cultural events or watched the action from afar will last a lifetime," the Lord Mayor said. "We are collecting Games-related items to help keep those memories alive and to show what a truly wonderful event it was to future generations.

"From the Commonwealth Games, we already have a full volunteer's uniform, including a shirt, hat and water bottle. To that, we would like to add photographs of memorable Games moments, event tickets, programs, and replicas of the medals and athletes' uniforms.

The City of Melbourne will liaise with other collecting bodies such as Melbourne Museum, the Australian Institute of Sport and the Public Records Office of Victoria to ensure the legacy of the Games is well preserved.

"All these things will be lasting reminders of a wonderful 12 days in our city's history," the Lord Mayor said.

"Our memorabilia from both the 1956 Olympics and the 2006 Commonwealth Games would clearly show how sport, society and the city itself have changed the past five decades.

"Our memorabilia from the 1956 Olympic Games includes an Olympic torch and a replica, invitations, programs, books, pennants and tickets. We also have a wooden model of a coxed four that was presented to the City of Melbourne by the victorious Italian rowers.

The Games have had a very positive impact on the city's development. A number of major capital works projects were completed in time for the Games, and these will continue to serve the city's population into the future. These include:

## Melbourne Cricket Ground



The MCG received its biggest ever upgrade in its 150-year history for the Games. More than half of the stadium was rebuilt, which boosted spectator capacity to 100,000 and improved many of the stadium's facilities.

## William Barak Bridge

The William Barak Bridge stretches from Birrarung Marr to the MCG, linking Melbourne's sports and entertainment venues with the CBD. The bridge offers splendid views of the city and an easy 10 - 15 minute walk through the parkland of Birrarung Marr along the northern bank of the Yarra River.

## The Travellers

This new public artwork celebrating Indigenous history and immigration to Victoria captures the enterprising story of immigrants' arrivals and new beginnings. Located on Sandridge Bridge, the public artwork comprises 10, 7.5m high stainless steel figures, nine of which travel across the bridge in a timed sequence.

## Sandridge Bridge

The bridge has been extensively redeveloped and now includes a walking track and cycle path as well as 'The Travellers' artwork. The \$15.5 million project was jointly funded by the City of Melbourne and the State Government.

## Northbank

Creation of a youth precinct and performance spaces, with pedestrian and bicycle links along the north bank of the Yarra River and to Sandridge Bridge.

## Queensbridge Square

The Queensbridge Square development is a major new

pedestrian plaza and precinct by the Yarra River next to Queensbridge Street at Southbank. The project includes a public square, amphitheatre area and landscaping.

## Bourke Street Mall



Council's \$5.75 million upgrade of the Bourke Street Mall has delivered a vibrant shopping and meeting space. Features include a new-style concrete finish to increase the visibility of the tram tracks and make the mall safer for pedestrians, a combination of new seats and benches, catenary (overhead) lighting, 'transplantable' trees in large planter boxes, 40 banner poles and new rubbish bins along the length of the mall.

## Princes Bridge



The \$4.1 million redevelopment of the Princes Bridge included removal of the original lead-based paint, strengthening of the structure, removal of areas of



corrosion, restoration of the decorative lamps/coats of arms and repainting of the bridge in its original colours, which have remained the same since the 1920s.

## Piazza Italia

Carlton's newest \$3.5 million public open space at Argyle Square on Lygon Street features new gardens, traditional Italian porphyry stone paving and a giant 45m<sup>2</sup> solar clock.

## Royal Park Wetlands

The wetlands are a natural habitat for wildlife within Royal Park, and since the conclusion of the Commonwealth Games provide a recreational area in the parkland adjacent to the recently vacated Commonwealth Games Village. The defunct Games Village will now become a residential precinct.

During the 12 days of the games and other cultural festivities, Melbourne's tourism has broken records. The Melbourne Visitor Centre (MVC) at Federation Square has also set a new record, welcoming a staggering 6,858 visitors on a Sunday, an increase of more than 1,500 visitors than the previous high on Australia Day 2005.

Also, setting impressive new levels of service, the Melbourne Visitor Booth in the Bourke Street Mall has experienced a massive 288 per cent increase in customers compared to the same period last year.

