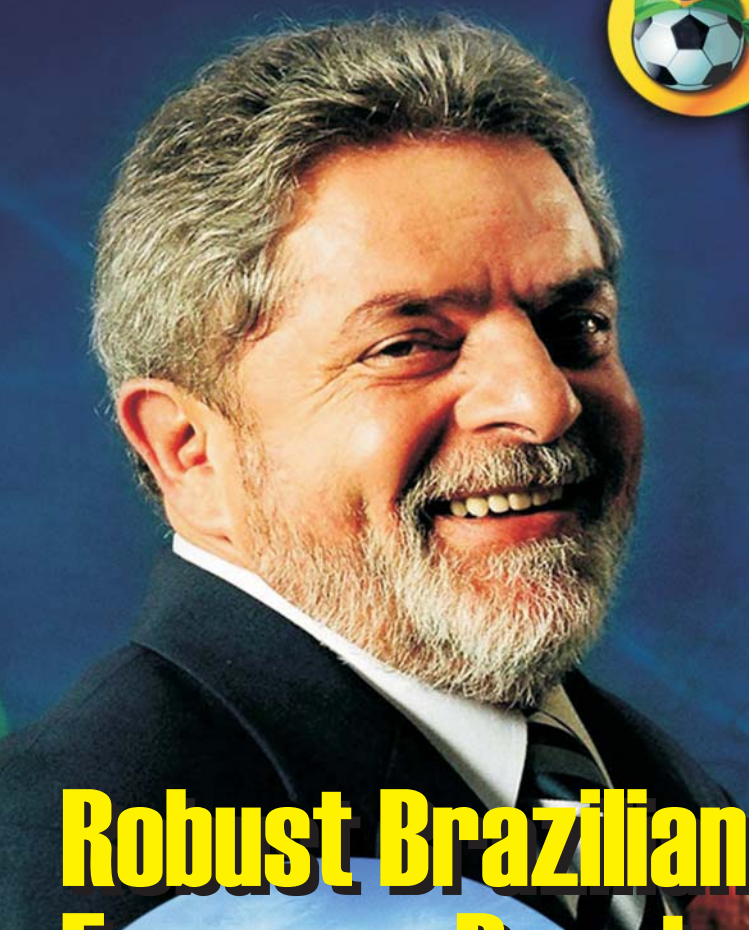


# INDO - LAC BUSINESS

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**Robust Brazilian  
Economy Boosts  
Investor  
Confidence**



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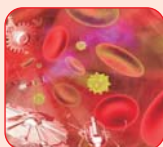
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The news items and information published herein have been collected from various sources, which are considered to be reliable. Readers are however requested to verify the facts before making business decisions using the same.

**Dear Reader,**

Greetings. Among the Latin American countries, Brazil has been steady and consistent in its economic growth. Brazil, the world's largest emerging market-debtor for decades became a net foreign creditor in January 2008. The country's exports in 2008 are expected to touch \$180 billion, up \$20 billion from the previous year's \$160 billion. In fact, Brazil's exports have tripled since 2003 when President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva took office. Since then, the country's international reserves rose by more than 10 times to \$170 billion. Brazil also cleared its debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2005, adding another feather to Lula's cap. By all counts the economic recovery of Brazil has been a great success story. The cover story of the current issue of Indo-LAC Business highlights Brazil's economic success which is nothing short of a miracle. Brazil's success appears to have rubbed off on others in the Latin American region, which received a record \$126 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2007. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the region as a whole will be heading for a sustained favourable GDP growth for the sixth year in a row in 2008. We carry these achievements in the focus section of the current issue, along with a positive projection made by the IMF for Latin America for 2008. Doing business with Latin America can be more exciting and profitable if only businessmen care to follow some of the essential tips that a write-up in the current issue offers. Credit goes to Latin America, especially Brazil for developing biofuels from biomass. The Inter-American Development Bank has recently announced that it has approved funding for biofuel projects in Haiti, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic. We carry a write-up in the news section. Then there is a report on the interaction between the ambassadors from Latin American countries and the West Bengal Government at a luncheon in Kolkata, discussing the initiatives to step up bilateral trade. A fascinating feature of the current issue is about ecotourism in Brazil, a country blessed with the best of everything in Nature. Figuring in the feature are the water world of the Amazon jungle, Beauty personified Bonito, the crystal mysteries of Chapada dos Veadeiros, the restless Iguacu falls and the world's largest wetlands Pantanal. We also have a write-up on how nanotechnology is all set to revolutionise healthcare across the world. As usual, we carry a Spanish section featuring the leading articles of the magazine.

Wish you happy reading,



**Satya Swaroop**

Managing Editor

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# Robust Brazilian Economy Boosts Investor Confidence

**Brazil's economy will continue to advance and still report solid growth in 2008, despite the recessionary effects from the US economy, although activity will moderate to some extent, according to the economic research group Moody's Economy.com.**

It said no major inflation problems are expected in the short or medium term, since monetary and fiscal disciplines will be maintained, adding that the annual inflation rate showed a gradual but steady upward trend since the beginning of last year but during the second half, as supply normalized and international prices stabilized, overall inflation moderated and some agricultural prices even fell.

If inflation remains under control, a few more rate cuts could be implemented this year, Moody's Economy.com said. However, the agency warned that the economy will be subject to the negative effects of the US recession, although to a lesser degree than in the past given a higher degree of trade diversification which has led to lesser exposure to the US. Moody's Economy.com noted that even though Brazilian financial markets were hit by the global turbulence in the second half of last year, it

remained one of the most attractive markets for foreign investors, thus reporting gains similar to those in the previous year.

Brazil's real kept strengthening as a tumbling U.S. dollar and surging commodity prices boosted demand for the currency. The real has jumped 4.8 percent since February 15, making it the biggest gainer against U.S. dollar among the world's 16 most actively traded currencies during the period. The consecutive gains are the longest winning streak since November 2005.

Bolstering the currency's allure were comments from U.S. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke suggesting that the Federal Reserve will continue to lower US interest rates, widening the yield advantages of Brazilian bonds and equities.

Brazil's real interest rate, calculated by subtracting annual inflation of 4.56 percent from the 11.25 percent Selic benchmark lending rate, is 6.79 percent.

Crude oil also rose above \$102 a barrel in February, the highest dollar level ever, as the weakening dollar led investors to buy commodities as a hedge against inflation. Brazil exports the crude oil it pumps from what are the deepest waters in the world, with recent discoveries in fields as deep as 6 kilometers (3.7 miles).

Commodity sales helped Brazilian exports rise to a record \$160.6 billion in 2007. Brazil will export as much as \$180 billion in 2008, according to Trade Ministry estimates.

## Breakthrough

Brazil, the world's largest emerging-market debtor for decades, became a net foreign creditor for the first time



in January 2008. International reserves, swelled by investment inflows and record exports of agricultural commodities and oil, probably exceeded gross foreign liabilities last month by about \$4 billion, the Banco Central do Brasil has said recently.

Brazil's shift to net creditor status may add to already growing investor confidence in what is Latin America's largest economy and help the country achieve investment-grade rating. Brazil finished paying off its debt to the International Monetary Fund in December 2005.



Brazilian exports have tripled since President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva took office in 2003 on rising world demand for soybeans, iron-ore, beef and cars. An accompanying surge in foreign direct investment, including stock and bond purchases by non-residents, has led the currency to appreciate to what is its strongest level in more than eight years.

International reserves, including cash and other financial assets, rose to a record \$171.6 billion in January, more than ten times the \$17 billion that the country had when Lula assumed power. At the end of 2003, Brazil's debt topped international reserves by \$165 billion, the bank said.

Foreign bond buyers have been lured by the prospect Brazil could attain an investment grade rating this year or

next, making the country's bonds the world's second-best performer over the past five years, returning 191 percent, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co. data. Only Ecuadorean bonds, which gained 234 percent, rose more.

Brazil's foreign currency debt rating of BB+ by Standard & Poor's and Ba1 by Moody's Investors Service are both one level below investment grade. Investment-grade standing gives a country greater access to international capital at lower borrowing costs.

The yield to the 2015 call date on Brazil's 11 percent bonds due in 2040, one of the most widely traded emerging-market securities, fell 9 basis points, or 0.09 percentage point, to 5.59 percent, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co. The bond's price rose 0.6 cent to 132.65 cents on the dollar.

The world economic slowdown may test whether Brazil's efforts to diversify export markets and bulk up reserves are enough to safeguard long-term growth after almost five years of record commodity exports and low borrowing costs.

An over-dependence on commodity sales abroad may cut Brazil's growth to 3 percent this year from about 5 percent should a slowing U.S. economy reduce demand, according to a Morgan Stanley report released recently.

The central bank has purchased U.S. dollars in currency markets almost every day since July 2006 to slow the real's appreciation and increase international reserves.

In a separate report, the bank and the National Treasury said that local and foreign debt fell 1.7 percent to 1.31 trillion reais in January from December. The stock of local debt, which makes up 90 percent of total Brazilian liabilities, fell 1.7 percent and foreign debt dropped 1.4 percent, both institutions said.

## Industrial Production

Brazil's industrial production in 2007 expanded at the fastest pace in three years, fueled by domestic demand and investments to boost production. Output rose 6.4 percent in December from December 2006, pushing the annual rate for 2007 up 6 percent, twice the pace of 2006, the national statistic agency said in a statement distributed recently in Rio de Janeiro. In 2004, output grew 8.3 percent.

Brazil's unemployment rate fell in December 2007 fell to the lowest since at least 2002 as companies added staff to step up output. More jobs coupled with record bank lending boosted consumption and spurred investments. Output of capital goods, which increased 19.5 percent





in 2007, led industrial growth. Production of durable goods, the second best performer, rose 9.2 percent.

Brazil's central bank has kept the benchmark interest rate at 11.25 percent since September 2007 and the possibility of rate increases in 2008 to keep inflation under control remains.

### Impact on Trade Surplus

Brazil's trade surplus narrowed to a 5 1/2-year low in January as a cheaper dollar and rising consumer demand pushed imports to a

record high. Imports increased to \$12.3 billion in January from \$10.6 billion in December, according to the Trade Ministry. Exports fell to \$13.3 billion in January from \$14.2 billion in December.

Brazil's real has appreciated 20 percent against the dollar in 12 months, the best performance among the 16 most-actively traded currencies. The cheaper dollar coupled with the fastest economic expansion since 2004 has boosted demand among Brazilian consumers for imports.

At the same time coffee exports from Brazil, which is the world's biggest producer, fell 11 percent in January from December, according to Brazil's Coffee Exporters Council.

Brazil's monthly imports exceeded \$10 billion for the first time ever in July and have since remained above this threshold. The country's annual surplus is expected to narrow to narrow to \$30 billion in 2008 from \$40 billion last year.

## Thriving under a credit boom

For decades, Brazilians had so little faith in their banks that they kept most of their money at home and paid for appliances, cars and even houses in lump sums. Financial tools that Americans take for granted, such as credit cards and affordable bank loans, seemed like science fiction in this

country of 184 million, where annual interest rates regularly soar into the triple digits. Yet as Brazil enjoys a rare spell of sustained economic growth, millions of people are fueling an explosion in consumer credit and banking services that's transforming the world's 10th biggest economy.

For the first time, Brazilians are scooping up consumer goods on credit and taking on mortgages to buy homes. Total bank loans have more than doubled over the past four years, passing \$530 billion, and banks have raked in record revenue. The banking system's assets grew by 19% in 2006 alone to hit more than \$1.1 trillion.

### Credit taking off

The growth has allowed middle-class



Brazilians such as government employee Maria do Carmo of Rio de Janeiro to buy more, and it's fueled an industrial boom that's lowered unemployment rates and raised incomes. Even Brazil's legions of poor are getting more access to credit, often in the form of microloans. Nearly four-fifths of payroll loans, which Brazilians use regularly, go to people earning less than \$650 a month.

"Before, the income limits for credit cards were so high that only a very few people had them," do Carmo said at a branch of the country's biggest bank, state-owned Banco do Brasil. "Today, everyone has a credit card. We use it to buy everything, which isn't always a good thing. My bills every month pile up to my chin." The Brazilian boom draws a sharp contrast to U.S. institutions, which are enduring a brutal downturn from the subprime-lending bust.

The United States buys more Brazilian exports than any other country, and a U.S. recession would hurt Brazil's economy. Nonetheless, most analysts expect Brazil's banking boom to continue at least through this year. For one thing, the banking system still has a lot of room to grow. Bank loans equal only 35% of Brazil's gross domestic product, compared with 80% of the United States', and mortgage lending equals 2% of Brazil's GDP. "This has opened up new frontiers for Brazil because, for years, no one had the confidence to loan to consumers," said Celina Vansetti-Hutchins, who heads the banking analysis team for Latin America at the ratings agency Moody's Investors Service.

"Banks are shifting away from their traditional role of financing the government to financing the private sector."

## New confidence

Officials at Brazil's biggest banks said their industry has turned the corner for good as domestic consumption charges ahead. Auto financing, in particular, has come into its own, making up one-third of all consumer lending. Nearly three million cars were produced in Brazil last year, 14% more than the year before. The banking industry also has been a global pioneer in tools such as electronic banking and payroll loans, which grew from \$5.7 billion in 2003 to about \$35 billion last year.

"We've learned how to work in moments of stress and in times of low volatility," said Marco Geovanne Tobias da Silva, Banco do Brasil's manager of investor relations. "The banks here are finally learning what it is to be a bank." That new confidence is a product, many say, of economic stability that's allowed banks and customers to



plan for the long term, a rarity in a country known for its bouts of hyperinflation and bank meltdowns.

## Key to growth

The country's economy is estimated to have grown by as much as 5.3% last year, its highest rate in three years, as booming commodity exports and a stable currency helped Brazil record a \$40 billion trade surplus. Inflation came in under 5 percent, and employment and foreign investment have reached record highs.

Brazil's central bank has responded by cutting its key lending rate to a historically low 11.25%, although banks still charge three times that to private lenders.

"We have a population that never accessed credit for cultural reasons," said Renato Martins Oliva, vice president of the Brazilian Banks Association, which represents small- and medium-sized banks. "With our history, people had little trust in the system. But we have sustained growth now and a government that sees credit as key to growth."

That's drawn the attention of U.S. banks such as Charlotte, N.C.-based Bank of America, which in 2006 sold its BankBoston operations in Uruguay and Chile for a 7.4% equity stake in Banco Itau Holding Financeira, Brazil's third-biggest bank in total assets last year. Itau announced Tuesday that it notched a record net profit last year of \$4.8 billion, nearly double 2006's results, driven in large part by a spike in personal and car loans. ■



# LAC Region Sustains High Growth Rate

Latin America and the Caribbean countries sustained a favourable economic situation that allowed for growth in nearly all the countries of the region during 2007.

Despite the deteriorating external financial context over the second half of the year, the region's gross domestic product (GDP) will have grown by 5.6%, according to estimates by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

In its Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean 2007, presented recently by ECLAC Executive Secretary José Luis Machinea, the UN regional commission report states that, for 2008, Latin America and the Caribbean could register a 4.9% growth rate. Should this forecast be borne out, it would signify the region's sixth consecutive year of growth, for a cumulative per capita GDP increase of 24%, or 3.5% per annum.

According to ECLAC, many of the trends characterizing the region's current stage of economic growth stayed on course during 2007, including its current account surplus (albeit at a lower level), renewed improvements in terms of trade (also at a lower rate), sustained positive primary results for fiscal accounts, decreased unemployment; increased international reserves and reduced external debt as a percentage of GDP. Meanwhile, dynamism in investment continued and private consumption grew considerably.

Current accounts registered a surplus of 0.7%, with terms of trade increasing by 2.6% overall, despite notable differences among countries. Gross disposable national income grew by 6.5%, exceeding GDP growth rate, while domestic demand increased by 7.7%.

The region's net external liabilities continued to drop over 2007. Most countries reported inflows of private capital, which upped the pressure on exchange rates and produced a significant accumulation of international reserves, which are estimated to exceed 3.5% of regional GDP. At the same time, the foreign debt burden dropped considerably.



