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Dear Reader

While writing this, the shock and horror caused by the terrorist attack on the Mumbai subway line on 11th July with close to 200 lives lost and over 700 casualties still lingers around and darkens the atmosphere. Not that the endurance and patience of the city had not been previously tested by terrorism. In March 1993, 13 simultaneous explosions at important public centres such as the Stock Exchange and the Air India Building took a death toll of 257 and left 1'400 seriously injured. Outside India the world then hardly took notice of the incident. Now, with India increasingly in the focus of world attention, awareness has hit the headlines everywhere. There was, however, nothing unprecedented in the resilience and courage of the Mumbai population with its spontaneous help immediately after the catastrophe and their return to their daily tasks. This has been very aptly described and commented on by a Delhi based political commentator and former editor of the Times of India and is given in this issue.

Even for a city that has suffered more than its fair share of terrorist outrage, the event was a shocking enormity.

Police intelligence services and media have assumed involvement of the Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), an extremist group banned in 2001 but believed to maintain links with Pakistan and supported by a terrorist group fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, Lashkar-e-Taiba, blamed for a series of attacks in India over the past years.

If the unstated intention of the Mumbai slaughter was to speed up and further the dragging negotiations between India and Pakistan over the lingering Kashmir issue, it will certainly have had the contrary effect. Sadly, in the end, only the terrorists may remain as winners.

All this comes at a time when, to quote from a leader in the June issue of "The Economist" India has taken off and has secured a niche in world economy that can only grow in importance. The question according to the article is no longer whether India can fly, but how high- and whether the success of its business class can spread throughout the country. Government action is needed to unplug bottlenecks that will be tightened as economy steadily grows. There are inadequate means of road transportation and congestions at air- and seaports as well as a dire need of improved education at the basic level to keep pace with the growing demand for more and more qualified English speaking engineers, chemists etc.

During the second quarter of this year the Chamber, through a number of its board members as speakers, has taken an active participation at a number of special events. Among them were the India Days, organised by the Cantonal Chambers of Commerce of the Cantons of Basle, Bern and St. Gallen as well as the Swiss Economic Forum in Thun, followed by the 36th St. Gallen Symposium with a panel participation on the topic "How can the global economy benefit from the dynamics of the Asian markets ?"

On the occasion of the "Auslandstag of Zurich Cantonal Bank, our president introduced the Chamber in the form of a presentation.

Among the highlights, however, were two events, the luncheon speech given by Mr. Azim Premji, Chairman and Managing Director of Wipro Technologies on the economic promise of collaboration on 8th May. (see article of Dr. Probst-Sallis in this issue) and the special panel discussion on Swiss Indian Partnership on 8th June under the heading "India and Switzerland — a winning Partnership", coinciding with the Annual General Meeting.

Chaired by the president, the panel consisted of Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss, Mr. Anjan Lahiri, Co Founder and Executive Vice President, European Operations, Mindtree Consulting, Bangalore and Patrick Masson, President of the Board of Directors of Bobst India.

To complete the cycle of the second quarter of the year, the president gave a speech at the Swiss Invest

Forum, organised by SOFI, and Mr. Premchand, president emeritus, spoke on 29th June in Davos at the “Davoser Unternehmensgespräche”, organised by ZfU.

By unanimous resolution the General Meeting elected Mr. Francesco Gherzi as new member to the board and took note of the resignation of Mr. Marco Gherzi, one of the founder members of the Chamber, expressing its appreciation for the valuable services rendered by him during the last 21 years.

The General Meeting also elected Mr. Stephan Nänny of Union Bank as new board member, replacing Mr. Herrmann E. Hof who has served for many years as Treasurer of the Chamber and is now entering retirement. The office of Treasurer will be taken over by the existing board member and representative of Zurich Cantonal Bank Mr. Herbert K. Wight.

Based on the evaluation of a tender proceeding conducted by our Vice President, Michael Enderle, the board, after due deliberation, resolved, to transfer the Service Secretariat of the Chamber to SOFI, (Swiss Organisation for Facilitating Investments) with effect as of 1st of September of this year.

This change will not affect the Chamber’s close collaboration with osec business network switzerland, with which the Chamber has been associated since its formation in 1985. Thus the Chamber and osec will continue to closely work together and osec will continue to be duly represented on the Chamber board. We should also here like to express our gratitude to those representatives of osec who, over the years have devoted their time and efforts to the management of the difficult and often not readily appreciated tasks of attending to the duties of the Chamber’s service secretariat and we look forward to the continued partnership with osec.

Casting an eye on coming events in the second half of the year, we would like to draw special attention to a symposium organised by the students as a contribution by the University of St. Gallen’s Research Institute for International Management to Swiss Indian cooperation on 27th October. under the lead theme “Future for Growth in India”. The Chamber will partner the event together with Executive School HSG, OIKOS, St.Gallen, Gateway to India HSG and possibly others to be confirmed.