Lord Mayor John So said the City of Melbourne's volunteers have played a vital role in ensuring the success of the Games. "The huge amount of Games visitors accessing City of Melbourne tourism services is astounding and all our volunteers and staff are to be congratulated for an impressive effort," the Lord Mayor said.

"In one day alone our City Ambassadors the volunteers in the distinctive red vests assisted in excess of 3,000 visitors - an impressive achievement by any standards. The Melbourne Visitor Booth in the Bourke Street Mall has also proven to be an invaluable resource for visitors to our City, with almost 45,000 visitor contacts since the Opening Ceremony.

"Tourism is one of Melbourne's most important industries and the high number of Games visitors so far to the Melbourne Visitor Centre clearly demonstrates its vital role in ensuring tourists take advantage of everything Melbourne has to offer.

"The Games have seen the city come alive with activity

and excitement and visitors have spoken glowingly about their experiences here in Melbourne.

"We've put on our best face for the world and it has only been possible thanks to the tireless work of our organising staff and volunteers. You have helped to deliver a spectacular show that visitors to Melbourne will talk about for many years to come," said the Lord Mayor.

Chair of Council's Marketing and Events Committee Carl Jetter said the City of Melbourne's tourism services, including the City Ambassadors, the Melbourne Visitor Booth and the Melbourne Visitor Centre will continue providing information, advice and knowledge to visitors long after the Games.

"Our volunteers don't just disappear once the Games come to an end they have been providing an invaluable service to the visitors of our city long before the Games came to Melbourne and will be carrying on long after the Games finish," Jetter said.

A Games-time survey of international and interstate visitors to Melbourne gives the city a resounding thumbs-up as being vibrant and lively, well presented, easy to get around and friendly.

The survey, commissioned by the City of Melbourne, shows outstanding results including:

- 96 per cent say Melbourne people are friendly and helpful;
- 98 per cent say the City is well presented;
- 96 per cent say the City has beautiful park;
- 92 per cent say the City is easy to get around as a pedestrian;
- 95 per cent say they feel safe; and
- 97 per cent say the City is vibrant and lively.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted in the city during the Games.

"Melbourne is a great city clean, lively, safe and inviting," the Lord Mayor said.

"It's pleasing to see our visitors recognise our city's strengths, especially at a time when the city has 40 per cent more pedestrian activity than is usual.

"To maintain our high standards when there are so many people using the city is a real achievement.

"On the broad question of how satisfied visitors were with their overall experience of Melbourne 96 per cent were satisfied and none were solely dissatisfied that's close to a

perfect score," the Lord Mayor said.

The survey also sought comments from visitors on what contributed to them feeling satisfied or very satisfied. Amongst these were:

- "I thing the friendliness and helpfulness of everybody here. Everyone has time for us."
- "The atmosphere. Feel safe on the streets any time of day or night."
- "Just so alive."
- "I think it is a fun and vibrant city with a lot to offer everyone."
- "The people and it is just a cultured city. Its surroundings are very clean and beautiful."
- "Spotless in comparison to London and people talk to each other."

Melbourne was meticulously planned. It began as a barely legal, speculative settlement that broke away from New South Wales, and was fortunate to be blessed with farsighted founders who envisioned a great 19<sup>th</sup> century city with an abundance of parks and wide roads and boulevards.

Since Robert Hoddle laid out his grid in 1837, many buildings have been raised and razed within the original 'town reserve' bounded by Victoria Street, Hoddle Street and the Yarra River, but the streets and parks remain resolute.

Fitzroy Gardens and the refined residences of East Melbourne sit in the northeast corner. A few minutes to the north are the Carlton Gardens, the surrounding terrace houses of Carlton, the Victoriana of South Parkville, the vast open Royal Park, and the eclectic collection of buildings in the Melbourne University grounds. The history of the City of Melbourne has always been of great interest to residents and non-residents alike. This section is intended to provide a concise, factual and representative history of the City. It also aims to answer the wide range of enquiries typically inspired by the affection that the local people and visitors to Melbourne hold for the City.

The City of Melbourne's extensive network of parks and gardens contributes to Melbourne's title as one of the world's 'most liveable cities'. Ranging from gardens with classic 19<sup>th</sup> century heritage features and majestic tree avenues, to the 188-hectare Royal Park with its unique bushland landscape and wetlands habitat, Melbourne offers a variety of open spaces for the 14 million visitors

who use its parks each year.