Taken as a whole, these factors place Latin America and the Caribbean in a much stronger position to face increased external volatility.

Another positive development is the lowering of the unemployment rate to 8.0%, its lowest level since the early 1990s. Moreover, this decrease occurs in a context of relative improvements in the quality of employment, which, coupled with economic growth, has a positive impact on poverty indicators.

## Forecasts & Challenges

The United States mortgage loan crisis has generated a sense of increased risk of economic slowdown. While the magnitude of the US crisis is not yet clear, the performance of other national economies constitutes a matter of concern. The most likely scenario for a US economic downturn is of 2.2% in 2007 to 2.0% in 2008. Growth in the European Union could drop from 2.9% in 2007 to 2.5% in 2008, and Japan could follow suit, with a projected decrease of 2.0% to 1.7% in 2008.

In summary, the lesser pace of developed country growth makes moderate world economic slowdown possible, with limited but divergent impacts on emerging economies. For Latin America and the Caribbean, the ECLAC Preliminary Overview 2007 forecasts that the relative strength of the region's economies warrants cautious optimism.

But the current situation is not free of risks. In addition to the likely slowdown of the US economy, Latin America exhibits warning signs of its own, including persistent decreases in the real exchange rate, growing inflation in several countries, and an overall increase in public expenditure.

In addition to these short-term risks, ECLAC cautions that the region is not doing enough to improve competitiveness at the systemic level, and cites the specific need to increase investment (especially infrastructure for energy and transport), encourage innovation and foster greater human resource capabilities, primarily by improving the quality of education. ■



# IMF Projects Strong Economic Growth for Latin America in '08

Latin America is poised for what could be its fifth consecutive year of strong economic growth in 2008. But inflation, after falling to an historical low for the region in 2006, is edging up in several countries, the IMF said in its Regional Economic Outlook for the Western Hemisphere, which it unveiled in Sao Paulo, Brazil, recently.

So far, Latin America and the Caribbean seem to have weathered the fallout from the global financial turbulence that has its roots in the decline in the U.S. housing markets. But the problems in financial markets, which began last summer, have "significantly increased downward risks" for the region, the IMF said in its semiannual report. The main sources of that risk include weaker external growth, with its attendant impact on commodity prices, and possible further tightening in U.S. and world credit markets.

Beyond the external conditions, the IMF said, the "sustainability" of the Latin American expansion will also depend on preserving "the strength of underlying fiscal positions" in the countries and "the resilience of domestic financial sectors." The report noted that strong fiscal and external current account surpluses are beginning to shrink as public spending accelerates and imports rise.

## Solid policies

Still, the overall message is "positive," said Anoop Singh, Director of the Western Hemisphere Department. "This is a recovery and a growth phase that is different from its predecessors" and is "not going to be terminated, we think, as prematurely as earlier ones" because of solid fiscal and monetary policies that make the region more resilient than it was in the past to changes in the external environment, Singh said at a briefing in Washington prior to the report's release.

Overall, the IMF predicts that growth in the region will be about 5 percent in 2007, moderating to about 4¼ percent in 2008. The decrease projected for next year reflects a less favorable external environment, and capacity constraints in some countries.

Still, if developments turn out as expected, 2008 would be the fifth year in a row that growth has

exceeded 4 percent, Latin America's best performance in decades (see Table 1).

Table 1

### Good times to continue

Real GDP is expected to grow smartly in 2008 in Latin America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

(real GDP growth, year-end to year-end, percent)<sup>1</sup>

	1995 -2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.6	4.6	5.5	5.0	4.3
South America	2.4	5.1	5.5	5.6	4.7
Central America	3.7	4.5	5.9	5.4	4.9
The Caribbean	4.2	6.5	8.4	6.0	4.4

Sources: IMF, *World Economic Outlook* and staff estimates.

<sup>1</sup>Weighted by purchasing power parity.

While Latin America is resilient enough to deal with the current global financial turbulence and some slowdown in U.S. growth, it would be more seriously affected were there to be a pronounced slowdown in the industrialized countries, especially the United States, and a credit crunch in financial markets. Were that downside scenario to unfold in coming months, with a further weakening of commodity prices, growth would slow significantly in Latin America's economies, perhaps to as low as 2½ percent overall in 2008, nearly 2 percentage points below the baseline projection.

## Energy shortages

In a few countries, "energy shortages could also create risks to the growth outlook" and many nations are facing food price shocks that heighten inflation risks. Overall, inflation in Latin America and the Caribbean is expected to rise from 5 percent last year to 5.4 percent this year and 5.7 percent next year (see Table 2).

Table 2

### Prices edge up

By historical standards inflation remains moderate, but following an historical low in 2006, prices are headed up in some countries.

(consumer price index, year-end to year-end, percent)<sup>1</sup>

	1995 -2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Latin America and the Caribbean	10.6	6.1	5.0	5.4	5.7
South America	9.5	6.8	5.2	6.0	6.4
Central America	7.8	8.4	6.3	6.5	5.7
The Caribbean	11.0	8.3	6.1	6.5	5.0

Sources: IMF, *World Economic Outlook* and staff estimates.

<sup>1</sup>Weighted by purchasing power parity.

The rising inflation reflects both the worldwide increase in food prices and growing aggregate demand as a result of the economic expansion. The increase in imports is one indication that demand is growing faster than production capacity. So is a leveling off in the decline of the unemployment rate, which "may now largely reflect structural bottlenecks," the IMF said. Overall, food prices are increasing almost 4 percentage points faster than the published overall inflation, according to the IMF report.

The price picture also has implications for monetary policy. Authorities will have to balance the risks of inflation induced by capacity constraints and food prices against the possibility of a more significant slowdown in the United States, which would lead to reduced growth.

But the region has so far sidestepped most of the financial turmoil that began in U.S. markets and spread. Latin American equity prices fell, currencies depreciated, and bond prices declined in the early days of the turbulence that began mid-summer in part, perhaps, because investors in hard-hit mortgage backed securities sold other investments, including those in emerging markets, to cover their losses in the mortgage market. But equities and bond prices have since mainly recovered and currencies appreciated.

### Imports growing

The IMF report also projected that both the current account surpluses and the fiscal surpluses, which had been a source of stability, will shrink this year and next (see Table 3).

Table 3

#### Shrinking surplus

Because imports are growing quickly, current account surpluses in Latin America are declining.

(percent of GDP)

	1995				
	-2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Latin America and the Caribbean	-2.0	1.4	1.5	0.6	0.0
South America	-2.1	1.3	1.5	0.7	0.3
Central America	-5.1	-5.1	-5.0	-5.6	-5.8
The Caribbean	-3.4	-0.3	-0.4	-1.0	-0.6

Sources: IMF, *World Economic Outlook* and staff estimates.

Imports are growing faster than exports and commodity prices have stabilized (although at high levels), so that export earnings are no longer rising so rapidly. As a result, "the trend toward weaker current accounts is shared by most countries in the region," the IMF said.

Meanwhile fiscal surpluses, which peaked in 2006, are projected to decline about 2 percent this year and 1 ¾ percent next, as revenues, heavily driven by commodity prices, slow and government expenditures continue to grow. "Unless the pace of spending growth is curbed, many countries in the region are likely to return to structural deficits in 2008," the IMF report warned.

The ongoing expansion has brought with it significant declines in both poverty and inequality, among the two most pressing long-term problems facing Latin America. Continuing reductions in both are linked to sustaining a rising trend in growth and productive investment in two areas in which, despite improvement, the region lags other emerging market economies. The regional outlook said that "to tackle persistent inequality and high poverty," better targeting of social spending is essential, and the region is developing effective models for this purpose in their growing experience with conditional cash transfer programs. ■

## EU-Caribbean Pact on Fair Tourism Services

A regulatory framework governing tourism-related services, as agreed to by the European Union and Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) states, seeks to provide a level playing field for participation by all legitimate stakeholders and interests, regardless of the dimension of their operations.

As outlined in the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the parties shall introduce or maintain appropriate measures aimed at prohibiting or discouraging anti-competitive practices, which could influence the terms of participation by all interests.

These practices, include abuse of dominant positions through the imposition of unfair prices, exclusivity clauses, refusal to deal, tied sales, quantity restrictions or vertical integration. Accordingly, the parties shall endeavour to facilitate the participation of small and

medium-sized enterprises.

In recognition of the need to increase the impact of tourism on sustainable development, the EPA outlines that the signatories shall encourage participation of CARIFORUM service suppliers in international, regional, sub-regional, bilateral, and private financing programmes in order to achieve the objectives.

Regarding environmental and quality standards within the sector, the signatories agree to encourage compliance accordingly, in a reasonable and objective manner, without unnecessary barriers to trade being brought to bear. Further, that they shall endeavour to facilitate the participation of signatory CARIFORUM states in relevant international organizations, setting the requisite environmental and quality standards applicable to the provision of tourism services. ■

# FDI in LatAm hits record \$126 bn in '07

Foreign direct investment in Latin America reached a record \$126 billion in 2007, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It was twice the level of 2006.

Brazil passed Mexico as Latin America's largest FDI recipient, garnering a \$37.4 billion, a 99.3 percent increase from 2006. FDI to Mexico grew by 92.9 percent to \$36.7 billion. Combined the two countries - the largest economies in Latin America - accounted for nearly 60 percent of all FDI to the region.

Chile, the third-largest FDI recipient in Latin America despite only having the sixth-largest economy in the region, also managed to double foreign investments - \$15.3 billion, an increase of 92.2 percent. Colombia, the fourth-largest recipient of FDI, had another good year. Total FDI grew by 30.5 percent to \$8.2 billion.

## India's exports to Brazil touch \$2.2 billion in 2007

India's exports to Brazil grew impressively to \$2.2 billion in 2007 from 1.5 billion in 2006. Fifty percent of Indian exports to Brazil comprised diesel by Reliance. Brazilian exports to India were \$958 million in 2007.

## El Salvador opening embassy in New Delhi

Ms Patricia Figueroa has been nominated as the first Ambassador. She has been to India nine times and is knowledgeable about Indian IT business. Guatemala and Costa Rica are also opening embassies in India soon.

## Argentina opens Consulate in Mumbai

Fernando Ras has been nominated as the first Consul General of Argentina in Mumbai. He has experience in Economic Diplomacy. He was Director General of Export promotion in the Foreign Ministry in the last three years and had visited India with an Argentine business delegation in July 2006. He will reach Mumbai to open the consulate in February 2008.

## Cognizant's IT Plans in Buenos Aires

Cognizant is inaugurating its new IT centre in Buenos Aires on 11 March 2008. The company has been operating with 70 staff since March 2007. Now they are moving to a new building with 230 staff.

## Steel-maker ArcelorMittal expands operations

ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company, took control (February 2008) of two Costa Rican steelmakers by buying the half of the companies it did not already own. It had bought a 50 percent stake in Laminadora Costarricense SA, which makes rolled steel, and wire-maker Trefileria Colima SA from Clarion del Norte, part of the Pujol Group. Both serve the construction market in Central America and the Caribbean region. One of the companies that formed ArcelorMittal last year, Arcelor SA, first bought into the companies earlier.

The Mittal group had also acquired Venezuelan steel company Unicon in January 2008. Unicon is a steel tube producer with capacity of 552,000 tons and 2445 employees. Mittal already has presence in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago.



In December 2007, Mittal acquired a Uruguayan stainless steel tube producer CINTER S.A.

ArcelorMittal Cinter S.A. is an important stainless steel tube producer located in Uruguay. Its net sales for the year ended, September 2007, was US\$47million. Cinter S.A. employs about 200 people in 3 sites located in Montevideo.

## Chinese trade with Latin America booming

According to a Chinese news agency, China's trade with Latin America was \$63.97 billion in the first nine months of 2007. In 2006, China's trade with Latin America was \$70.22 billion. ■



# Nanotech set to Revolutionise Healthcare

Nanotechnology holds great promise for the development of new treatments and diagnostics. It may provide new drugs that can reach specific areas of the body more effectively and at safer doses.

Nanotechnology has the projected ability to make things from the bottom-up, using techniques and tools that are being developed today to place every atom and molecule in a desired place. Nanotechnology is often referred to as a general-purpose technology. That's because in its mature form it will have significant impact on almost all industries and all areas of society. It offers better built, longer lasting, cleaner, safer, and smarter products for home, communications, medicine, transportation, agriculture, and industry in general.

The term "nanotechnology" has evolved over the years via terminology drift to mean "anything smaller than micro technology," such as nano powders, and other things that are nanoscale in size, but not referring to mechanisms that have been purposefully built from nanoscale components.

The pharmaceutical industry has tapped the nano treasure chest as a way of developing new and more effective means of drug delivery, with carbon nanotubes, buckyballs and lipid nano-scale materials being exploited to get the most out of available materials.

Nanotechnology has great potential to benefit - even revolutionise - the pharmaceutical, medical devices, diagnostics and imaging sectors. Key technology platforms such as nanocrystals, nanotubes, dendrimers, fullerenes, quantum dots and molecular scaffolding will drive that market expansion.

"Nanomedicine" includes development of tiny sensors that detect disease markers in the body far earlier than existing diagnostic methods, and incredibly small pumps capable of delivering medications precisely to the cells and tissues that need them. Other examples of nano-products in development include disease imaging tools and food packaging that further extend shelf life.

Peter Singer, senior scientist at the McLaughlin-Rotman Centre for Global Health, in his study "Nanotechnology and the Developing World" stated that India's Department of Science and Technology would invest \$20 million during 2004-2009 for a Nanomaterials Science and Technology Initiative. China ranks third in patent application in nanotechnology, behind the US and Japan. In Brazil, the projected budget for nanoscience during 2004-2007 was about \$25 million.

Marlene Bourne of Bourne Research said that the challenges the growing nanotechnology revolution presents include establishing effective quality control measures in the manufacturing process, as well as addressing key concerns regarding environmental impact and perceived health concerns. Some of these concerns are somewhat inevitable as a new technology becomes more prominent and consumers and patients learn to become familiar with previously alien materials or concepts.

Nanotechnology-based products are set to become increasingly common, with the technology opening up new possibilities across a range of industries. Drug delivery is one of the most dynamic and fast growing sectors of the pharmaceutical industry e.g. Pfizer's inhaled insulin, Exubera.

'Innovation in Drug Delivery' provides an in-depth examination of product launches and pipeline drugs with novel drug delivery mechanisms set to revolutionize the market.

- Solubility is a key resistor to drug delivery and a major factor causing attrition and poor efficacy in drug development, with an estimated 30% of drugs in pre-clinical development having low solubility.
- Abraxane and Doxil are both innovative marketed oncology products utilizing nanotechnology, gaining sales of \$184m and \$177m in the US and five major European countries in 2005, respectively.
- There are several high potential inhaled monoclonal

antibodies in development, including products from Enzon and Nektar, Alexion and Medimmune, and Alkermes.

- Active transdermal patches are predominantly indicated for pain and women's health, but products using ALZA's E-TRANS and Altea's PassPort patch technology are predicted to be available for protein delivery within the next few years, and consequently will increase the range of accessible indications for transdermal delivery.
- Drug eluting stents are typically 3 to 4 fold more expensive than bare metal stents and have elicited safety concerns; however next generation drug-eluting stents

consist of bio-absorbable polymers and are predicted to be safer.

Nanomedicine will exhibit strong growth in all sectors from 2006-2011, leading to multi-billion dollar revenues.

Recognizing the emerging nature of this technology and its potential for rapid development, the US FDA's Task Force Report on Nanotechnology addressed regulatory and scientific issues to regulate drugs, medical devices and other products built on the nanoscale. The report also recommended development of nanotechnology-associated guidance for manufacturers and researchers. ■

## LatAm countries Keen on Stepping Up Trade with Bengal

Bharat Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata has recently organized an interactive session with the Ambassadors of the Latin American countries (GRULAC).