We finally have the pleasure to welcome the following new members :

Mr. James Cherian, Prestige Enterprise
Mr. Paul Hummel, Besta AG
Mr. Martin Schneider, Brainforce AG
Mr. Patrice Riedo, PFS Precision Finishing Systems AG
Mrs. Monica Cohen-Dumani, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Mr. H.Joerg Bodenmann, Bodenmann & Associates Inc.
Mr. Marc Rudolf, Greater Zurich Area AG
Mr. Balthasar Wicki
Mr. Patrick Kupferschmid, SYRO Engineering AG
Mr. Roberto Martullo, Martullo & Partner AG
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Dr. Peter Nüesch, ConGlobo GmbH
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Thomas Wach

End August 2006

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INDIA DIARY

By Bernard Imhasly, Delhi

April 6 Getting Back

“I feel a stranger in my own country”, I read today in a column by Arvind Singhal, a marketing entrepreneur. I feel the same, getting back to mainstream India after five months of self-chosen exile. Some examples: To start with, the ‘irrational exuberance’ of the Stock Market, going up to 12’000 points, and a SEBI official saying: ‘It could go to 16’000 in a year’! A ‘triplex’ flat in Worli, Bombay, changes hands for 310 million Rupees – nine million Francs for 250 sq.mtrs! Graduates from Business Schools now get 180’000 Dollars p.a. as a starting salary! I discover that there are now half a dozen TV Business channels, constantly monitoring the economic heartbeat of the country and discussing it threadbare. And then there was the decision by the Government of Maharashtra to ban ‘dance bars’, where 75’000 young women were employed to entertain customers by dancing alone on a lit floor.

What is happening here? Does it make sense? Does it correspond to the reality of extreme poverty and deprivation that I witnessed on my outings from my privileged vantage point in Matheran? It does. Why are apartments so expensive in Bombay? Because somebody can afford to pay. But also because of the scarcity of space in this city. If I have to pay 300’000 Rupees for a one-room hut in a slum, why shouldn’t a rich diamond dealer pay 9 million dollars to Messrs. Nusli Wadia? And a graduate from the Indian Business School getting a monthly starting salary of 15’000 Dollars has something to do with his talent, but also with the fact that excellence is increasingly hard to get by. And finally, if 75’000 young women are willing to dance in bars – a thinly disguised form of prostitution – this just shows how desperate the job situation is.

April 18 Nagpur

I have spent more time in Nagpur in the last year than all the twenty-two years in India before. For people who only see the big metros, a visit to Nagpur would be instructive. It is just as prosperous as the big metros, but much cleaner – the flyovers and the modern buildings are there,

but also flower beds along the new highways. The heritage buildings in the ‘Civil Lines’ are well looked after, and the Railway Station is newly renovated.

Now Nagpur wants to capitalise on its central location on the Indian subcontinent. The Government plans to make it a major aviation hub in the region, especially for air cargo. It is easy to guess the reason: “Over 400 international flights pass daily over its skies”, wrote a paper, “making Nagpur Air Traffic Control the busiest in the country”. Moreover the two major railway lines cross nearby, as do two National Highways.

The Government has bought ca.1500 hectares of land around the airport (which already has international flights to the Middle East and Bangkok) and designated it as a ‘Special Economic Zone’(SEZ). 2000 more will be acquired. Apart from IT companies, who are desperate to find alternatives to Bangalore and Bombay, one welcome foreign entrant is Boeing, which is setting up its regional Maintenance, Repairs and Overhaul facility there. And having seen the shortage of pilots in the booming aviation sector, it has decided to set up a pilot training school too. TNT might put up a hub, and FedEx has sent a recce team to Nagpur.

April 25 SEZ’s

Indians love acronyms, and SEZ is another one which is becoming a household word. No less than 26 ‘Special Economic Zones’ are currently being offered to the private sector – custom zones which provide not only jobs, but also housing, security and infrastructure. The largest one has been allocated to Reliance across the Bombay harbour. 5000 hectares are already purchased, another 5000 will follow. It would be the largest privately run SEZ in the world. Once complete, it is supposed to provide jobs and residences to over a million people, who would be connected to Bombay by a transharbour bridge – and to the outside world through its own small airport and harbour.

Mukesh Ambani will certainly deliver, and one feels happy that there will be new jobs, as well as good urban housing. At the same time, there are questions. Manicured gardens and wide avenues will all be fine, but they will make the space in this

densely inhabited belt even more scarce. 35 villages will be relocated. The villagers will certainly get a fair compensation, but will they find jobs? There is also criticism against the government. What it does here is to virtually hand over small cities to the private sector, and washing its hands of its primary duty of looking after its citizens. It is an acknowledgment of defeat: Since the State cannot deliver good roads, power, water, schools etc. it allows the private sector to do it on its behalf. And the price is high: the fiscal loss for the exchequer in terms of tax-holidays has been calculated to 10 billion Rupees.

May 11

2. 6 Billion Dollars

“India is known abroad as the paradise of limitless and cheap Human Resources talent. Cheap? Limitless? In one of my earlier entries I spoke about the huge salaries MBA- and IIT-graduates are getting; and that they not only indicate talent, but also a growing demand overhang. Now Mohandas Pai has confirmed this. Pai is from Infosys, and as its longtime CFO he was the third man behind Narayana Murthy and Nandan Nilekani. Now, in a surprise move, he has taken over the lowly Human Resources Department of Infosys. This is not a demotion, but a sign how critical this area is becoming for Infosys, the IT industry and India as a whole.