Other gardens of note are the stunning Carlton Gardens and the Royal Exhibition Building which received international recognition through their inclusion on the World Heritage List in 2004.

The city's newest park is Birrarung Marr (left). Located behind Federation Square alongside the Yarra River, it provides dramatic open spaces, sculptured terraces and a unique state-of-the-art playground. Birrarung Marr also offers the ideal setting for some of the city's best festivals and events.

The wider metropolitan park system includes the Royal Botanic Gardens, Albert Park, the Melbourne Zoo and many kilometres of open spaces along Melbourne's waterways.

The parks and gardens are available for use by the community and offer a wide range of facilities. These include sporting pavilions and fields, barbecues, playgrounds and general areas for all sorts of recreational uses. Some spaces can also be booked for private events ranging from weddings to corporate functions. Park rangers patrol the parks, gardens and reserves to assist park visitors, assess the safety of park activities and to protect the parks overall.

Providing the backdrop to many events and fun activities, there is always something for you to see and do in Melbourne's many open spaces

The next Commonwealth Games will be held in New Delhi in 2010. Lord Mayor John So has today moved to significantly strengthen Melbourne's relationship with India, Australia's 12<sup>th</sup> biggest trading partner. During the City of Melbourne and Business Club Australia's Melbourne 2006 Australia India Business Exchange, the Lord Mayor:

- delivered a 'letter of intent' indicating the City of Melbourne's commitment to establish a strategic city alliance with New Delhi to the Honourable Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, Ms Sheila Dikshit; and,
- signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Mr Sunil Kant Mugal, Immediate Past President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), to promote business activities between Melbourne and the CII a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed association that is India's premier business association.

Lord Mayor John So said the Commonwealth Games had

presented a unique opportunity to strengthen Melbourne's friendship with India especially Delhi, the hosts of the next Commonwealth Games in 2010.

"The City of Melbourne was delighted to have adopted India as its second Games team, as part of the State Government initiative to create a cultural and business exchange," said the Lord Mayor.

"India is currently Australia's 12th biggest trading partner, and Melbourne is proud to be one of the first Australian cities to have a formal connection with the world's second largest nation. We join Mumbai as members of the Business Partner City Network, the group of leading business organisations in the Asia Pacific region, and will attend this year's Roundtable in Mumbai in September.

"In conjunction with the Australian Industry Group, the City of Melbourne is also planning to take a trade mission to the cities of Mumbai and New Delhi during this time.

"The City of Melbourne is continually working toward facilitating international business opportunities, providing access to new trading markets and encouraging investment in Melbourne.

"We are very excited to have been able to express our determination to create formal links with New Delhi and are confident that the Letter of Intent accepted by the Chief Minister will lead to the successful establishment of a strategic alliance with the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

"Today's City of Melbourne and Business Club Australia joint event, the Australia India Business Exchange, has provided the opportunity to further discuss the great potential for strong economic and trade links between Australia and India.

"It is important to acknowledge the very positive working relationship we have enjoyed with the Confederation of Indian Industries while organizing today's business exchange. The Memorandum of Understanding we have signed with the CII will expand upon our already productive working relationship.

"The City of Melbourne is eager to develop a stronger connection with the CII and its esteemed members, as a lasting legacy of our Commonwealth Games.

"This marks a joint focus on delivering benefits to business and the community.

"It is also a pleasure to acknowledge the continued valuable support of the Australia India Business Council.

"I believe that together we can deliver a peaceful and

prosperous future for the people of Australia and India," the Lord Mayor said.

"Hosting the 2006 Commonwealth Games has so far proven to be a productive experience for our city as evidenced by our growing relations with India.

Officials say the 18th Commonwealth Games set a new benchmark.

The State Government and Games organisers faced months of scrutiny over the standard of accommodation being provided at the Parkville athletes village.

The village was redesigned in late 2004 at a cost of \$22 million after complaints from the Commonwealth Games Federation.

More than 52 per cent of those surveyed described the village as "very good", with another 39 per cent describing it as "good".