The main objective of the interactive session was to boost bilateral ties between the GRULAC countries and West Bengal. The members of the GRULAC countries are, Columbia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Rakesh Shah, Vice President, BCC, in his opening remarks described the visit of all the delegates of the Grulac countries as the most appropriate at a time when Bengal was passing through an industrial resurgence.

Projecting the business prospects in the state in the future as very bright, Shah said that both GRULAC countries and West Bengal would have to enhance their ties to get maximum results out of them.

At present, the volume of trade between these countries and India was around Rs 39,000 crore, Shah said. The figure was expected to touch Rs 50,700 crore by this year-end, he added.

All the countries in GRULAC are eager to increase business transactions with Bengal as well as India as a whole. The ambassadors think that areas such as IT, Food processing, and tourism hold great potential in Bengal.

Hans Dannenberg Castellanos, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic and the spokesperson GRULAC countries, invited investors and said that Latin American countries have great resources and Indian companies could take advantage of them.

He said that the main barrier which came in the way of the bilateral ties was the communication gap and also

less information.

"So GRULAC countries are working very seriously on these matters and very soon they will sign a treaty on free air travel with India. They are also trying to start a direct flight from Dubai or Singapore, so that the communication between the countries become more robust and the tourism industry will also get a positive boost because of this step," Castellanos said.

Countries like Cuba and Mexico which are also part of the grulac showed their interest in the new Bengal's booming economy and wanted to invest in the fields of pharma and biotechnology and power industry.

The Latin American countries are keen to invest in information technology, energy, pharma, tourism and agri business sectors.

Carlos Abad, Ambassador of Ecuador, said: "We want to invest in upstream and downstream oil companies." With an investment of around Rs 8,000 crore, ONGC and the state-owned company of Ecuador, Petro-Ecuador, were negotiating for gas and crude oil fields, Abad said.

Mexico was keen to invest in infrastructure, especially building multiplexes across India, said Ambassador Rogelio Granguillhome. Indian IT major Infosys was likely to set up a facility in the northern part of Mexico shortly, he said.

The Dominican Republic, keen to set up a huge number of call centres, wants to become a strategic BPO partner of India.

Currently, Indian exports to these countries include chemicals, textiles, engineering goods, auto parts and pharmaceuticals. ■

# Essential Tips for Doing Business with

# LatAm

You are a businessman looking for new avenues for investment in Latin America. Or you are a rich tourist seeking to explore exotic lands of exquisite beauty, which again is Latin America. Or you are just a soccer fan wanting to watch the men in light yellow with nimble footwork move the ball to the rhythm of Samba in Brazil. Then how do you go about acquiring a Visa? How to get to know about the business practices or cultures followed in these countries? Here are the answers.



## Visas

- Earlier, visa was the single most important obstacle for business with Latin America. But now all the Latin American and Caribbean embassies have liberalized the procedure for visas and are giving quickly. The Ministry of External affairs of India has been working with the governments and embassies of Latin America to make the visa system simple, predictable and quick.
- Indian Embassies in Latin America, as elsewhere, are authorized to give five year multiple entry visas for foreign businessmen visiting India.
- While applying for visas give full details of your company, export experience, details of clients (smaller the company.. more is the info needed ). The US and Schengen visas, give additional confidence to the Embassies, some of which insist on this. This is to differentiate from a few of our compatriots who try illegally to use Latin America as transit to the US. In many cases complications arise when travel agents file visa applications without giving full business info about your company. If you are participating in a trade fair or part of a delegation, this should be mentioned with details.

- The visa procedures of a few embassies are complex. Some will ask for invitation letter from clients in the countries to which visa is required. Some embassies insist on personal interviews.
- Brazil and Uruguay give five-year multi entry visas,
- Mexico and Argentina give three-year multi entry visas.
- Dominican Republic, Colombia and Venezuela give one-year multi-entry visas. Other embassies give short term visas.
- No visas required for Dominica and St Kitts and Nevis
- Bolivia, Jamaica and Grenada give visa on arrival at their airport
- For Belize, Bahamas and cayman islands, visa can be applied at the British High Commission in Delhi.
- **Costa Rica:** Costa Rica had carried out a general review of its visa system with effect





from July 19, 2006, inter alia, removing India from Consultada (prior reference) category and allowing visitors from India to enter Costa Rica without a visa for a period of 30 days. However, the visa regime was again revised by Costa Rica with effect from December 8, 2006, putting India in Consular (visa on application) category.

- **Guatemala:** In August 2006, Guatemala announced relaxation of its visa regime, whereby visa applicants from India, holding a visa for the US or Canada, would be exempted from the consultada (prior reference) category and issued a consular visa (visa on application) by a Guatemalan Consul or Diplomatic Representative abroad.

- **Honduras:** Honduran Foreign Ministry officially informed the Embassy on September 12, 2006, that visa applicants from India, holding a visa for the US or Canada for a minimum duration of six months, would be exempted from consultada (prior reference) category and issued a consular visa (visa on application) by a Honduran Consul or Diplomatic Representative abroad.

- **Panama:** India continues to figure in the consultada (prior reference) category and all applications of visas are referred to Panama for clearance. In November 2005, during the visit of the First Vice President and Minister of External Relations to India, the two sides had exchanged letters of agreement facilitating business visas for visitors between the two countries. However, the same has not been implemented by Panama so far. Further, instances have come to the notice of the Mission where the passports of the visiting Indian nationals, including business executives, were confiscated on arrival by the immigration authorities at the airport saying that the same would be returned to them at the time of their departure. On enquiring about the reasons, the Embassy was told that it was being done because they were 'Asians.'

- **El Salvador:** India continues to figure in the consultada (prior reference) category. Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua form the Central American-4 (CA-4) Group and have been working towards harmonizing their immigration and customs regimes, along the lines of Guatemala and Honduras.

- **Nicaragua:** India continues to figure in the consultada (prior reference) category. Nicaragua had a change of government on January 10, 2007. We will pursue for relaxation of their visa regime along the lines of Guatemala and Honduras since the Central American-4 (CA-4) Group have been working towards harmonizing their immigration and customs regimes.

- Panama embassy in Delhi is the only one which is not authorised to issue visa on application. They need to get clearance from Panama city, which takes time.

- Diplomatic and official passport holders do not need visas for Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Guyana, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay and Paraguay.

- If you are passing through European cities such as London, Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid, etc. This should be applied well in advance, since generally there is long queue in these embassies. There is no need for Johannesburg transit visa.

- Please take visas for all the countries you propose to visit, in India itself. Getting visas in third countries is more time consuming and difficult.

### Yellow fever vaccination certificate

- For Brazil and Venezuela this is requirement by Indian health authorities. The vaccination should be done 10 days before starting the journey. They might quarantine the passenger at Indian airports in the absence of this certificate

- A Venezuelan oil delegation had to sign agreement with Indian oil corporation at the quarantine section of Delhi airport in the late eighties. They were not allowed into the city.

### What support Indian embassies provide to visiting Indian businessmen

- Indian Embassies facilitate and promote India's business and exports as part of their Economic Diplomacy. Each embassy has one officer (counsellor, first secretary, second secretary or attache) dealing with commercial work, under the guidance of the Ambassador. There are local marketing assistants under the commercial officers. The Commercial officers should be contacted well in advance for information and meetings. The visitor will find it worthwhile to visit the embassies and meet the commercial officer and the Ambassador as the first step.

- Do not get frustrated or discouraged if some embassies or officers do not show so much enthusiasm. Embassies are reflection of the Indian society and mind-set. In smaller countries, the ambassadors will be more accessible than in bigger countries.

- While contacting the embassies, the businessmen should give detailed profile of their companies, products, export experience and other such information. The embassies would like to satisfy themselves about the credibility and seriousness of the companies before

response and recommendation to local clients.

- The honorary consulates of India provide limited info and assistance. They are not paid by the Government of India.
- It is worthwhile to contact the foreign embassies in India who also provide info and assistance. Of course, their priority is to promote their exports and business in India.
- In some countries Indian Embassies have worked out discount and corporate rates in hotels for businessmen and delegations from India.
- The visitors can also contact the LAC division of the Ministry of External Affairs ( [jslac@mea.gov.in](mailto:jslac@mea.gov.in) ) and the Commerce Ministry for facilitation and guidance.
- Indian embassies provide information on the market, opportunities for specific exports and list of importers, agents and chambers of commerce and industry. They also provide information and assessment about local companies, statistics and market strategies.
- In some cases the embassies can even fix appointments with local clients.
- Some embassies have business centers with meeting rooms, multimedia facilities and business catalogues.

facilitating registration of Indian pharma products.

- Even while participating in trade fairs or joining delegations, it will be worthwhile to contact the embassies. They can arrange one-on-one meetings and give business leads.
- Companies, especially small ones, participating in trade fairs and forming part of visiting delegations can get financial support from Focus-LAC programme of the Commerce Ministry through export promotion councils and trade and industry bodies.
- Embassies intervene in favour of Indian companies in trade disputes and problems faced in foreign countries.
- In Chile, appointments for Indian business visitors are done professionally by the Chamber of commerce in Santiago for a fee of 350 US\$. Their service can be arranged through our embassy. pl see the country profile of Chile.

## Airlines

- Shortest and less expensive route to South America is through Johannesburg by South African Airways. One leaves Mumbai at 2 am, reach Joburg at 8 am and catch the connecting flt at 10am and reach SaoPaulo at 3.30 pm.



For small and medium exporters, meeting at the Embassy adds to their credibility with the local clients.

- Some embassies have panels of interpreters and some of them can be hired in advance to do preparatory work before the visit.
- Embassies can buy tender documents and send to Indian companies on payment basis.
- Some embassies have websites (see the section embassy contacts) and publish Guides for business with countries to which they are accredited.
- Embassies intervene with local governments supporting the bids and offer of Indian companies and

## South African Airways increases connectivity to Sao Paulo through Johannesburg

They are starting two flights daily between Joburg and sao paulo which connect with their daily Mumbai flts. They have plan to connect Delhi to Joburg three times a week from this winter.

Soth African Airways has joined as partner in the Star Alliance of Varig, the Brazilian airline.

No need for transit visa at Johannesburg.

- Connections through European cities such as London, Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid, etc. but transit visas are

needed.

- Local airlines with regional network:

- o Lan Chile

- o TACA

- o Copa Airlines

- o Aeropostal

- o Aero Mexico

- o Avianca

- o Aerolineas Argentinas

- o BWIS

- Copa and TACA airlines are more reliable and punctual among the small airlines.

### Security

- Many Latin American cities are known for crime, violence, and kidnapping. The traveller has to be extra cautious in cities such as Bogota, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City. Do not display money, expensive jewellery, watches, or accessories. Even while sitting in a taxi keep your windows closed and brief case and bag secure. Keep some 20 US dollars in the wallet to give it readily to muggers. Resistance could be fatal.



- While taking taxis especially from airport, please check that the taxi is from a prepaid service or teletaxi. Avoid touts and taxis which do not look proper.

- But this does not mean that you should be confined to the hotel and meeting rooms. Night life and entertainment in Latin America are more interesting than in other parts of the world. One should enjoy these, while taking precautions. It is better to go in the company of locals, who would be happy to do so.

### Business practices

- Since business with India is a relatively new experience

for many latin Americans, they need to be convinced and persuaded about the quality of products and reliability of of the Indian companies.

- Do not get discouraged, if you do not get prompt responses or commitments are not fulfilled as promised. patience and persistence needed.

- In latin America show is more important than the content. Your presentation and packing have to be impressive. Please flaunt your exports to USA and Europe and proclaim loudly your clients there.

- While Letters of Credit are the general method of payment, cash against payment and other forms are used. some buyers might ask for long credit for 180 days or even 360 days. Some Indian firms extend credit and do business without LCs. many European traders to Latin America provide such long credits to sweeten their exports of bulk drugs and chemicals, some of which are sourced from India.

- Some clients might use creative methods of payment and billing, as some do in India.

- Persons are generally more important than systems and rules. This is why establishing personal relationship and rapport is more necessary in Latin America. Chileans are the most serious and system-based in Latin America.

- Do not hustle the client asking him for appointment on Friday evening or Monday morning. It may not be fruitful, since the Latin American's mind would be on the beach and fun of the weekend.

- Some Latin American businessmen operate from Florida. They have bank accounts and ware houses there.

- While the top executives speak English, one needs the help of interpreters at lower levels.

- Small and medium exporters should explore opportunities outside the big metros such as Sao Paulo and Mexico City. In smaller cities, there is better receptivity and less competition.

- There is a tendency among Indian exporters of bulk drugs, chemicals, hand tools and cycle parts to undercut each other and offer very low prices. This spoils the buyers and the market itself. The Latin Americans use the prices of Indians to beat other Indians.

- There are thousands of followers of Sai Baba and other Indian gurus and spiritual groups in Latin America. It would be worthwhile to check about your client and take appropriate gifts and souvenirs. ■



# Virgin billionaire Branson's Eco-Friendly Initiative

It's a busy day but Sir Richard Branson, Virgin Group billionaire, takes his time walking through a sand trail at Necker Island in sandals and white cotton pants.

Along the way, he points to a salt pond with 101 flamingoes, greets guests by name, and high-fives an employee raking leaves. When he reaches an open lodge, he sits down at the end of an alligator-shaped table next to an infinity pool overlooking the ocean. He smiles and says that he's expecting visitors: "The elders are coming tomorrow," he says about the group of former world leaders that he brought together to try to resolve disputes last year with rock star Peter Gabriel. Among them: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former US President Jimmy Carter, former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and former Irish President Mary Robinson.

There are some other items on Sir Richard's "to-do" list. One of them is arranging last-minute details for Virgin Galactic, his commercial space travel company to be launched next year. His first passengers will be his parents. "They're in their 90s," Sir Richard says. "I'm also going with my children."

But today he puts world peace and space travel aside for a moment to talk about his latest project: Making Mosquito and Necker the most "eco-friendly islands in the world."

The plans have the potential to be replicated elsewhere, according to Sir Richard. "I would love to see the Virgin Islands become the first carbon neutral country in the world. I think economically they would benefit from becoming the first carbon neutral islands. We've got plenty wind, sun, and wave power," he says, his light blonde hair flapping with the breeze. "An in-depth study on Necker and Mosquito shows that we can use these two islands as an example for the rest of the world."

To do so, Sir Richard has hired experts on renewable energy like Daniel Kammen, a professor at the University of California Berkley Energy and Resources Group. On a boat ride to Mosquito Island, Dr. Kammen speaks about the advantages of using alternative energy here. "The BVI is the best place to do this," he says. "It's got



1000 square meters of solar energy and the wind is over 16 knots an hour, so why not use it?"

To Dr. Kammen, the territory could actually make money by turning to renewable energy that would allow it to sell carbon credits in Europe and fuel to the USVI. A 60-foot high wind turbine will power Sir Richard's private residence, and 20 luxury villas on Mosquito. Like in Necker, developers will avoid using air conditioners.

Recently, Mosquito Island's project director Ryan West gave a tour of the island and said the resort would be more affordable and accessible than Necker. West has contacted farmers in Virgin Gorda, who will provide local produce for the resort. And a restaurant and café on the island's Manchioneel Bay and several trails on the West side of the island will be open to the public. The buildings will be open structures to conserve energy and avoid using air-conditioners. Instead, developers will build with clay composite, a heat reducing technique.

And, according to West, the natural vegetation of the island will be respected. Developers have submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment and the project is now being reviewed by the Town and Country Planning Department. The next step will be a public meeting at the Robinson O'Neal Memorial Primary School, in North Sound, Virgin Gorda on Feb 27

Three weeks ago government officials toured the island and listened to a presentation on alternative energy use. "The response has been very positive," Sir Richard says. "The reason why I bought Mosquito is because I was terrified that it would go the way Scrub is going... The British Virgin Islands is famous all over the world for its exquisite beauty, and I think development should be done with exquisite good taste. The challenge is to enhance the islands, to leave them better than they were before."