In recent interviews Pai said that India is facing a huge HR crunch at the managerial and technical level (not to speak of the research level). “A total of 370’000 engineers graduate in India every year, out of which 200’000 are reasonably good. The IT industry will hire around 85% of these people next year. So nothing is left for the rest of Indian industry”. And this happens at a time when a large part of management staff in the industry, especially in nationalised sectors like Banks, are over-aged, and 300’000 employees are going to retire in the next five years.

The result will be a bidding war for talent, which will leave many companies gasping for air. Infosys is arguably the most admired India company, which offers its 50’000 employees everything from stock options to health clubs on the campus. Yet, last year it suffered an attrition rate of 19% in its middle management. They went to MNCs like HP, GE, IBM and Microsoft, which are aggressively ramping up their Indian operations and paying high salaries (the wage inflation in the sector is 15% p.a.). The only response to both challenges

(poor skill output from educational institutions and scarcity of good talent): In-house Training. Pai says that the IT industry will have to take over large areas of education from the State, which seems unable to expand educational institutions fast enough. According to him, the sector will spend 2.6 billion Dollars on training its staff in the next three years! Moreover, Infosys will work with 250 engineering colleges to improve their quality.

There are of course other options, but are they in India’s longterm interest? One is to invest abroad, another to recruit abroad. In its Shanghai campus, Infosys plans to have 10’000 employees in four years – up from 500 today! And in India, Infy will employ 300 college graduates from the US next year, up from 100 in 2006. They will also be given training in the in-house HR Centre in Mysore, one of the largest corporate training centres in the world. Meanwhile, the cost of training per employee has gone up to 5000 Dollars. Guess what this will do to the software prices! India ain’t cheap anymore!

May 20

Juggernaut

It is rare for Swiss citizens to get into the headlines in India (except for the wrong reasons – like paedophilia). There is an honourable exception by the name of Elisabeth Ziggler, “a practicing lawyer in Geneva”, the Chief Administrator of the Jagannath Temple in Puri said. She has donated 400’000 Dollars to the temple, after having donated generously before. But the recent gift is by far the largest received by the temple, and more than the combined alms it gets in a year.

The Jagannath temple is known for only allowing access to Hindus, and you have to born a Hindu if you want to enter it. Would they make an exception for Ms. Ziggler? Trust a good Brahmin to come up with some justification! Maybe this one: Ms. Z. was a Hindu in one of her previous incarnations. Otherwise, why would she otherwise feed poor Brahmins from faraway Geneva? A friend has another interpretation: Ms. Z. is only a front (after all, she is a lawyer!), and behind the gift is a rich NRI who wants to be forgiven for his sins (Hawala transactions included?).

May 29

Red Buddha

The Communist Party has again won the elections in West Bengal, with flying red colours. One reason

is Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, its flamboyant Chief Minister. He has turned the industrial graveyard of Bengal back into an investment greenfield. Not only the IT industry is swarming to the East, traditional manufacturers, which had been chased away earlier by militant Trade Unions, are queuing to come back. From the third-last investment destination the State has become the third-most attractive, after Maharashtra and Gujerat. Land is cheaper than in the rest of the country, labour is cheaper and relatively better-skilled, the infrastructure of roads and power is better. And the main attraction: Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee

'Buddha' as he is called, has not adopted the neo-Stalinist ideology of his Party, but is more in line with Teng Hsiao Ping's pragmatic approach (, whether cats are black or white – the main thing is that they catch mice'). In Singapore recently, he said: "We are not fools to ignore the changes taking place in the world. We are keenly studying China's policies and have learnt: Don't stick to dogmas, change with the times and learn from life".

One reason for Buddha's popularity is his squeaky-clean reputation. He still lives in his two-room apartment, his wife still works in an Architectural firm and uses the pool-car, he hands over his Chief Minister's salary to the Party (because he still draws a salary of Rs. 3'200 as a full-time party worker). He is an intensely private man, who likes to hang out with his buddies in a coffe-house, smoke his favourite 555's and discuss movies and literature. And look at his Declaration of wealth (every candidate has to submit one to the Election Commission): "Bank Account: Nil; Cash: Nil; Deposits in Banks: Nil; Investment in Financial Institutions: Nil; Postal Savings: Nil; LIC (Life Insurance): Nil; Motor Vehicles: Nil; Jewellery: Nil; Agricultural Land: Nil; Buildings: Nil". I would love to be his tax consultant!

June 21 HNWI

If you are a HNWI, probably you know what is meant by that acronym. If you are not – well, poor you. Poor you indeed, because "HNWI" stands for "High net-worth individual" and is defined by owning liquid assets of one million Dollars or more. And more and more Indians, washed up the scale by the shareholder income or superb corporate performance, are among them. There are 61'000 Indian HNWIs, up 19% in one year alone. Just before the annual HNWI Report appeared,

there was Forbes Magazine giving us the good news that India's 23 Dollar Billionaires have now a higher combined net worth than the 27 Japanese one – 99 bn.\$ compared to Japan's 67 bn.\$.