## Crowds

The sale of more than 1.5 million tickets was a record for

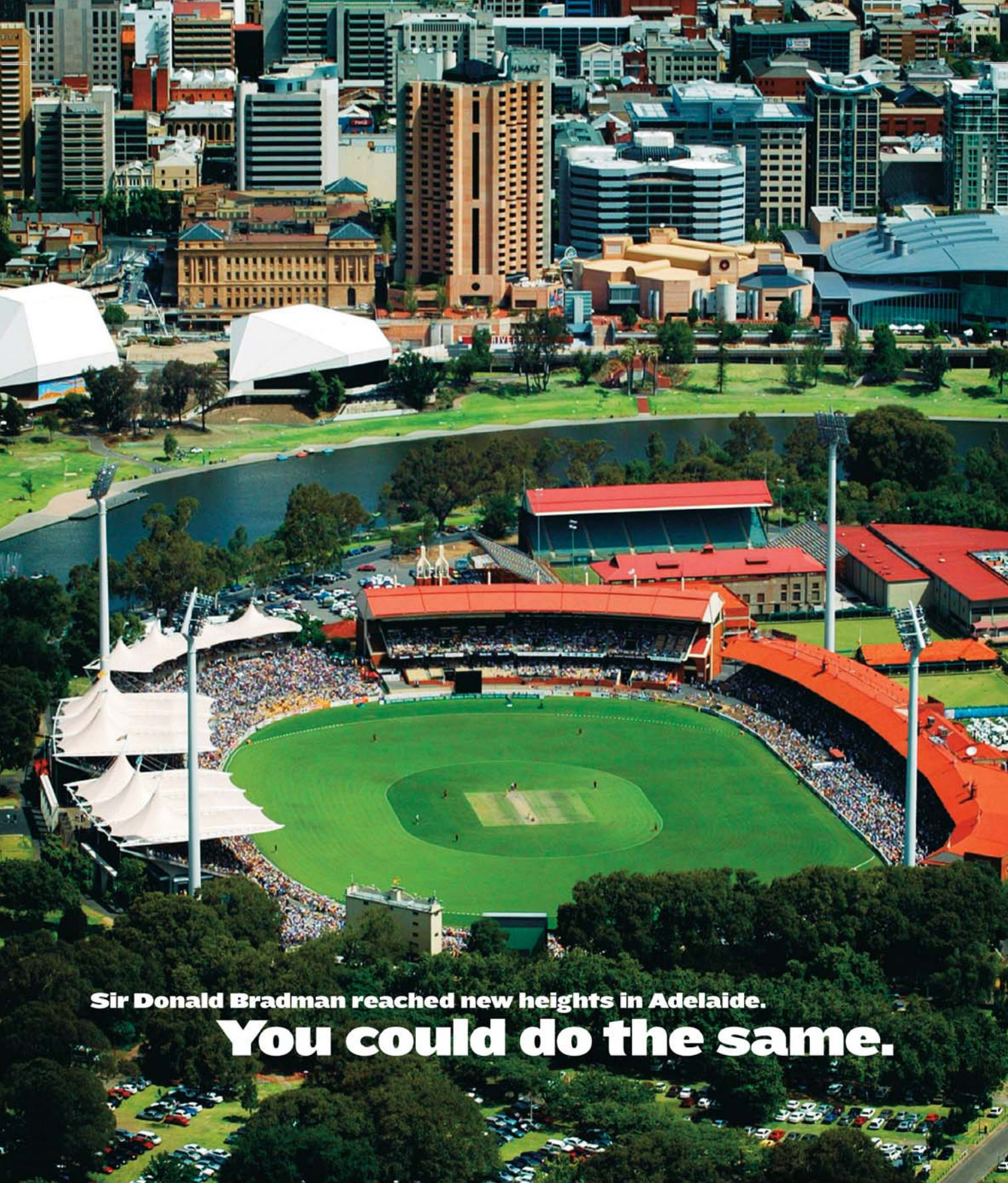


any Commonwealth Games, making members of the Melbourne 2006 ticketing team - such as Allyse Buchanan, Sam Tighe and Louise Atkinson - prime headhunting targets for rival events.

Looking back, the people of Australia, especially the citizens of Melbourne

Could feel proud not only about the performance of the athletes of their country who won, 84 gold, 69 silver and 68 bronze medals, the highest for any participant country, followed by England, Canada and India. But the appreciation medal, everybody agrees, is won by Melbourne, the city. ■

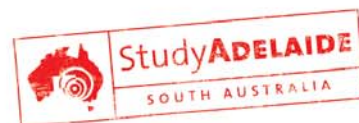




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