# Fabulous Furniture that Fascinates Celebrities

An elegant furniture boutique is not complete without the sophistication and opulence of its merchandise. Being simply a place to sell home furnishings is not enough. Customers choose boutique styles not only because of their looks, but also their exclusivity.

They deserve to make it more than just a place to rest their heads. A person's home should be a place where they love being. Absolutely Fabulous located in Grand Cayman in the Cayman Islands offers Caribbean boutiques the power of making one's home their most special place by offering exclusive, hand made teak elegance.

Absolutely Fabulous is a Caribbean distributor for Old Java's Teak furniture line of products and has been offering fine home accessory and furniture through their Grand Cayman showroom and has been making homes in Cayman Islands everything needed to make a home an ideal environment to live, work, and play.

Having been in business since 1999, store director, Nicole McClean, along with brother, and director of Asia wholesale office, Craig McClean, have traveled far



and wide, in order to offer furniture boutiques unique styles that won't be found anywhere else. From dining tables to sofas, the store / the wholesale catalog offers the finest quality and most exceptional design on its imports. They facilitate whole container orders to anywhere in the Caribbean, and work with customers to give them preferred shipping rates.

Teak is considered one of the most durable, valuable wood types in the world. The furniture created from such timber has a high fungal and wood insect resistance, making it ideal for both indoor and outdoor pieces. This is the very reason we know of have purchased Old Java furniture in some cases more than once some of the celebrities:

Sharon Stone; Janet Jackson; Donny Osmond; Ozzie Osbourne; Goldie Hawn/Kurt Russell; Oprah Winfrey; Pierce Brosnan; Bruce Willis; Gary Sinise; John Cusack; LeeAnn Rimes; Arnold Schwarzenegger; Liz Hurley; Alan Rickman; Dennis Quaid; Angelina Jolie; and Anastacia

The new web site developed under the brand of Abfabcayman.com is the ultimate gateway to the latest in teak sophistication. Browse their online catalog to select the perfect style. The teak furniture store offers class and elegance at affordable prices. The rich deep toned pieces are timeless, and inviting. The ranges of select styles are sure to make any home or office as unique as the people that own them. Choose from such categories as living, eating, sleeping, working, and accessories. Information about Absolutely Fabulous, and teak furniture is accessible as well.

With furniture boutiques being a fast growing business in the Caribbean, it is extremely important to take steps to ensure a positive return on investment. Making sure one's place of business is a relaxing atmosphere created with style and personality is one way to do so. ■

## Telecom Meet to Evolve Regional ICT Strategy

The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) in association with the Government of the Bermuda will be hosting a Ministerial Strategic Seminar to be held in Bermuda on 28 and 29 February 2008.

This Seminar will put the challenges facing the Caribbean in a global context and consider ICT tools for fostering regional integration and development. In

addition, the Seminar will present

- Bermuda's ICT initiatives;
- CTU's work in harmonisation for the regional ICT sector;
- Technological implications for regulatory frameworks;

# Energy Encore Plans Brisk Sale of Geothermal Systems in Caribbean



Encore Energy Systems Inc. a rapidly growing diversified energy company, has recently announced its plans to expand sales and distribution of its geothermal heating and cooling systems to the Caribbean.

The company intends to open new sales offices in a soon to be announced in a port city located within the Caribbean islands. The port city will be ideally located for shipping of geothermal units and subsequent shipping to other Caribbean islands. The Company has secured an alliance partner relationship with a construction company in the region to handle all importation and installation of the systems.

Anthony Welch, Chairman, said "As promised we are expanding our operations to other markets. We have a firm foundation in the US and now extend our reach. The Caribbean market for new

construction is growing and energy costs are increasing. Our geothermal systems are ideal for the market as electricity is typically 25 cents per kilo-watt hour or more."

## Ongoing Business Development

"We actively recruit qualified alliance partners. We target businesses partners involved in home construction, architects and HVAC to join us and establish new operating companies in all areas of the USA, Caribbean and Europe," Welch said.

Encore Energy Systems Inc. is on a rapid growth and expansion track based upon revenue growth through key acquisitions, energy technology distribution and seeking acquisitions congruent with energy conservation and supporting industries. This strategy lays the groundwork for consistent introduction of energy-related technologies and continuing revenue growth for the company and its shareholders.

Encore Energy Systems Inc. (formerly Energy Vision International) grows through energy-related acquisitions, marketing its patented geothermal water- air heating/cooling systems, and sales of energy conservation solutions.

The company's geothermal marketing unit, DeMarco Energy Systems of America, Inc. (<http://www.demarcoenergy.com>), has geothermal installations in Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, Montana, South Dakota, Mississippi, California and Texas. Encore's primary focus is to provide energy efficient technologies to commercial and institutional markets through the application of the DeMarco 'Systems' patents and other acquired technologies. ■

- The Connected Caribbean Initiative from the CTU and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) perspectives;

- Strategies for collective regional action.

The Secretary General of the ITU as well as leading Caribbean and international experts are scheduled to share their perspectives and experiences with a view to developing a blueprint for Caribbean ICT harmonization and regional integration.

This event will bring together Caribbean Government Ministers, the corporate community, regulators, academia and other regional ICT stakeholders for candid discussions on achieving functional Caribbean integration and fostering use of ICT for the development of the region. The CTU's Caribbean Spectrum Management Policy Framework will be promoted as an important step in regional harmonisation. ■



# CARICOM Seeks to Forge Stronger Ties with Italy



The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will seek the support of countries such as Italy to sensitise other members of the European Community on the challenges that small countries face in adjusting to new reciprocal arrangements under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), CARICOM Secretary-General Edwin Carrington said.

Shortly before accepting the letters of credence of Ambassador Luigi Maccotta, Italy's Plenipotentiary Representative to CARICOM recently at the CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Georgetown, the Secretary-General noted the longstanding "positive and amicable" relationship between CARICOM and Italy, and the co-operation the Community received from Italy within the international fora on issues that were of critical importance.

The EPA between CARIFORUM Member States and the European Community was initialed in Barbados on 16 December 2007 after more than three years of negotiations.

"As the Region embarks upon a new relationship with the European Union (EU) within the context of the recently concluded Negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), we look to countries such as Italy to sensitize other Members of the European Community of the challenges that confront these small countries as they seek to adjust to the new reciprocal arrangements

inherent in the EPA. In this regard, the importance of the development dimension of the historical EU - CARIFORUM relationship cannot be over emphasized," Carrington said at the ceremony.

CARICOM, he said, was also heartened that Italy places priority on issues such as Climate Change and economic and social development, which were of critical importance to the Community.

The Secretary-General was also appreciative of the interest and support of Italy and the European Union in regional integration as a mechanism to enhance economic development in the Caribbean.

CARICOM and Italy have enjoyed a positive and amicable relationship dating back to 1988 when Italy became a non-borrowing member of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

During almost two decades, the Community recognized Italy as a valuable technical cooperation partner, lending assistance in a range of areas of vital interest to the Region, including climate change, food security, natural disaster prevention and enhancing capacity in tourism.

Ambassador Maccotta succeeded Ambassador Gerardo Carante, Italy's first Plenipotentiary Representative to CARICOM ■

## Brazil's Vale Posts 49 pc Rise in Net Earnings to \$12bn

Brazilian mining and metals group Vale (NYSE:RIO) saw its net earnings jump 49% in 2007 to 20.0bn reais (US\$12.0bn) from 13.4bn reais in 2006, Vale said in its financial report.

Gross revenues increased 42% to 66.4bn reais in 2007, while Ebitda rose 48% to 33.6bn reais over 22.8bn reais in 2006. Net exports were worth US\$11.5bn in 2007, up 31% versus the previous year.

"Vale completed in 2007 the fifth consecutive year of extraordinary growth in its activities. This process was sustained by continuous improvement in operational and financial performance, greater diversification of its asset portfolio and globalization of its operations," the report continued.

Investments last year, excluding acquisitions, reached US\$7.63bn. Net profits in the fourth quarter of 2007 rose 30% year-over-year to 4.41bn reais, while gross operating revenues reached 15.5bn reais compared to 16.7bn in the

# Infosys on Expansion Spree in Latin America

After the creating a Mexican subsidiary, Indian IT services giant Infosys (Nasdaq: INFY) has established a new markets and services business unit to look for opportunities in emerging markets like Latin America, Infosys Latin America CEO Mohit Joshi said.

Infosys opened its first Latin American subsidiary in August last year in Monterrey, Mexico, which also operates a software development center to serve clients in North and South America and Europe. Now, the new business unit is the company's first step in the possible rollout of operations in other Latin American countries such as Brazil, Argentina and Chile, Joshi said.

The already existing development and BPO center serves six customers, including large financial entities from the US, Spain and Mexico, and expects to add another 12 customers by year-end.

Training has been an integral part of getting the new unit up and running. Infosys plans to employ some 1,000 people within three years. Roughly half of the current workforce is from the Monterrey area, while the other half comprises engineers from the rest of Mexico, according to Joshi.

In fact, Infosys Technologies has recently begun sending faculty members from local universities to its campus Connect training program to assure uniformity in university education material, and therefore relatively uniform levels of graduates and incoming employees.

The unit currently has a staff of approximately 100. While these employees have gone through local training



courses, Infosys has sent 22 professors from local university computer science programs to India to participate in its training program.

"We try to give them a sense from an employee's perspective what are the skill sets people are looking for and what kind of technology development we want in our employees," Joshi said.

In addition to developers and engineers, Infosys also plans to replace Joshi with a Mexican country manager, he said.

"We have set up the infrastructure, hired the first set of employees and started working. We have gained significant momentum and have to continue growing by adding people, training people in delivery," he added.

Local Mexican software developers also stand to benefit from Infosys' presence in Mexico. The company is currently in talks with a handful of local firms, looking for complementary skill sets to help on customer projects.

"We have ongoing partnerships in terms of subcontracting with other companies; if we don't have the exact skill set, we find it from a partner company, but there are no formal agreements yet," he said. ■

last three months of 2006.

## Sales

In 2007, Vale shipped 291Mt of iron ore and pellets, the highest figures in its history, and equivalent to a 7% increase versus last year. Sales of both products to China totaled 96Mt, up some 24% compared to 2006.

Meanwhile nickel sales came in at 268,000t last year compared to 73,000t in 2006, at the time when Vale snapped up Canadian nickel miner Inco. Copper shipments rose to 300,000t over 169,000t in 2006, while primary aluminum sales reached 562,000t last year, a new record and up 10%. Rio de Janeiro-based

Vale is the world's biggest iron ore producer.

## Hike in Pellets Price

The mining and metals group is due to disclose in the coming days the results of pellet price negotiations for 2008, Vale CEO Roger Agnelli told reporters recently.

"The pellets market is currently experiencing strong demand because of the scarcity of metallurgical coal. Australia had problems in late 2007 and also earlier in the year with floods and troubles in their logistics system," therefore decreasing the availability of the steelmaking input, Agnelli said in a webcast to discuss 2007 results. ■

# SECCI Fund to Boost LatAm Biofuel Output

The Inter-American Development Bank has announced in Washington the approval of a US\$750,000 donation from SECCI (Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative) funds for developing feasibility studies of biofuels production initially in Haiti, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic. SECCI will support countries in the region in order to develop its biofuel industry.

The studies will be carried out by Brazil's Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) within the framework laid out by the US-Brazil Initiative for biofuels in Central America and the Caribbean. FGV has established a successful methodology that has been applied in similar studies in Brazil.

"The application of this uniform methodology will allow the establishment of the limitations advantages of each of the countries and if it were possible to make full use of these conditions to launch the repositioning of the region as a competitive force in the international market," said Laura Natalia Rojas, one of the leaders of the IADB team.

"For the United States and Brazil, the largest producers and consumers of ethanol in the world, it's indispensable to develop a competitive and sustainable global market," said Arnaldo Vieira de Carvalho, the other team leader. "Central America and the Caribbean have very good potential in this new market due to their geographic location and the benefits given to them by international treaties such as the Dominican Republic and Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA)."

The program will be conducted in coordination with Brazil's Export and Investment Promotion Agency (APEX) and the corresponding authorities in each country. The activities will be carried out by a team of technical,

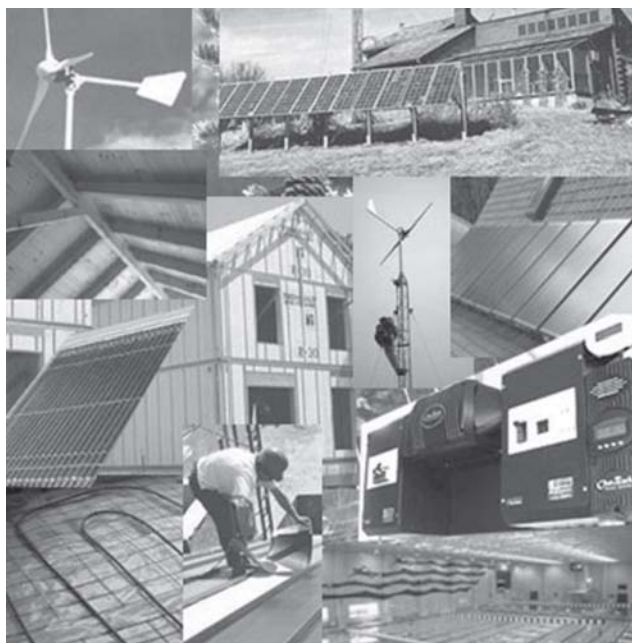
financial, and commercial experts, provided by the Getulio Vargas Foundation. This team will apply the same methodology to all beneficiary countries in the program.

## SECCI Fund

The SECCI Fund was launched in November 2006 with an initial IDB contribution of \$20 million and has subsequently received a \$2.8 million donation from the United Kingdom.

The fund backs major investments in the development of biofuels, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and a wide range of sustainable energy options. In certain cases, the fund will also finance programs and policies aimed at fighting climate change in the region, according to Juan Pablo Bonilla, SECCI coordinator.

Institutions that can contribute to the fund include government ministries, government agencies tasked with dealing with the issue of climate change, planning entities, public and private companies, sub-national governments, private investors, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions. ■



## An Ideal Contract towards Building a Model Home

Construction of dwelling houses will no longer be a casual exercise in Grenada. The Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) has launched a Model Home Construction and repair Contract for use by homeowners and contractors recently.

All the stakeholders signed the Residential Design and Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) Charter, which

has been developed under the Grenada Hurricane Resilient Home Reconstruction Programme.

The CQA encourages better building practices that could lessen the loss of lives and reduce potential damage, while also shortening the disaster recovery process.



ARD's Deputy Chairman and CEO Richardson Andrews says the CQA will represent improvements in the way in which houses are built resulting in the security and safety of the public. "As you know there is a lot of casual construction, and we encountered a lot of deficiencies in various aspects of the sector, therefore we need to push more and more that all construction of dwellings be treated seriously. In fact, we think there should be laws governing the construction of houses."

The Programme, which was launched in August 2006, was a collaborative effort by the Organisation of American States and the ARD, with \$70,000 (US) in funding from the Canadian International Development Agency.

Minister of Social Development Yolanda Bain-Horsford welcomed the programme and says it is important that home owners enlighten themselves about the Grenada building code and guidelines. "With the model Home Construction Repair contract available, all homeowners and prospective homeowners now have

an enabling tool to guard against faulty construction....with the model contract in hand, every family can be protected from the disastrous impact of any future hurricane or other disasters, by ensuring that their house is constructed or repaired in accordance with the Grenada Building Code or Guidelines."

The Programme has produced three documents: These are: A Checking Manual for the Examination of Residential Plans and Inspection of Residential Construction, a Model Home Construction/repair Contract for use by homeowners and contractors, and A Residential CQA Charter that commits all key stakeholders to the principles of the CQA Mechanism.

Homeowners and contractors can access copies of the Model Home Construction/Repair Contract and the C Q A C h a r t e r o n t h e A R D Website...[www.ardgrenada.org](http://www.ardgrenada.org)

A number of companies have given their signature to the CQA charter. ■

## Climate Change Widening Rich-Poor Divide in LAC Region

Climate change is deepening the divide between the rich and poor across Latin America and the Caribbean, threatening to halt and then reverse advances in health and education for the most vulnerable, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (HDR) on climate change launched recently in Brazil.