But if you thought that all of them were like Vijya Mallya, sporting girls, gold chains and Gulfstream jets, you would be mistaken. They lead lives, a commentator said, "of boring rectitude" – devoted to their spouses, teetotallers, vegetarians, family-bound (outside their 18 hour work-day), and religious-minded. Lakshmi Mittal (catch him having that first name!) is the most prominent among them, although his Indian credentials are a bit in doubt. He has lately been appropriated by India as its son, but he made his money abroad, lives in London, runs a Dutch company (perhaps soon Luxemburg-based) and still has no major investments in his country of origin. It speaks volumes for (or against) India that its most celebrated entrepreneur has not yet left his footprint here. Mittal is also atypical, insofar as he lacks the austerity of his peers and knows ,how to spend it'.

July 5 Shashi Tharoor

You have never heard of Shashi Tharoor? If not, you soon will. S.T. is India's candidate for taking over from Kofi Annan as Secretary General of the UN. In a surprise decision last week, the Government backed Tharoor's candidacy. It was a surprise for at least two reasons. One is that Tharoor is neither a politician nor a civil servant of the GoI. He has spent all his professional life with the UN, in peace-keeping missions, in refugee work, and for the last ten years as Under-Secretary General for Information. The second reason for the surprise was that it might ruin Delhi's chances to get a permanent seat in the Security Council.

Tharoor's is still a far-off chance. He justifies his candidacy with the argument that it is now Asia's turn to have a SG (the last one was the Burmese U Thant 35 years ago). But there are other Asian candidates – a Thai, a Sri Lankan and a South Korean. And the USA, by far the most important player in this game, is said to be against the formula of regional musical chairs. They want to have, says the rumour-mill, a Muslim SG, or at least an East European (like Alexander Kwasniewski, Poland's ex-President). And will China, which favours Surakiart Sathirathai, the Thai politician,

accommodate a national from a rising Asian power and potential rival?

If he did take over from his boss and friend Kofi Annan, Shashi Tharoor would be an excellent choice. Not only because of his experience, his oratorical skills and his diplomatic finesse. He is, most of all, a very nice and decent human being. I met him last month at the Foreign Correspondents Club in Delhi, where he talked about reform of the UN, Iraq, Darfur, Bosnia and the terrible tragedy of Rwanda – with self-critical frankness and honesty (it was all off-the-record). But he also spoke about his passion for writing and literature, the difficulties of balancing the professional and the personal life and the human cost it involves (Tharoor has two teenaged sons and is divorced). He is a prolific writer of fiction and non-fiction, all worth reading. He has written a biography of Nehru, he has written “The Great Indian Novel”, he has authored a fine novel called “Riot”, and memoirs from his Kerala childhood.

July 14

Bad manners

According to the US edition of “Readers’ Digest”, Bombay is the ‘rudest city in the world’. Its criteria: Do Bombayites say ‘thank you’? No. Do they hold the door open for others? No. Do they pick up a paper when someone has dropped it? No. 34 other world cities fare better than Bombay on these scores.

The reaction I noticed among friends and family was first a blush, a bit of introspection, but then a vigorous defence: “Who says ‘thank you’ in India anyway?” asked one. “It is just not part of our culture to say thank you”. Holding the door open? “You start holding the door open” said another one, “and you end up being a doorman. There are so many people in India, there is always someone who comes up from behind”. Only when it comes to picking up a paper which has fallen to the ground, people looked bewildered, perhaps because people litter public spaces so freely, one would never be sure whether the paper fell or was thrown away!

I am interested in the ‘Thank you’ question, because it could indeed have something to do with cultural practices. In Engelberg, favourite destination of many Indian tourists, the local staff in the shops had to be trained in the intricacies of ‘cultural communication’. The cashier woman of

the Coop had to learn not to be offended when a tourist who buys a litre of milk, pays, gets the small change back doesn’t say ‘thank you’. It isn’t rude. Not thanking verbally is just part of a cultural practice. You may find that strange, but isn’t it as strange to thank someone at every step in a business transaction, as we do in Europe? (I remember a cartoon by André François where a chain of workers at a building site are passing up bricks from one to the other. “Stop saying ‘thank you!’”, one finally shouts).

Now that more and more expats are finding work in India, Human Resource Departments of large firms are coming up with courses called “Cross-cultural Training”. Expats are not only taught not to get offended if someone doesn’t pick up a paper which has fallen down, and not to get disturbed if the boss doesn’t hold up the door for her. They are not instructed to act likewise of course. But they are advised not to take offense.

And they learn to follow practices which in their own countries would be considered as rude: You are invited for dinner at eight p.m.? Don’t arrive before nine! Never arrive on time! You want to stay on after dinner and round up a nice evening with a brandy? Don’t be rude! As soon as dinner is over, take your leave immediately! There are, thank god, some practices which are not encouraged – like belching, to express your approval for the fine food! And if you go for a stroll in the park with your wife – don’t make her walk six steps behind you!

July 23

Tailpiece

Which the biggest enemy of a guerilla army? You guessed right: Mosquitoes. At least that is the verdict of the Security Forces in Assam in their fight against the underground ‘United Liberation Front of Assam’ (ULFA). They say that ULFA has lost around 600 of its 3000 fighters in the last decades due to encephalitis and malaria. And every year the Army catches around forty militants when they come out from their jungle hideouts to get treatment in a hospital. “It seems these pests are doing what the armed forces are supposed to do”, a spokesman told the ‘Hindustan Times’. The only problem: Mosquitoes have a poor sense of nationalism, and they have not been trained to recognise military epaulettes. So they happily sting soldiers as well.

“Feeding Each Other”:

Azim Premji Explores the Economic Promise of Collaboration

At the SICC Business Lunch on May 8, Indian Ambassador to Switzerland Amitava Tripathi, introduced Azim Premji, Chairman and Managing Director of Wipro Technologies as “an engineer and CEO who knows what he’s doing and where he’s going.”

For an entrepreneur who built a cooking fat company into a global service provider that is fourth largest in the world in terms of market capitalization in IT services, this is hardly overstating the case. Headquartered in Bangalore, India, Wipro boasts over 40 development centers globally, more than 53’000 employees and has become the world’s largest R&D service provider under Azim Premji’s guiding hand. As such it was with great pleasure and anticipation that the SICC could welcome Mr. Premji to Zurich as their guest speaker.

The defining message in Mr. Premji’s speech was the value and importance of cross-border business collaboration. Azim Premji envisions what he terms “a complex mosaic – a global ecosystem – where the end product... will be delivered through various discrete, globally distributed stakeholders who can deliver that work in the most efficient and cost effective manner.”

Mr. Premji noted the speed with which the Indian economy has picked up steam since economic liberalization of the 1990s. Using the example of Ajanta Clocks, he related how a leading Indian manufacturer of clocks had built its business model on low cost rural labor. Its ultimate advantage, however, came when it moved its manufacturing unit to Shenzhen, China three years ago to become the largest clock manufacturer in the world.

India, can offer similar advantages, not only in IT, but is proving itself as an increasingly suitable partner for world-class organization in pharma, bio-tech, automotive, petrochemical and precision engineering. The Indian government has recognized this partnering potential and opened markets with reduction in customs duties, 100% foreign direct investment in most sectors, and no government discrimination against foreign companies in procurement. India’s technical talent is an essential factor in the country’s capacity to gain the status of a major power in trade and economy. Referring to Professor Jean-Pierre Lehman of IMD who calls India a birthplace for ideas, philosophy and religion, Mr. Premji said that today the country has “the self-confidence to partner as equals with countries such as Switzerland who are ahead on the development curve.”

India’s challenges offer partnering opportunities for foreign companies. He noted that India’s priorities are to industrialize and inflate its domestic economy, which cannot happen without adequate infrastructure, “better roads, and a reliable supply of power and clean water, better ports and airports.” Mr. Premji noted a stunning statistic in which economic losses from congestion and poor roads alone run from USD 4 to 6 billion a year.

Evoking the future, Azim Premji observed that “as Europe is poised at the brink of a new economic cooperation and world order, India can emerge as a very strategic partner for many of her nations.” He concluded with the idea that by feeding each other through collaboration and partnering, nations can reap greater prosperity together.

Commentary Mumbai

By Swapan Dasgupta, Delhi based political commentator, former managing editor of “India Today”
13th July 2006

When “London pride” was invoked a year ago to describe the grit and resilience of a city that remained undaunted by the horrible terrorist attacks on the Underground, it carried a measure of novelty in the contemporary era. By contrast there was absolutely nothing unprecedented in the gushing – by either politicians or the media of Bombay (now renamed Mumbai) – over remarkable display of the “Mumbai spirit” after the bomb blasts that

killed 200 people on Tuesday.

Human life, it is said, is remarkably cheap in India. Even so, it speaks volumes for the fortitude of Mumbaikars, as they like to refer to themselves, that after enduring Tuesday’s carnage and the total disruption of the public transport system, it was back to business with a vengeance the very next morning – with the stock exchange climbing 3%. The patience of Mumbai has been repeatedly tested

by terrorism. In March 1993, 13 simultaneous explosions at important public buildings, killed 257 people and left 1'400 seriously injured. There was a predictable sense of outrage but no recrimination. Mumbai, after all, was weary after 10 days of vicious sectarian clashes involving Hindu and Muslims in January, which left 900 people dead. At that time the tension had centered on the demolition of the 16th century mosque in faraway Ayodhya, in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, which many Hindus claim as their sacred place.

After 9/11 heralded the scourge of Islamist terror, Mumbai was attacked on August 25th, 2003. The powerful car bombs, including one in the parking lot of the Gateway of India, a British-made monument that has become the symbol of the city, killed 60 people. The perpetrators were Muslim activists who, it was said, wanted to extract revenge for the murder of fellow Muslims during the riots in the neighbouring state of Gujarat. Mumbai, once again, refused to be provoked, not least because the purpose of the bombings was never clear. It was a case of mysterious enemies targeting innocent people.

The rationale behind Tuesday's seven serial explosions in the first class carriages of commuter trains wasn't quite apparent 24 hours later. At least 200 people have died and the identity of the terrorists is still a matter of conjecture. Intelligence agencies and the police strongly believe that the blasts were the handwork of Islamist terrorists. There are also suggestions the Mumbai blasts were timed to coincide with the grenade attacks in Srinagar, the capital of Jammu and Kashmir, by LeT terrorists, which killed six tourists from Calcutta.