Building on the recently-released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Synthesis Report, the 2007/2008 HDR, entitled Fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world, sets out a pathway for climate change negotiations in Bali, Indonesia, and stresses that a narrow ten-year window of opportunity remains to put it into practice.

If that window is missed, temperature rises of above two degrees Celsius could see over 10 percent of land in the Bahamas submerged under water, losses of up to 60 percent of rain-fed maize production in Mexico on which two million poor farmers depend, the disappearance of glaciers that provide 80 percent of fresh water to Peruvian cities, and increased cases of dengue fever in previously dengue-free areas of Latin America, says the Report.

"The carbon budget of the 21st Century the amount of carbon that can be absorbed creating an even probability that temperatures will not rise above two degrees is being overspent and threatens to run out entirely by 2032," says Kevin Watkins, lead author and Director of the Human Development Report Office, "and the poorest with the lightest carbon footprint but the least means to protect themselves are the first victims of developed countries' energy-rich lifestyle."

The world's richest countries have a historic responsibility to take the lead in balancing the carbon budget through a range of measures, says the Report, including: cutting emissions by at least 80 percent by 2050; investing at least an additional US\$86 billion annually in adaptation efforts to protect the world's poor; supporting the production of biofuels without eroding the rights of small farmers or indigenous people; and backing efforts to reduce deforestation in countries like Brazil.

The Report argues that with the support of such measures and through international cooperation of finance and low carbon technology, developing countries should also play their part with total emission cuts of at least 20 percent by 2050. ■

# HSBC LatAm 2007

## Pre-tax profits up 26 pc at \$ 2bn

London-based HSBC (NYSE: HBC) posted a US\$2.18bn pre-tax profit in 2007 from its Latin American operations, up 26% on 2006, driven by strong growth in Brazil, according to the bank's latest earnings release.

The region grew to represent 9% of the group's US\$24.2bn worldwide pre-tax profits in 2007, up from 7.9% the previous year.

Net interest income was up 32.9% to US\$5.58bn, with fee income rising 32.1% to US\$2.15bn. Operating expenses rose 30.0% to US\$5.40bn. Net loans and advances to Latin American customers increased 33.9% to US\$47.9bn as of December 31 compared to the same time in 2006.

### HSBC Mexico

Loan impairment charges soared 80.9% to US\$1.70bn, as HSBC Mexico's loan portfolio began to mature and sent these charges up more than threefold to US\$737mn.

Those charges dampened pre-tax profits from HSBC's personal financial services in the region, which were up 12% to US\$893mn. Customer lending in the sector rose 5% to US\$21.7bn as of December 31.

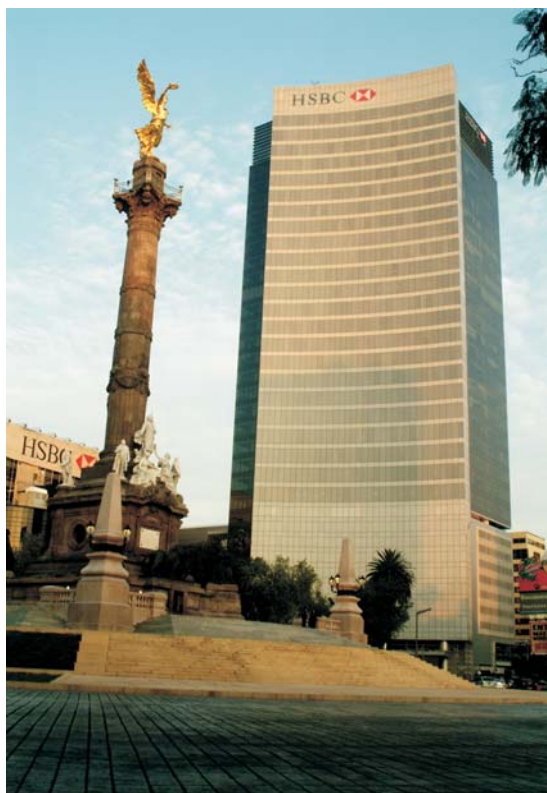
Latin America was the fastest-growing region for HSBC's commercial and private banking businesses, with pre-tax profits rising 64% to US\$740mn and 79% to US\$25mn respectively. Growth in the former was fueled by Brazilian SMEs and Mexican corporates, HSBC said.

Pre-tax profits from global banking and markets were up 9% to US\$517mn as strong growth in net fee and net interest income was partly offset by a decrease in trading income and higher costs related to business expansion, the bank said.

Last year, HSBC integrated the acquisitions of Grupo Banistmo in Central America and Banco Nazionale in Argentina carried out in 2006.

"I've just come back from visiting our businesses in Latin America and they are still benefiting from strong commodity prices," CEO Michael Geoghegan told a conference call.

"Even if commodity prices slow, there are significant opportunities for internal wealth generation. The exception to this may be Mexico, which will inevitably be impacted by the US,"



he said.

### HSBC Brazil

HSBC Brazil saw last year's pre-tax profits jump 67.1% to US\$879mn, driven by increased volume of personal and vehicle finance loans.

"Brazil had an excellent year, leveraging the region's more dynamic economy," Geoghegan said.

On the other hand, Mexico's pre-tax profits were down 2.87% to US\$980mn due to the aforementioned loan impairment charges. Geoghegan said the bank was expecting these results as the asset portfolio of Banco Bital - which it bought in 2002 - is now maturing.

### HSBC Argentina

HSBC Argentina saw pre-tax profits increase 28% to US\$201mn, with the Panamanian subsidiary's pre-tax profits soaring 120% to US\$86mn. HSBC managed US\$99.1bn in assets in Latin America as of December 31.

Worldwide, HSBC saw 2007 profits increase 21% to US\$19.1bn as strong earnings in Asia offset a strong increase in loan impairment charges, which were up 63% to US\$17.2bn, mainly due to the US subprime crisis. ■

# Anguillian Luxury Hotel Bags Rare AAA 4-Diamond Rating



Sheriva Villa Hotel has been awarded the prestigious AAA Four Diamond rating for the year 2008. The fundamental hallmarks at this level include an extensive array of amenities combined with a high degree of hospitality, service, and attention to detail. SHERIVA has been awarded this esteemed accolade in just one year of operation.

SHERIVA joins a select group of AAA Four Diamond Award winners. Just 3.6 percent of the more than 32,000 AAA Rated lodgings were awarded the prestigious AAA Four Diamond designation for 2008.

"We are pleased to have been awarded the AAA Four Diamond rating," said General Manager, Jeannine Connor-Gittens. "At SHERIVA, we are committed to ensuring that every guest's experience is exceptional. This award acknowledges the total dedication and hard work of our staff."

The assignment of the AAA rating of one to five Diamonds

marks the completion of a successful annual evaluation. All properties must first meet AAA's rigorous requirements and guidelines during an evaluation by one of AAA's 65 full-time professional inspectors to become AAA Approved.

"AAA Four Diamond Award winners consistently deliver premier experiences, complete with superior personal service, first-class amenities, and impressive surroundings," said Michael Petrone, AAA director of Tourism Information Development. "To achieve and maintain AAA Four Diamond Award level of service is an amazing accomplishment, and AAA is pleased to honor SHERIVA."

AAA's Diamond Rating System is the only ratings system that covers all of North America and one of only two that include physical, on-site evaluations. It is the only system that uses full-time, professionally trained evaluators to inspect each property.

SHERIVA, the realized dream of Anguillian developer and owner, Sheridan Smith, is a luxurious waterfront villa-hotel with 20 rooms and suites. Launched in December 2006, the property's stellar accommodations range from oversized one-bedroom private pool suites to lavish 7-bedroom villas. The lush 10-acre enclave offers superlative services such as personal chef, 24-hour concierge privé, onsite security staff, in-villa spa treatments, private 8-seat golf cart for villa guests, a complimentary shuttle service to Maundays Bay beach and restaurant signing privileges at adjacent world-famous Cap Juluca Hotel. ■







# Petro-Canada Hits Rich Reserves in Oil Well off T&T

Petro-Canada has recently announced successful results from two international exploration wells - one in the United Kingdom (U.K.) sector of the North Sea and one in deepwater off Trinidad and Tobago.

"Exploration is a key part of our long-term growth strategy," said Peter Kallos, Executive Vice-President of International and Offshore, said in London. "Our drilling program last year yielded several successes, with these most recent discoveries among the more significant."

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Cassra-1 well in deepwater Block 22 was completed as a significant natural gas discovery. The well targeted the reservoir objective at the edge of a large seismic anomaly covering 68 sq km. Petro-Canada operated the well and holds a 90% interest. Based on well results and using local field recovery factors, the discovery could have between 0.6 to 1.3 trillion cubic feet of contingent resources; however further appraisal activity is required before finalizing the estimates.

"This is an exciting result for us, because it is the first well in a four-well program on Block 22," said Kallos. "The discovery validates our exploration model and further success on the Block could lead to a material development."

The second discovery was made in the U.K. sector of the North Sea, with the successful completion of the 13/21b-7 well. The well encountered two oil columns that total nearly 80 metres when combined. Petro-Canada operated the well and holds a 50% interest. Early drill stem test data indicates the reservoir has the capacity to yield commercial flow rates. Preliminary estimates indicate a commercial discovery; however further appraisal activity is required before potential reserves can be fully assessed.

Petro-Canada and its partners plan to conduct appraisal activity on both the Trinidad and Tobago and U.K. discoveries to fully assess the resource base

before considering development options.

In Trinidad, Petro-Canada has net production of 65 million cubic feet per day through a 17.3% interest in the North Coast Marine Area gas project, which supplies gas for the Atlantic LNG project. The new Block 22 discovery has the potential to materially contribute to Petro-Canada's future production in Trinidad and Tobago. Petro-Canada is currently carrying out a multi-well exploration program on Blocks 1a and 1b (Petro-Canada interest of 80%) and Block 22 (Petro-Canada interest of 90%).

In the U.K. sector of the North Sea, Petro-Canada had net production of approximately 75,000 barrels per day in the third quarter of 2007. Production came from the Company's participation in the Buzzard field, as well as production from the core Triton and Scott/Telford areas.

Petro-Canada is one of Canada's largest oil and gas companies, operating in both the upstream and the downstream sectors of the industry in Canada and internationally. The Company creates value by responsibly developing energy resources and providing world class petroleum products and services. Petro-Canada is proud to be a National Partner to the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The Company's common shares trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol PCA and on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol PCZ. ■

# Breath-Taking Green Brazil

## The Ecotourist's Earthly Eden

Brazil is blessed with the best of everything in Nature. Brazil will take your breath away. Brazil's beaches are dazzling. Adventurers choose its forest trails. Fun-loving people throng Brazil's lively cities. If ecotourism is your passion, Brazil is your destination; because Brazil knows how to preserve the precious gifts of the Nature.

### The Waterworld of the Amazon Jungle

The Amazon Rainforest was awarded World Natural Heritage by UNESCO status in 2000, and 2003. Next to the grandeur of the Amazon's natural giants, prepare to be overwhelmed by an unusual sense of smallness. Here you will learn medicinal secrets of the endangered and, in many cases, extinct indigenous tribes, snuggle sloths, drink water from the insides of trees, watch monkeys swing through the magnificent branches of "the world's lungs", marvel at lily-pads the size of your kitchen table, eat fruits you never would have imagined existed, canoe through the endless waterworld of the Amazon, stopping to fish for piranhas and visit with local river dwellers, capture dazzling sunsets, and fall asleep at night hypnotized by the symphonic hum of the ecosystem. Welcome to the Amazon, your destination for adrenaline and rejuvenation.

#### How to Get There

Several options exist to enter the rainforest. Daily flights from the majority of Brazil's cities service Manaus, the premier gateway to the Amazon. Manaus stands as the living monument of the rubber





boom. It is definitely worth the visit, boasting delightful restaurants, an incredible theatre, and a relatively exciting nightlife. From that point on, transfers are provided by most jungle lodges and travel specialists. Access to the forest is also feasible from Belém, the capital city of the state of Pará. In fact, in the recent past Belém has made exceptional strides in improving their capacity for tourism. It is also conveniently located more proximate to the Northeast of Brazil. The Amazon Clipper Cruise offers several short, simple and affordable packages to explore the region by boat. Ecotour Expeditions operates the Motor Yacht Tucano, which provides the option of privately chartered trips, is more lavish, and offers longer itineraries. Brazil Adventure International (a São Paulo-based tour operator) offers hiking and trekking tours through the Atlantic Rainforest. Numerous other local companies are also available to take you on similar adventures through the region.

Entrance to the Amazon via Alta Floresta, Mato Grosso state, is another option. Flights are available from Cuiabá. If you are in the Pantanal, the closest entrance to the Amazon is through São Jose do Rio Claro.

## Best Time of Visit & Where to Stay

Depending on your interests, there are two wonderful seasons to make your visit. From December through March, the water levels are lower, and from June to November, the water levels rise. Simply avoid traveling from April through June during the rainy season, when your adventures can become nearly impossible. There are more than 40 Jungle Lodges operating within the Amazon Rainforest to choose from.

## Vital Tips

Consult your physician regarding yellow fever vaccinations, and remember to take your eco-friendly insect repellent, extra shoes, and flash-lights.

## Bonito - Beyond Beauty

For those of you who do not understand Spanish or Portuguese, the word Bonito translates in English to beautiful. However, many believe that this destination was not named justifiably...as Bonito simply does not describe the extraordinariness of the attractions! Merely a decade ago, this region remained undiscovered by tourists. Fortunately, by the time it became known, the sustainable tourism movement had already taken root. To this day, strict regulations modify the impact of humans on the natural treasures of Bonito. Far from the coastal zone, Bonito conceals one of Brazil's top diving destinations, offering exceptional cave diving and rappelling itineraries. Within a 35-mile radius, nearly every mile offers a dazzling gift from Mother Nature. In creating Bonito, she was like Leonardo da Vinci with his beloved Mona Lisa; constantly making improvements. She spent six hundred million years perfecting the intricate details of each one of these gifts. Today, you can explore this wonderland, admiring her work, amazed at the grace and grandeur of each waterfall, crystal clear river (be it above ground or below), grotto, underwater garden, cave and crater. She chose a fine layer of limestone for her material and water as her sculpting tool. The final product is truly a masterpiece! Bonito deserves to be a primary destination. However, if you plan to be in the Pantanal North, taking a side trip to Bonito is an absolute must!

## Getting There

The best time to visit Bonito is between March and November. There are daily flights from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to Campo Grande. Bonito is 175 miles from Campo Grande, (approximately three hours by car due to road conditions).





## Vital Tips

Remember to book reservations at least two months in advance, as the limited accommodations and tours quickly reach capacity. All tours throughout the region are led by excellently trained guides and, although most caves and grottos could hold as many as 100 people, are kept to a maximum of 15 people.

## Caju Island - Endless Options



Divided between the northeast states of Maranhão and Piauí is the third largest encounter of salt and fresh water on the planet, the Parnaíba Delta. It is situated in open water, and is the only one of the sort throughout the Americas. Warm canals meander through the dunes, creating an abundance of small islands, 83 to be exact, and a rich selection of ecosystems, including forests, beaches, mangroves, lagoons and dunes. Exploring this region can be done by foot, horseback, or various boats, such as canoes, kayaks, and gaiolas, boats typically used by locals, both here and in the Amazon. The rare and graceful Guará, resembling a flamingo with a long, curved beak, is found only on Caju Island. There are two recommended ways to experience this region. One of the best ways is to stay on Caju Island. The island has been owned by the Clark family since the late 19th century. However, it is protected by an official conservation project. There is only one small pousada here, but the ecotourism options are endless! Another unforgettable option is to stay in one of the surrounding towns, where the infrastructure for ecotourism is developing rapidly, while maintaining its historical charm from the days when it was the seventh largest port in the country. Here you will encounter lovely bars, restaurants and galleries.