Police investigations may bring out the details of the murderous conspiracy in Mumbai. For the moment, however, bewildered Mumbaikars are asking the question: Why us? What did these terrorists want? In London and Madrid, the bombers were, avowedly, protesting the presence of British and Spanish forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. But there are no Indian troops assisting U.S. peacekeepers anywhere in the world. There is, of course, a Muslim secessionist movement in Jammu and Kashmir but, with the exception of last October's bombing of two crowded markets in Delhi, Kashmiri separatists have confined activities to the northern states.

Mumbai blasts lack both a face and an ostensible reason. Some of the terrorists may be motivated

by a crazy wish to usher in an Islamic Caliphate throughout the world, but this desire is too fantastic for ordinary comprehension. There are also rogue elements within the Pakistan security establishment which yearn to bleed India with "a thousand cuts"- to use a metaphor from across the border. Yet popular antipathy toward Pakistan is nowhere as intense as it was when the Indian Parliament was attacked on December 13th, 2001, and the prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, angrily promised a "war to the finish".

Today, Mumbaikars combine a sense of horror with an air of phlegmatic resignation. They have put their admirable sense of community- rushing the wounded to hospital, donating blood, feeding stranded commuters and offering rides to total strangers- over any contrived outrage against an invisible enemy.

The adversary, however, is not entirely unknown. Over the last two years, India has been in a state of denial over mounting evidence that the emerging threat is not from those acting at the behest of the controllers in Islamabad, but homegrown jihads. In Mumbai, the finger of suspicion is pointing to terrorist modules based in either the town of Aurangabad, east of Mumbai, or the cyber city of Hyderabad, to the south. Last month the police seized an incredible 43 kilograms of RDX and 13AK-47s from the tourist town of Ellora, near Aurangabad. The man facing charges for organising the bombings in the temple town of Varanasi on March 7 this year is an imam from the neighbouring town who was once a full-time SIMI organiser. An audacious attack on the disputed mosque in Ayodhya last year, too, was facilitated by local Muslims acting in concert with terrorists who entered from Bangladesh.

The suggestion that Islamist terrorism has developed strong roots within India is one that the government in New Delhi does not relish. The Congress Party, the regional parties and the Communists who are the constituents of the ruling coalition, depend substantially on Muslims - 13% of the population - for political sustenance. This explains why prime minister Manmohan Singh has encountered strong resistance against pressing on with India's strategic relationship with the US. It also accounts for the government's complete unwillingness to act on intelligence reports that the protests against George W. Bush's visit in February had the financial backing of the clerics in Iran.

Around the same time as President Bush visited

India, the Congress- and Communist dominated state legislature of Kerala passed a unanimous resolution seeking the release, on “compassionate grounds”, of a Muslim extremist who had masterminded a series of explosions that killed 58 people in the southern city of Coimbatore in 1998. A cabinet minister took this appeasement policy to the absurd level of joint meetings with a look alike of Osama bin Laden !

India has often boasted that its vibrant democracy ensured that there was no Indian to be found in al Queda. Nominally, the claim is incontrovertible,

but Islamist terrorism is not manifested through the direct control of bin Laden alone. The LeT, HuJi and SIMI are carbon copies of al Queda. They all have Indian Muslim adherents, including educated professionals, many of whom have received arms training in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Indian politicians often blame a “foreign hand” for terrorism. The assertion is not untrue. But after Tuesday’s savagery, they would also do well to look at the burgeoning homegrown menace. –The Mumbai blasts may symbolize the coming of age of Islamism in India.

“Incredible India”: A Panel on Swiss-Indian Partnership at the Recent AGM

By D. Probst-Sallis, SOFI



The SICC Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 8 departed from its traditional format with a panel of distinguished speakers who addressed the topic, “India and Switzerland - A Winning Partnership?” Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss was joined by Anjan Lahiri, Co-Founder and Executive Vice-President, European Operations, Mindtree Consulting, Bangalore and Patrick Masson, President of the Board of Directors of Bobst India to examine the opportunities and challenges facing Swiss companies in India, and Indian companies in Switzerland. The event was moderated by SICC President Franz Probst.

Federal Councillor Deiss launched the proceedings by saying that during his January mission to India, he was most struck by the great energy that the economy has. He observed that there is a lot more room for Swiss products in the Indian market and it is necessary to improve the framework in which partnerships can take place.

On the question of how to begin operating in India, Patrick Masson said one could do it as a joint venture or independently. Most important is to hire excellent local talent, and wherever possible to build

good collaboration between the management teams in India and Switzerland. Correct communication is critical in this situation. He added that employee loyalty can be strengthened not only by paying good salaries, but more importantly by investing in training and ensuring conditions for professional growth.

The Swiss government is engaged in a number of activities to help SMEs who want to do business in India. On the multilateral level, Federal Councillor Deiss noted the successful round of trade negotiations in Doha. Achieving tariff concessions will require Switzerland to make an attractive offer on agricultural goods, and China and India to do so with regard to industrial goods.

On the bilateral level, Swiss business missions to India are routinely organized. Within this framework specific questions of concern to managers are addressed. There are also organizations such as the Osec business hub in India and the Swiss Organisation for Facilitating Investments (SOFI) that provide advisory and financing services to SMEs. Bodies such as SICC play an important role familiarizing Swiss business with the workings

of the Indian market and building a more positive perception of the country. Beyond that it is up to the private sector to forge its own path in a market such as India, Federal Councillor Deiss observed.