### Getting There

Fly into Teresina, the capital of the state of Piauí. From there to Parnaíba the drive is 220 miles, followed by a four-hour boat ride to Caju Island.

While the temperature is hot all year round, it is best to visit during the rainy season, between January and June when the lagoons are full, and best for swimming.

## Chapada Diamantina - Tales to Listen

Chapada Diamantina, the surrounding 152,000 hectare national park, and the gateway city Lençóis, welcome you with rare natural spectacles and nostalgic charm. In the beginning of the 19th century, Germans Spix and Martius discovered a massive diamond vein in this territory. Prospectors



scrambled to the region, eager for their piece of the fortune. With that, Lençóis became the third largest town in the northeast state of Bahia. Despite the fact that today, the population is a mere 4,000, the culture of the diamond boom lives on through the local folklore. Make sure to mingle with the townspeople once you have retired to the bars and restaurants for a taste of savory sun-dried meats and Axé music, as the stories you will learn are sure to add yet another element of enchantment to the region.

Chapada Diamantina earns its place on the list of ecotourism musts in Brazil, as it holds numerous natural records and monuments. Lapão Cave is the largest quartzite caves in the Americas, excellent for experienced rappellers. In addition, there are excellent cave-lakes, some of the best being Poço Encantado and Poço Azul. If you are an experienced cave diver, in search of an adventure, Chapada da Diamantina should be high on your list. Fumaça Waterfall, at 1,020 feet, is one of the highest in Brazil -

however, the volume of water is not sufficient to maintain its liquid state throughout the long drop to the bottom. Instead it forms a mysterious mist just before reaching the ground. Chapada Diamantina is perhaps one of the most well known natural monuments among Brazilians. After experiencing Salvador, the escape to Chapada Diamantina is merely a one hour flight or 267 miles bus ride away.

## Getting There

There are two options to get to Lençóis. Nordeste Airlines offers flights from São Paulo and from Salvador. By land, from Salvador to Lençóis daily bus service is available. The drive is approximately 267 miles.

Tourists in the know flock to Chapada Diamantina all year round. However, keep in mind to plan your daily adventures around the frequent evening storms.

## Chapada dos Guimarães - An Artist Haven

Adventure sports, archaeology, esotericism, ecotourism - what's your pleasure? In Chapada dos Guimarães even the most difficult to impress will delight in the endless pleasures of the National Parks and "new-age" community. In the late 1980's rumor spread that the perfect civilization was to settle in this region, leading to a small mass exodus of new age hippies, artists and esoterics to the town. Visitors reap the benefits of the town's unique accommodations, dining options, and crafts. Subject to parochial debate, here lies the geodesic centre of South America, amidst an 80,000 acre National Park and UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve in the Brazilian savannah. The awe-inspiring red rock cliffs and canyons are reminiscent of the desert buttes of the American Southwest. Endless trails carve out intricate patterns into the rock, and waterfalls such as the 260 foot "Véu da Noiva" cascade down the side, forming natural massage parlors surrounded by lush flora where the water meets the ground. The exquisite Red-Macaw and innumerable other exotic fauna often drop by to welcome ecotourists respectful of their home. Protected within the confines of the spectacular red sandstone walls are 46 identified ancient cave paintings, many more undoubtedly await discovery,



as well as natural cave pools. One not to be missed is the Caverna Aroe Jari. For those of you interested in the surrounding indigenous communities, Xingu National Park can be visited with a permit from Funai obtained at least one month prior to travel. Chapada dos Guimarães is an excellent side trip from the Pantanal!

## Getting There

Daily flights from airports throughout Brazil service Cuiabá, the capital of the state of Mato Grosso. From the capital to the town of Chapada dos Guimarães the drive is around 50 miles. Numerous busses commute daily between Cuiabá and Chapada dos Guimarães.

Chapada dos Guimarães is an excellent side-trip if you are planning on visiting the Pantanal, and vice-versa. While the seasons do alter the experience, all year round is an excellent time to travel to this region. Keep in mind that the rainy season lasts from September to May. In July they hold the Winter Festival, where the sacred, traditional, and modern arts combine for an exceptional experience. Locals flock to this area on weekends, so to avoid a crowd, also avoid Fridays-Sundays.

## Chapada dos Veadeiros - Crystal Mystery

The lucky few humans who have had the pleasure of seeing planet earth from outer space will affirm the glowing light shining from the southern hemisphere. That light is Chapada dos Veadeiros - caused by the reflection between the sun and the abundance of quartz crystal in the region. However, clairvoyants argue that this light is, in fact, the magnificent energy and magical forces of this sanctuary of spiritualism and mysticism. Chapada dos Veadeiros is located on parallel 14, the same parallel that crosses Machu Pichu in Peru. Stories of flying saucers and extraterrestrial sightings abound. Yet, Chapada dos Veadeiros is an excellent destination for more than just esoterics - it is also excellent for ecotourism. This wonderland was declared a Natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2001. The striking contrasts of the region create a rare treasure in the heart of the highly threatened savanna ecosystem. Curious flora and fauna are native to the cerrado(savanna), further adding to the surreal atmosphere. The Vale da Lua (Valley of the Moon) was named after its resemblance to lunar craters. The São Miguel River flows through holes in the rock, forming warm pools amongst the rocks. Panoramic vistas of the fiery red-orange of the savanna and rocks set against the soothing pastels of the afternoon sky will mesmerize you with their beauty as you gaze out in wonder from your perch atop waterfalls. Chapada dos Veadeiros is an excellent side trip from Brasília!

## Getting There

Fly into the federal district Brasília. To Alto Paraíso do Goiás from Brasília, the drive is approximately 145 miles. Another 20 miles towards the park entrance is Vila de São Jorge. This destination is renowned for its simple accessibility.

To make the most from your visit, plan your trip between April and September.

## Tips to Remember

Do not forget to bring extra shoes. Also, São Jorge cuts down your travel time between the park and your accommodation, while providing a glimpse into authentic regional culture.





# FDI in LatAm hits record \$126 bn in '07

Foreign direct investment in Latin America reached a record \$126 billion in 2007, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It was twice the level of 2006.

Brazil passed Mexico as Latin America's largest FDI recipient, garnering a \$37.4 billion, a 99.3 percent increase from 2006. FDI to Mexico grew by 92.9 percent to \$36.7 billion. Combined the two countries - the largest economies in Latin America - accounted for nearly 60 percent of all FDI to the region.

Chile, the third-largest FDI recipient in Latin America despite only having the sixth-largest economy in the region, also managed to double foreign investments - \$15.3 billion, an increase of 92.2 percent. Colombia, the fourth-largest recipient of FDI, had another good year. Total FDI grew by 30.5 percent to \$8.2 billion.

## India's exports to Brazil touch \$2.2 billion in 2007

India's exports to Brazil grew impressively to \$2.2 billion in 2007 from 1.5 billion in 2006. Fifty percent of Indian exports to Brazil comprised diesel by Reliance. Brazilian exports to India were \$958 million in 2007.

## El Salvador opening embassy in New Delhi

Ms Patricia Figueroa has been nominated as the first Ambassador. She has been to India nine times and is knowledgeable about Indian IT business. Guatemala and Costa Rica are also opening embassies in India soon.

## Argentina opens Consulate in Mumbai

Fernando Ras has been nominated as the first Consul General of Argentina in Mumbai. He has experience in Economic Diplomacy. He was Director General of Export promotion in the Foreign Ministry in the last three years and had visited India with an Argentine business delegation in July 2006. he will reach Mumbai to open the consulate in February 2008

## Cognizant's IT Plans in Buenos Aires

Cognizant is inaugurating its new IT centre in Buenos Aires on 11 March 2008. The company has been operating with 70 staff since March 2007. Now they are moving to a new building with 230 staff.

## Steel-maker ArcelorMittal expands operations

ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company, took control (February 2008) of two Costa Rican steelmakers by buying the half of the companies it did not already own. It had bought a 50 percent stake in Laminadora Costarricense SA, which makes rolled steel, and wire-maker Trefileria Colima SA from Clarion del Norte, part of the Pujol Group. Both serve the construction market in Central America and the Caribbean region. One of the companies that formed ArcelorMittal last year, Arcelor SA, first bought into the companies earlier.

The Mittal group had also acquired Venezuelan steel company Unicon in January 2008. Unicon is a steel tube producer with capacity of 552,000 tons and 2445 employees. Mittal already has presence in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago.



In December 2007, Mittal acquired a Uruguayan stainless steel tube producer CINTER S.A.

ArcelorMittal Cinter S.A. is an important stainless steel tube producer located in Uruguay. Its net sales for the year ended, September 2007, was US\$47million. Cinter S.A. employs about 200 people in 3 sites located in Montevideo.

## Chinese trade with Latin America booming

According to a Chinese news agency, China's trade with Latin America was \$63.97 billion in the first nine months of 2007. In 2006, China's trade with Latin America was \$70.22 billion. ■

## Fernando de Noronha - Surfers' Paradise

Fernando de Noronha is a treasure chest of biodiversity, preserved under strict national regulations, and perhaps, one of the best kept secrets of Brazil. Fernando de Noronha is also on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage list. Here you will find the largest population of spinner dolphins, and countless other species of spell-bounding biodiversity. The destination is actually a series of 21 small islands, islets, and crags atop a submerged volcano. This paradise is cherished among surfers and divers in the know as being one of the best destinations worldwide, and is the best location for diving in all of Brazil. People travel from all parts of the world for a few days of the ultimate eco-experience. Interestingly, this peaceful wonder has been through years of regime change before settling into its current state of perfection. From the beginning of the 17th century, the main island has been invaded by the Spanish, French, Dutch and Portuguese. It then became a North American military base and prison, before the government declared the vast majority of the land and surrounding waters National Marine Park in 1988, enforcing conservation and protection laws that even limit the number of visitors allowed on the island at any given time.



### Getting There

Located approximately one and a half hours by plane from the Northeast coastal cities of Natal and Recife, Noronha is well worth the time it takes to arrive. As the saying goes, the best things come to those who wait!

### Tips to Remember

Visitors to the Island must pay a conservation fee, and goods and services on the island tend to be relatively expensive. Also, as there are limits on the number of tourists allowed on the island, it is advisable to book in advance in order to avoid the risk of joining the waiting list. High season runs from mid-December through February-end.

## Iguaçu Falls, Falls & Falls

Iguassu Falls are the widest in the world, and in the Native Tupi-Guarani language, guazu means big, and I means water. There are a total of 275 falls, forming a gigantic semi-circle 8,100 feet long, with millions of gallons of thundering water plunging to depths 250 feet below. The semi-circular falls bring together both the Iguassu and Parana Rivers, as well as Brazil and Argentina. Argentina claims the majority of the falls on her territory. However, the view from the Brazilian side is far superior. The infinite wonders of Iguassu cannot be described in words. The falls are surrounded by a National Park containing the world's largest pluvial forest, home to 12 species of amphibians, 18 species of fish, 40 species of mammals, including the jaguar, ocelot, capybara and giant river otter, 60 different reptiles, 340 bird species, and 700 unique species of fluttering butterflies! Many of these species can be



discovered in the Bird Park and on excursions within the park, such as the Macuco Safari where you will be led on a short hike and a ride nearly under the falls in a small boat. To alter your point of reference, helicopter rides are another exciting option. A new project is currently being developed by the park administration which will facilitate adventure sports such as hiking, rafting, canyoning, canoeing, boia-cross, and camping. Adding to the magic, brilliant rainbows often frame the falls. The Iguassu National Park was awarded World Natural Heritage status by UNESCO in 1986.

## Getting There

Numerous daily flights service Iguassu Falls from airports throughout Brazil, connecting through São Paulo.

Depending on your interests, different seasons will be perceived as more ideal than others to make this venture. In truth, year round Iguassu Falls promise a thrilling experience. The rainy season and dry seasons are difficult to specify. When there are high levels of rainfall, the falls are at their fullest and most powerful state. Keep in mind that some trails and catwalks become inaccessible during times of increased rainfall. If you are more interested in exploring the National Park, it is better to aim for drier seasons in order to ensure access to the majority of trails.

## Lagamar - Prize-Winning Eco-Destination

In 1999 Lagamar was awarded the title of The Condé Nast TravelerWorld's Best Ecotourism Destination, by. Lagamar is a sparkling myriad of lagoons formed by numerous adjoining rivers which meet with the sea, where serenity and thrills are the dominant ways of life. The Lagamar Iguape Estuary Complex encompasses Cananéia, Cardoso Island, Iguape, Ilha Comprida, Pariquera-Acu State Park, and Superagui Island. Protected within Lagamar are numerous pockets of rainforest, mangroves, and coastal lowlands.

The area also serves as an incubator and breeding ground for marine species. As soon as you embark on the boat ride from Cananéia to Cardoso Island, you will feel the weight of the world begin to disappear as dolphins perform gracefully around you, and the rich jewel-tones of the environment hypnotize you with their vibrant glow. Spend your days frolicking in waterfalls, island-hopping, snorkeling and diving, hiking through the lush Atlantic Rainforests and in Superagui National Park, marveling at the rare species on the uninhabited island, and getting to know the local culture of the quaint fishing villages...or if none of these options sound enticing, you can always simply beach it.

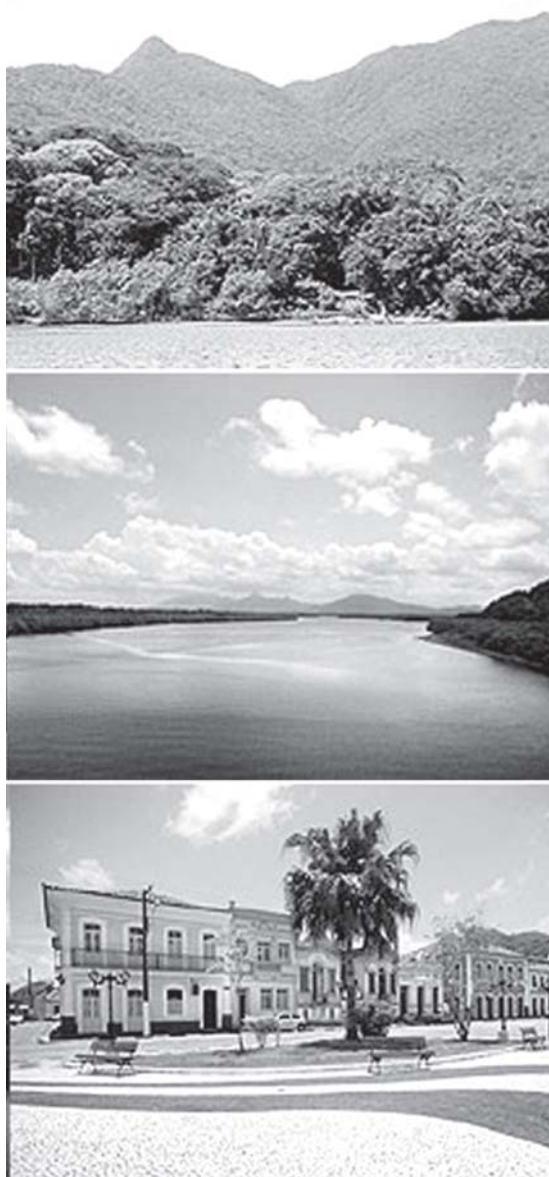
### Getting There

Cananéia and Iguape: Fly into São Paulo. The trip from São Paulo to Cananéia or Iguape is approximately 160 miles, or three to four hours. The boat ride from the port of Cananéia to Cardoso Island may take up to three hours.

Superagui Island and Guaraqueçaba: The nearest airport to Superagui Island is in Curitiba. From Curitiba to Guaraqueçaba, the trip is 60 miles. From there you can charter a boat to the Island.

When it comes time to make the decisions of where to rest your head at night, you have a range of options. Please note that encountering bilingual representatives in this region may be a

luxury. For that reason, you contact a travel specialist to assist you with reservations and arrangements. Lodgings on





Cananéia, Cardoso Island, Superagüi Island and Guaraqueçaba. Cananéia will provide you with the most modernized accommodations, and most easily accessible from São Paulo. It is one of the oldest cities in the country; the architecture is proof, as are the Sambaqui mounds built ten to twenty thousand years ago of shells, bones, spear, and other remnants of Amerindian culture. The eco-adventure takes place on the smaller islands. Cardoso Island is accessible by boat from Cananéia. There is no electricity on the island, and the accommodations are rustic. Superagüi Island and Guaraqueçaba are more proximate to one and other than they are to the former two destinations. Several pousadas, or inns, are available in both destinations. Campgrounds are available on Guaraqueçaba.

It rains most of the year in this region. During their winter, in July and August, precipitation decreases, as does the temperature. Although frequent heavy rains can be expected during the summer, the warmer temperatures improve diving conditions.

## Lençóis Maranhenses - Shifting Dunes

When you first see aerial images of Lençóis Maranhenses, you will believe what you are looking at are images of the clouds set against the clear blue sky. In reality, what they saw were the bitolas, or dune trails formed by multicolored freshwater lagoons that create glimmering oasis between thousands of rolling sand dunes. Here, time seems to stand still - but life and the landscape do not. Due to the force of the sea winds, the dunes are constantly shifting, frequently as much as 60 feet throughout a year. The plentiful annual precipitation gives birth to a thriving ecosystem. Lagoons provide an excellent escape for migratory birds and sea turtles preferring to lay their eggs in peace, and fish also fill the crystal waters of the lagoons. Exploring this region, you will also encounter mangroves and tropical forests along the Negro and Preguiças Rivers. The lifestyle of the locals is worth the visit in itself. Much can be learned from the hospitality and simple efficiency of their habits. While it is legal to camp both in the National Park created in 1981 encompassing 155,000 hectares of the region, as well as along the riverbanks, you may also encounter the opportunity to string up a hammock and stay in local homes made of Buriti Palm.



### Getting There

Fly into São Luís, the capital of the state of Maranhão. 170 miles from the capital lies the town of Barreirinhas, the trip takes three hours by coach due to road conditions. A faster option is to make the one hour trip in a single engine plane.

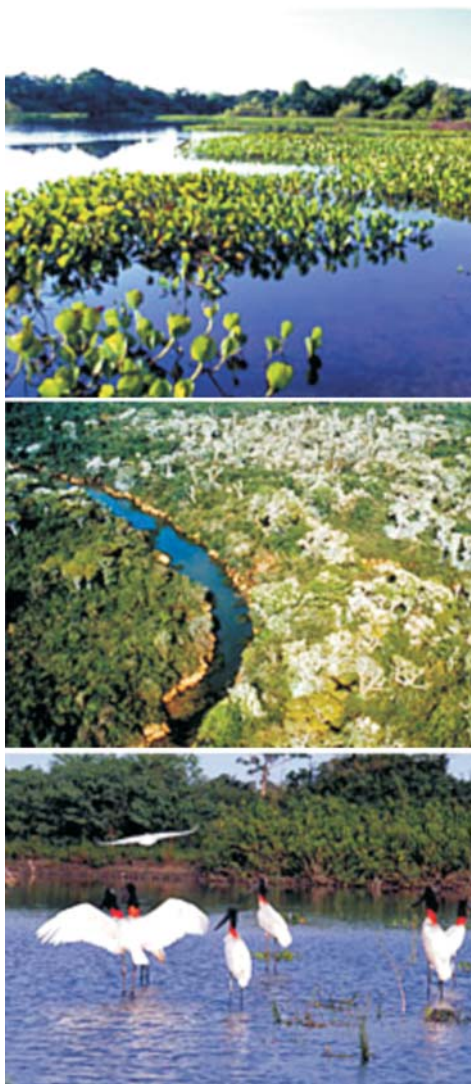
The best time of year to visit the region is during the rainy season from December to June when the biodiversity increases with the rainfall.

### Tips to Remember

Be sure to always bring water on your daily excursions. Also, it is easy to lose your way among the endless dunes. Therefore, it is highly recommended that you consult a guide to ensure safety. Camping in the wild is permitted.

## Pantanal - World's Largest Wetlands

The Pantanal was named by UNESCO as both a World Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage of Humanity site. It holds the rights to many claims of grandeur - Beyond being the world's largest wetlands, it also contains the greatest biodiversity of animal species in the Americas, the Transpantaneira Highway featured in the Guinness Book of World Records as the highway with the most bridges and the longest open-air zoo in the world, the biggest freshwater boat-



fishing festival worldwide, and the best place for wildlife sightings in all of Brazil. The Pantanal offers the best photographic safari in the Americas! Contrary to popular belief, here you will encounter an abundance of wildlife far surpassing that found throughout the entire Amazon. This region, and unique ecosystem, is home to nearly 670 species of birds, 242 fish species, 110 different mammals and 50 reptiles, in addition to the 1,500 plant species. The constant polyrhythmic harmony of the flora and fauna creates an endless symphony. This truly is paradise for nature enthusiasts of all walks of life. Whatever your passion, be it fishing, boating, birdwatching, wildlife, horseback riding or hiking - your greatest dreams will be fulfilled in the Pantanal! The Pantanal is spread over to two Brazilian states, Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. The capitals of the two states, Cuiabá and Campo Grande, as well as the city of Corumbá are the most convenient access points to this ecological paradise. All three cities have airports and hotels.

### Getting There

Flights arrive daily to Campo Grande and Corumbá, the gateway cities to Mato Grosso do Sul, and Cuiabá, the gateway city to Mato Grosso, from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Upon arrival to the airport, you may then opt to arrive at your accommodations by ground transfer, which tend to last several hours in duration. Depending on where you have chosen to stay, consider taking a small plane to your final destination. Consult one of our travel specialists for transfer information.

The water levels rise significantly during the rainy season from November through the beginning of April. Then, from May to October, the water levels begin to lower, and what were lakes, gradually diminish to small ponds, and then to mere puddles. Populations of fish become trapped as their home evaporates, providing the birds with a glorious buffet, far easier to feast on than when the waters are fullest. Therefore, if you are interested in birdwatching, this is your time! A word to the wise

- do not forget your insect repellent or flashlights, and leave your Sunday best at home.

### Tips to Remember

If you are interested in visiting three ecosystems during your trip to Brazil, it is recommended that you travel to the state of Mato Grosso. Here you will encounter the Pantanal wetlands, Amazon Rainforest, and savannah. The main gateway to the Pantanal through Mato Grosso is Cuiabá. There are several entrances to the rainforest. The closest Amazon destination accessible by land from the Pantanal is São José do Rio Claro. Another option is to fly or take a bus to Alta Floresta from Cuiabá. The third ecosystem, the savannah, is found in the Chapada dos Guimarães, an incredible destination in itself, as well as an excellent side-trip from the Pantanal.

If you are interested in visiting the Pantanal, and in addition enjoy trekking, wildlife, spelunking, snorkeling, and cave diving we suggest visiting Mato Grosso do Sul. The primary gateway to this region is via Campo Grande. From there you can begin your adventures into the Pantanal wetlands and on to Bonito, where you will encounter some of the most incredible caves in Brazil.

## Serra da Bocaina - Bridging Two Cities

Linking together Brazil's two largest cities, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, is the Serra da Bocaina mountain range. In the Tupi-Guarani language, Bocaina means "paths to the heights". In the past, difficult access to the region created an ideal haven for many fugitive slaves. Since 1971, about 110,000 hectares of the region have become national park. Access to the "heights" remains difficult, preserving the natural integrity of the land. The historical towns of Bananal, Silveiras, São José dos Barreiros and Areias surrounding Bocaina serve as both doors to a rare natural wonderland as

well as windows to a nearly forgotten past. Entering the park from the south, you stumble into the world of the early 18th century muleteers. Access the park from the north and you will find yourself surrounded by the gloriously lush Atlantic Rainforest. To really explore the region, you must set out onto the 65 mile "Trilha do Ouro" (Gold Trail). In terms of biodiversity and ecotourism, the "Gold Trail" offers a greater selection than Baskin Robbins, ranging from hang-gliding to home-stays with local farmers. However, since much of the region can only be explored on foot or horse-back, you can taste as many of the tantalizing flavors of Serra da Bocaina as you like - without the guilt!

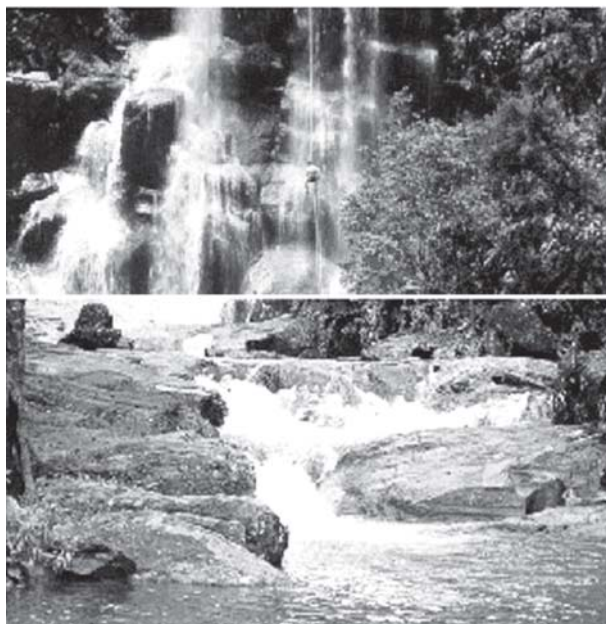
## Getting There

Serra da Bocaina is accessible from both São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. From Rio de Janeiro, the drive is approximately 145 miles, and from São Paulo it is 175 miles until you arrive in São José do Barreiro, one of the charming historical gateways to the park.

If photography is your forté and sloshing through 70 miles of mud is not, visiting Serra da Bocaina during the winter from June to August is advised when the skies are clear and blue.

## Tips to Remember

If you plan to travel the "Gold Trail", this can be done in varying levels of "comfort". Some choose to stay in tents along the way while others opt to stay at the local fazendas where delicious country-style food is almost always guaranteed. Mules are also available to lighten your load along the trails. Most people allocate a minimum of three days for this trek.



# Serra do Cipó - The Great Global Garden

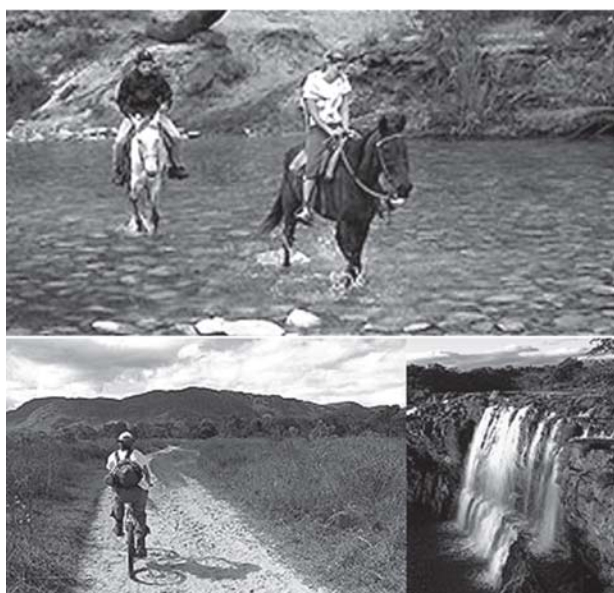
Topping the charts in the natural records books as the park with the greatest number of plants per square meter on the planet, the Serra do Cipó National Park wins the title of "The World's Largest Garden". More than 1,600 species of flowers decorate the land, their delicate forms set against a backdrop of an endless list of waterfalls and unique layers of rock, formed during the pre-Cambrian era when the entire region was underwater. For centuries humans have been

overwhelmed by the mystical intrigue of the region, enhanced by the abundance of crystals and cave inscriptions. While this description so far may be reminiscent of a fairy-tale, true adventure enthusiasts must know that the soaring cliffs and waterfalls, endless trails, streams and lakes perfect for rappelling, canoing, hiking, biking, and horse-back riding offer plenty of adrenaline-fueled opportunities. To truly indulge your senses, kayak the Cipó River, which cuts through brilliant fields of flowers.

## Getting There

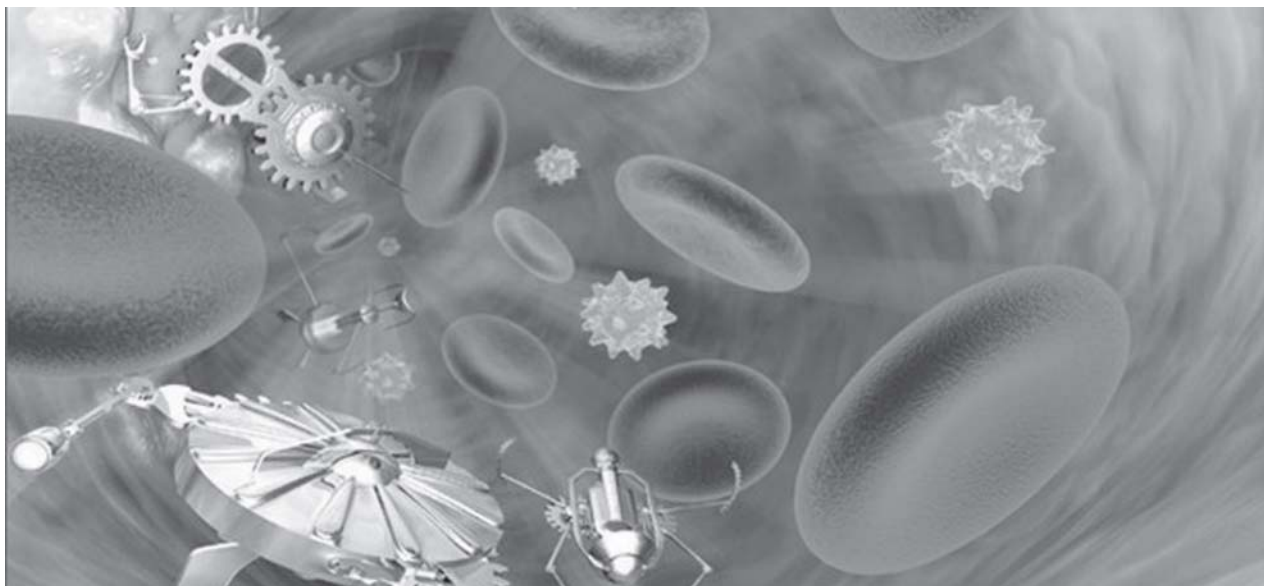
Serra do Cipó is in the heart of the state of Minas Gerais. Fly into Belo Horizonte. The trip from Belo Horizonte is nearly 63 miles.

The ideal time of year to visit the Serra do Cipó is during the dry season from April to November. ■





# Nanotecnología lista para revolucionar asistencia sanitaria



La nanotecnología tiene gran promesa para el desarrollo de nuevos tratamientos y la diagnóstica. Puede proporcionar nuevas drogas que pueden alcanzar áreas específicas del cuerpo más efectivamente y en dosis más seguras.

La nanotecnología tiene la capacidad proyectada para hacer las cosas bottom up, usando las técnicas y herramientas que se están desarrollando hoy para colocar cada átomo y molécula en un lugar deseado. A menudo se refiere a la nanotecnología como una tecnología de uso general. Eso es porque en su forma madura tendrá un impacto significativo en casi todas las industrias y todas las áreas de la sociedad. Ofrece productos mejor hechos, duraderos, más limpios, más seguros y listos para la casa, las comunicaciones, la medicina, el transporte, la agricultura, y la industria en general.

El término de "nanotecnología" ha evolucionado a lo largo de los años por la terminología "drift" que significa "algo más pequeño que micro tecnología," tal como polvos de nano, y otras cosas que son a escala nanométrica en el tamaño, pero no refiriéndose a mecanismos que se han construido resueltamente de componentes a escala nanométrica.