In response to the question posed by Franz Probst concerning challenges that Indian companies face in Switzerland, Anjan Lahiri said that the logistics of moving people and settling into the Swiss lifestyle was sometimes difficult. To improve flows of experts from India to Switzerland, for example, it is necessary for the latter to issue permits more efficiently and to accept Schengen structures. Ultimately, he mused, "doing business in India is no more difficult than doing business in Italy... the essential thing is to reduce the cost of entry."

Regarding plans for the future, Patrick Masson said that Bobst had purchased 80'000 square meters of land and was preparing to expand their manufacturing facilities further. Anjan Lahiri said that Mindtree intended to expand into the Nordics, United Kingdom, Germany and of course Switzerland where they will open an office in Zurich and double operations. Finally Federal Councillor Deiss said that the Swiss

government would continue on its current course of strengthening Indian-Swiss relations in the next 5 years. He believes that "while India is slower than China, it is more sustainable in the long run."

Wrapping up the proceedings, Ambassador Tripathi observed that India has the potential to maintain its growth rate of 8% per annum until 2050, if it can keep its leadership position in terms of skilled human resources. The country, however, should not only focus on services, but ensure diversification in the direction of manufacturing and agriculture. Swiss companies have an important role to play in all three sectors and it is crucial that companies from both countries reach out to each other in cooperation.

In the final analysis, "a country growing at 8% per annum cannot afford to be ignored," said Ambassador Tripathi. This vision was echoed by SICC Vice President Michael Enderle, who will move to New Delhi this summer to manage Rieter's Textile Machinery Operations in the country, when he summed up a thought-provoking panel and a country embodying so many extremes in two words: "Incredible India!"

Caste and cash

DELHI

Business fears quota legislation

INDIA'S business leaders have recently been enjoying the benefits of becoming internationally competitive, after decades of leaden regulation. Now, they have taken fright. The reason is an inferred warning that the government is thinking of setting quotas for the number of people from the poorly-educated bottom end of the Hindu caste system they should employ. What seemed to make matters worse was that it was none other than Manmohan Singh, the prime minister, who gave the warning, when he said, on April 18th at the annual conference of the Confederation of Industry, that it would be best for them to take action voluntarily.

"We've no alternative but to hire the best talent available, within India and globally," retorts Azim Premji, head of Wipro, one of India's leading software companies, echoing a general mood of mild panic. The compulsory hiring of sub-standard workers, he and others fear, could hit profitability and international confidence, pricking India's current bubble of economic success.

Mr Singh had been characteristically mild. All he did was urge companies to assess "the diversity in your employee profile", and commit themselves, voluntarily, to broadening their workforce and to taking a more active social role. But his audience seems to have taken it as a genuine threat that, if they do not respond, action, in the shape of legislation, may follow.

"Scheduled" castes and tribes-the lowest groups in India's caste system-have had claim to just over 20% of government and other public-sector jobs since 1950. This system was extended in 1990 to include another 27% for marginally better-off "other backward castes". Leaders from all these lower castes now fear that these benefits will be eroded as privatisation reduces the size of the public sector (though not many state assets have yet been sold or are likely to be sold soon). The Congress-led government's policy programme, which it adopted in May 2004, said it was very sensitive to the issue of job-preferment, as well as the reservation of some jobs for certain groups, in

the private sector, where low-caste employees are well represented only in the most menial jobs.

A ministerial committee has now passed the buck back to the cabinet, which is expected to consider possible draft legislation in May. The committee said that an amendment to the constitution might be needed, as well as new laws. In a separate initiative, the human-resources ministry has horrified industry, academia and students by proposing a reservation of 27% of places in universities and management and technical institutions for “backward castes”, on top of the 22.5% already reserved for scheduled castes and tribes.

Stung both by Mr Singh’s speech and perhaps by the realisation that companies have not done much in the past, business organisations are now preparing plans for voluntary action. These will probably include improving education and training opportunities, and providing introductory coaching classes for higher education. The government is also considering introducing tax breaks and other incentives for low-caste employment in poor areas. All that should help the anti-legislation lobby. But caste divisions play a potent role in Indian politics. The threat of quota laws will not easily be dismissed.

India

Safe and sorry

DELHI

To achieve faster growth, India needs financial-sector reform

WHEN the fashionable comparisons are drawn between India and China, one industry where India normally comes out on top is finance. Its banks and capital markets are more open and efficient. Private institutions — such as ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank — are growing fast and are widely admired. And the central bank, the Reserve Bank of India, is a respected prudential regulator. Yet, marking two years of this government’s tenure late last month, the finance minister, Palaniappan Chidambaram, singled out financial sector reform as essential if India is to achieve its aim of sustaining economic growth of 7-8% a year.

He identified a shortage of credit as a big obstacle to growth and a shortage of capital in the banking system as the biggest constraint to increasing credit. It is doubtful, however, whether Mr. Chidambaram’s government is likely to undertake the reforms needed to generate the capital: mostly they involve the government allowing its own dominant role in the financial system to shrink.