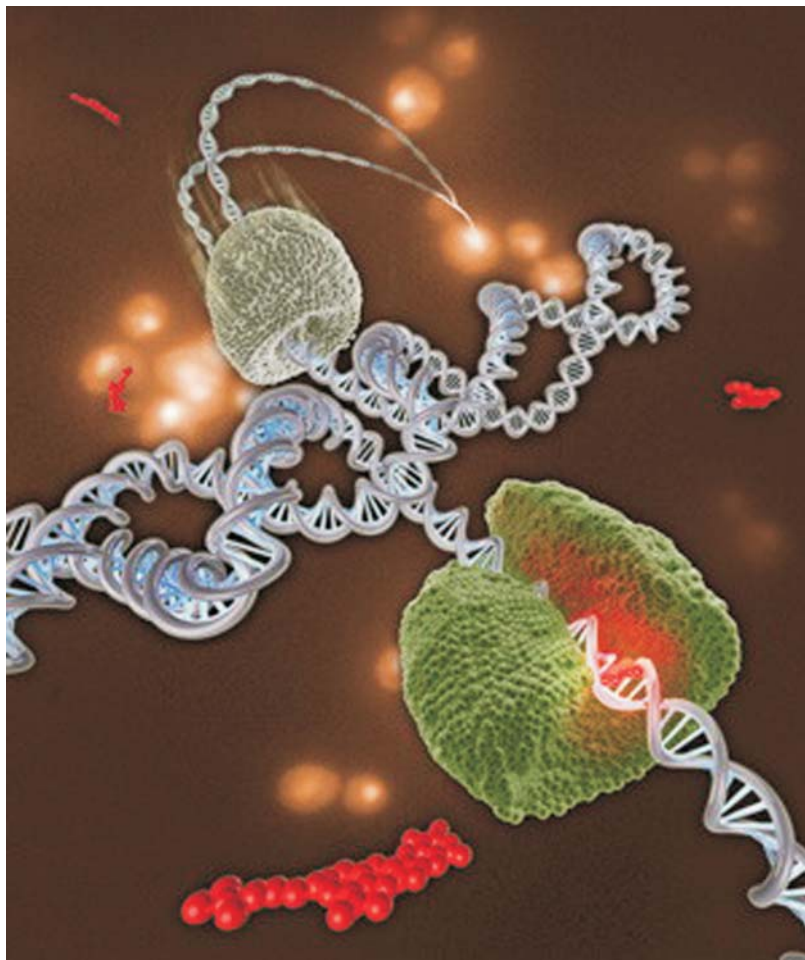
La industria farmacéutica ha utilizado el cofre de tesoro de nano como una manera de desarrollar medios nuevos y más efectivos de la provisión de la droga, con

nanotubos de carbón, buckyballs y materias de lípido a escala nanométrica que se explotan para sacar lo máximo de las materias disponibles.

La nanotecnología tiene gran potencial para beneficiar hasta revolucionar la farmacéutica, dispositivos médicos, la diagnóstica e los sectores de formación de imagen. Las plataformas claves de la tecnología tales como nanocristales, nanotubos, dendrimers, fullerenes, puntos de quantum y andamio molecular manejarán esa expansión de mercadotecnia.

"Nanomedicina" incluye el desarrollo de sensores diminutos que disciernen marcadores de enfermedad en el cuerpo más antes que los existentes métodos diagnósticos, y bombas increíblemente pequeñas capaces de proveer las medicinas precisamente a las células y tejidos que las necesiten. Otros ejemplos de nano-productos en el desarrollo incluyen las herramientas de formación de imagen de la enfermedad y envasado de alimento que extiende más el período de conservación.

Peter Singer, científico mayor en el Centro de McLaughlin-Rotman para la Salud Global, en su estudio "la Nanotecnología y el Mundo en desarrollo" indicó que el Departamento de la Ciencia y la Tecnología de India invertiría \$20 millones durante 2004-2009 para una iniciativa de la Ciencia y la Tecnología de Nanomateriales. China ocupa el tercer lugar en la



aplicación patentada en la nanotecnología, después de los EEUU y Japón. En Brasil, el presupuesto proyectado para la nanociencia durante 2004-2007 era alrededor de \$25 millones.

Marlene Bourne de Bourne Investigación dijo que los desafíos que la revolución creciente de la nanotecnología presenta incluyen establecer las medidas efectivas de control de calidad en el proceso industrial, así como tratar las cuestiones claves con respecto al impacto ambiental y las cuestiones percibidas de salud. Algunas de estas cuestiones son un poco inevitables ya que una nueva tecnología llega a ser más prominente y los consumidores y los pacientes aprenden a llegar a ser familiarizados con materias o conceptos previamente extranjeros.

Los productos basados en nano-tecnología ya están listos a ser cada vez más comunes, con la tecnología abriendo nuevas posibilidades en una gama de industrias. La provisión de las drogas es uno de los sectores más dinámicos y rápidamente crecientes de la industria farmacéutica por ejemplo insulina inhalada de Pfizer, Exubera.

'La innovación en la provisión de la Droga' proporciona un examen exhaustivo de lanchas de producto y drogas en proyecto con mecanismos novedosos de la provisión de droga, listo a revolucionar el mercado.

- La Solubilidad es una resistencia clave a la provisión de las drogas y un factor principal que causa el desgaste y la eficacia pobre en el desarrollo de la droga, con un 30% estimado de drogas en desarrollo

pre-clínico teniendo la solubilidad baja.

- Abraxane y Doxil ambos son productos innovadores vendidos de la oncología que utilizan la nanotecnología, ganando las ventas de \$184m y \$177m en los EEUU y cinco países europeos mayores en 2005, respectivamente.

- Hay varios anticuerpos inhalados monoclonales de potencial alto en el desarrollo, inclusive productos de Enzon y Nektar, de Alexion y Medimmune, y de Alkermes.

- Parches activos transdermales son indicados predominantemente para el dolor y la salud de mujeres, pero los productos que utilizan E-TRANS de ALZA y la tecnología de Passport parche de Altea son pronosticados a ser disponibles para la provisión de la proteína dentro de los próximos años, y aumentarán consecuentemente la gama de indicaciones accesibles para la provisión transdermal.

- Las drogas de Stents eluting son típicamente 3 a 4 veces más costosas que los stents de metal descubierto y han sacado cuestiones de la seguridad; sin embargo las drogas de Stents eluting de la próxima generación consista en polímeros bio-absorbibles y son pronosticados a ser más seguros.

Nanomedicina exhibirá el crecimiento fuerte en todos sectores de 2006-2011, llevando a rentas de multi-billones de dólares.

Reconociendo la naturaleza emergente de esta tecnología y su potencial para el desarrollo rápido, el Informe del Grupo de Trabajo de FDA de EEUU sobre la Nanotecnología trató de los asuntos regulativos y científicos para regular las drogas, dispositivos médicos y otros productos construidos a la escala nanométrica. El informe también recomendó el desarrollo de la guía asociado con nanotecnología para los fabricantes e investigadores. ■

## Se revela el secreto El Nano de Tata



Nano- el auto de Tata por aprox. USD 2500.00 ya es realidad. Este auto de bajo costo (el de menor costo en el mundo), llamado el "Auto del Pueblo" es el proyecto soñado de Ratan Tata, Presidente del grupo Tata. Se trata de un auto con cuatro asientos y cuatro puertas que cumple con las últimas normas de emisión de gases.

Esto demuestra la competencia de la India en "ingeniería frugal" (término acuñado por Carlos Ghosn, Jefe de Renault y Nissan) para destacar la habilidad de los ingenieros indios para producir más con menos recursos. Con este acontecimiento se ha abierto una nueva frontera de la tecnología y una base de nuevos consumidores de bajo costo.

## Crecen las exportaciones indias un 26.82% en noviembre hasta los US \$ 12.42 mil millones

Las exportaciones de la India crecieron un 26.82% en noviembre de 2007 hasta los 12.42 mil millones de dólares mientras que en el mismo mes del año anterior alcanzaron los 9.79 millones dólares. Las importaciones durante noviembre de 2007 se valoraron en 19.83 mil millones de dólares, creciendo un 29.26% de los 15.34 mil millones de dólares en importaciones en el mismo mes del 2006. El déficit comercial para el periodo Abril-Noviembre de 2007 fue de 52.8 mil millones de dólares, mientras que en igual periodo del 2006 fue de 38.48 mil millones de dólares.

## La compañía India de tubería y cañería están buscando adquirir empresas argentinas

La compañía india es una de las más grandes en la fabricación de tubería y cañería en Asia. Actualmente provee de cañería al Golfo de México, USA y a 40 grandes compañías de gas y combustible del mundo. Ahora están interesados en adquirir a una empresa que fabrique en América del Sur - el tamaño ideal sería US\$ 100 Ml en ventas y un turnover de US\$ 1.5 Bln. La compañía a elegir debería tener buenos clientes y contratos de servicios que den un mercado de fácil acceso en América del Sur y si es posible en USA. La Embajada puede dar mayor información.

## Visita del Presidente de Cognizant a Buenos Aires

El señor R Chandrasekaran, Presidente de la compañía india de informática Cognizant, vendrá a Buenos Aires para revisar y expandir las operaciones de la compañía en la ciudad. La compañía ha establecido un centro de desarrollo de software y BPO con 50 empleados. En marzo de 2008 inaugurarán un nuevo centro con 250 empleados argentinos.

Cognizant tiene un volumen de negocios de US \$ 2,5 mil millones y posee un staff de 50.000 personas en la India, Estados Unidos y Europa. En América Latina, Buenos Aires es el primer y único centro de operaciones.

La Embajada está organizando reuniones entre el señor Chandrasekaran y autoridades gubernamentales y empresarios de la informática en Argentina.



## Visita de Delegación Parlamentaria de la India a Cuba

Respondiendo a una invitación oficial de la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular visitó Cuba del 6 al 10 de enero de 2008 una delegación parlamentaria india presidida por el Sr. Somnath Chatterjee, Honorable Presidente de la Lok Sabha (Cámara Baja del Parlamento de la India). Integraron la delegación parlamentaria multipartidista el Dr. Karan Singh Yadav, Presidente del Grupo Parlamentario de Amistad India - Cuba, el Sr. Anant Geete, Dr. Sujan Chakraborty, Sra. M. S. K. Bhavani Rajenthiran, Sr Kanjibhai Patel y Dr. Barun. Durante la visita el Honorable Presidente y su delegación se reunieron con el Sr. Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional de Cuba, con el Sr. Carlos Lage Dávila, Vice Presidente del Consejo de Estado y Secretario del Comité Ejecutivo del Consejo de Ministros, con el Sr. Felipe Pérez Roque, Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores y con el Sr. Fernando Remirez de Estenoz, Jefe del Departamento de Relaciones Internacionales del Comité Central y Miembro del Secretariado del Comité Central del Partido Comunista de Cuba. Los dirigentes expresaron su satisfacción con los programas bilaterales de cooperación existentes en los campos de Ciencia y Tecnología, Energía, Informática, Deportes y Cultura y subrayaron la necesidad de fortalecerlos y diversificarlos a nuevos sectores como energía renovable, aviación civil y turismo. La delegación india visitó también varios Centros de Excelencia incluyendo el centro de Inmunología Molecular, la Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina y el Centro de Entrenamiento Cerro Pelado para Atletas de Alto Rendimiento. El Honorable Presidente ofreció una Conferencia Magistral organizada por el Centro de Estudios de Asia y Oceanía (CEAO) en el Hotel Nacional.

## Productos farmacéuticos de la India:

El volumen de negocios anual de la industria farmacéutica india en 2006-07 fue de US \$ 6 mil millones. La India es el cuarto mayor productor de productos medicinales en el mundo en términos de volumen y el trigésimo en términos de valor. Las exportaciones de la India en productos farmacéuticos para 2006-07 fue de US \$2,4 mil millones.

La FDA de EUA ha aprobado 100 plantas farmacéuticas en la India. India posee el mayor número de unidades farmacéuticas aprobadas por la FDA fuera de los Estados Unidos.

## Ford ha producir autos pequeños

La Ford India está invirtiendo \$500 millones para duplicar su capacidad de producción y fabricar un auto pequeño que deberá salir de su nueva fábrica en Chennai dentro de dos años. Esta es la segunda gran inversión que realiza la Ford en la India tras su desembolso inicial para construir su fábrica en Chennai. Esta nueva inversión de la compañía aumentará su producción de autos de 100,000 a 200,000 para el 2010. También incluirá una nueva fábrica de motores que comenzará a operar en el 2010 con una capacidad anual inicial de 50 mil motores. Las compañías Volkswagen, Toyota Motor Corp, Honda Motor Co y Fiat han expresado también su interés en producir vehículos pequeños que aumentarán sus volúmenes de venta en la India.

## Volvo y Eicher establecerán empresa mixta en la India

La empresa sueca fabricante de camiones Volvo AB y la automotriz India Eicher Motors Ltd. firmaron una carta de intención bajo la cual Volvo invertirá \$275 millones y transferirá su actual red de servicios de camiones valorada en \$75 millones, a la empresa mixta. Por su parte Eicher Motors transferirá todas sus operaciones de camiones y ómnibus, incluyendo su planta productora en el norte de la India, hacia la nueva empresa. La asociación mejorará el acceso de Volvo al mercado de camiones indio, donde Eicher controla más de un cuarto de las ventas de camiones ligeros y medianos. Se espera que las transacciones se completen antes de mediados del 2008.

## La empresa india de IT (Tecnología Informática) Cellent establece sus operaciones en la Argentina



Cellent ha comprado la empresa argentina "Net People", fundada por tres jóvenes argentinos entrepreneurs, Antonia Pena, Francisco Okecki y Jose Ugarte, que ahora son parte del staff de Cellent, que se especializa en software para teléfonos móviles.

Los argentinos van a contribuir para Cellent no solo en el mercado argentino y de América Latina sino también para el desarrollo de nuevas tecnologías incluso con la colaboración del Instituto Indio de Tecnología en Mumbai. Ellos tienen un grupo de trabajo de seis y tienen planes de expandir en Uruguay.

Cellent es la quinta compañía en IT en India en establecer operaciones en Argentina luego de TCS, First Source, Crisil/Irevna y Cognizant.

## Audi comienza la producción del sedán de lujo A6

La automotriz Audi AG ha comenzado la producción de un auto mediano, sedán de lujo A6 en su fábrica en Aurangabad, India, con el objetivo de producir más de 2,000 autos para el año 2015. La compañía ha invertido ya 10 millones de euros en su línea de ensamblaje e invertirá 20 millones de euros para incrementar la producción. En el 2008 en la fábrica de Aurangabad se ensamblarán más de 300 sedan A6 por turno. Esta es la segunda unidad de producción de Audi en Asia después de la Changchun en China.

## En el 2007 las inversiones de la India en el extranjero superaron lo esperado

El valor de las adquisiciones de compañías indias en el extranjero fue de US\$ 32,73 mil millones en 2007. La Inversión Extranjera directa en la India fue de 16 mil millones de dólares. Las mayores adquisiciones por parte de compañías indias en 2007 fueron:

- Tata Steel ha adquirido Corus, con base en el Reino Unido, por aproximadamente US\$ 8 mil millones.
- Suzlon Energy Ltd ha adquirido la compañía alemana Repower Systems AG en US\$ 1,7 mil millones.
- United Spirits, de Vijay Mallya, compró la destiladora de whisky escocés Whyte & Mackay en US\$ 1,11 mil millones
- Tata Power ha adquirido un importante paquete accionario en dos firmas indonesas, PT Kaltim Prima Coal y PT Arutmin Indonesia, por US\$ 1,1 mil millones.
- Essar Group adquirió la firma canadiense Algoma Steel por US\$ 1,55 mil millones.
- Hindalco ha adquirido Novelis por US\$ 6 mil millones.
- JSW Steels adquirió tres firmas norteamericanas, Jindal United Steel Corp, Saw Pipes USA y Jindal Enterprises LLC, por US\$ 940 millones.