The arguments for reform are bolstered by the publication this week of a report by the McKinsey Global Institute, the research arm of an American consultancy. It believes that the financial system is inefficient, and allocates most of its capital to the least productive parts of the economy. Correcting these short comings, it argues, could free \$48 billion of capital a year, over 6% of GDP, and raise the growth rate by 2.5 percentage points a year.

According to McKinsey’s Leo Puri, India’s

financial system is “healthier but punier” than China’s, and is “the one sector that could hold India back”. Indian banks lend only 61% of their deposits, compared with 130% in China. A broader measure of “financial depth” which includes other assets, such as shares, and corporate and government bonds, finds India at just 160% of GDP, compared with 220% in China.

Not only is there a shortage of finance. It is going to the wrong places. Banks are required to hold 5% of their reserves in cash and at least 25% in government debt. They also have to direct 36% of loans to “priority sectors”, picked by the government to help small borrowers. These are often loss-making for the banks, and hence lower overall lending. Even with these rules, access to bank credit is very limited. In much of the countryside, usurious moneylenders still hold sway. So, even in its own terms of ensuring that India’s poor have access to banking services, the system does not work.

State owned banks control 75% of total banking assets, a share second only to that of China (83%) among the large developing economies. One obvious solution to the difficulties would be to make it easier for private and foreign banks to operate. It would also help if the government forced some of the 27 state banks to merge. But bank unions put up powerful resistance, as does the notion that, left to the market, Indians’ access to finance would be even more restricted. It is hard to see how.

**Extract from monthly Newsletter of King Stubb & Kasiva,
Advocates & Attorneys, India**

No 15, Vol 7, July

**Stock Exchange Board of India (Sebi) hikes
FII registration fee to \$ 10 k**

The SEBI has hiked the registration fee for foreign institutional investors (FIIS) to \$ 10'000.- for five years from the earlier \$ 5'000.-. As per communication sent to FIIs last week, the fee for sub accounts has also been hiked to \$ 2'000.- from the current \$ 1'000.-. SEBI is considering reducing the validity of the registration period to three years from the existing five years. It is also planning to introduce a turnover based tax for exchange to boost its revenues.

**SEBI clears norms for real estate Mutual
Funds**

The Stock Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved the guidelines for real Estate Mutual Funds (MFs) and also gave its nod for lifting the lock-in period for venture capital funds which had remained invested for over a year and were offering their stake for through initial public offers. SEBI board would soon meet in two week's time to discuss other important issues like allowing institutional investors to sell short, introducing Securities Lending Borrowing Systems (SLBS) and also physical settlement in the derivatives segment. As per SEBI these issues were also discussed at the meeting but board members wanted to know more about how international markets handled these issues. Schemes floated by real estate MFs would have an investment objective to invest directly or indirectly in realty. These funds will be governed by SEBI Mutual Funds Regulations. The funds will be initially close ended and their units will be compulsorily listed on the stock exchanges.

**ADR/GDR rules relaxed for unlisted
companies**

The Government announced that unlisted Indian companies would now be allowed to sponsor an issue of American Depository Receipts (ADRs) or Global Depository Receipts (GDRs). With an overseas depository against the shares held by its shareholders. Under a sponsored ADR/GDR programme, a majority shareholder in a company gets an opportunity to divest a portion of his holdings in the overseas market through issuance of ADRs or GDRs. Such a window for divesting abroad is also made available to other shareholders in the company. The latest decision to throw open the sponsored ADR/GDR route to unlisted Indian companies, however, comes with certain conditions.

Deadline for telecom FDI norms extended

In a breather to telecom companies, the Union Cabinet gave its approval to extend the deadline by three months for implementing the revised guidelines for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the telecom sector. Telecom operators were supposed to meet the requirement of the guidelines by July 3. The new deadline is now October 2. This is the second time the deadline is extended. The extension has been given since the Department of Telecommunication (DoT) is discussing a number of issues that were originally stipulated in the guidelines but were flagged by the operators for a review. These issues include appointing foreigners in key positions of a telecom company, permitting remote access to operators to haul Telephone traffic outside India, accounting information and calculation of FDI.

A passage from INDIA

By Frances Cairncross

Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, and Chairman of the Economic and Social Research Council.

President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science 2005-06.

(In this article, given in extract from "Oxford today", the University Magazine, Trinity 2006, the author finds that China is not the only Asian country fuelled by education, industry and ambition.)

It takes some imagination, as you drive in from Mumbai airport, to realise that this will be the world's third largest economy before most of today's undergraduates are in their 50s. The road is bumpy, choked with traffic, and buildings ramshackle. Everywhere there are signs of underinvestment and poverty.

But India also has a new-found economic momentum. Its rapidly growing middle class exudes a sense of self-confidence and pride. No longer do the country's businessmen talk enviously of what China has achieved. Instead, there is a growing realisation that India has some advantages that China lacks, and that may well sustain its growth once China loses momentum. The big question for India is whether it can exploit those advantages. To do so, it will need to transform education and especially higher education, in the course of the next decade. Oxford has a role to play in this.

Even in the past 18 months India has gone through a period of great change. The economy is growing almost as fast as is China's, at 7 per cent a year., although it is still only half as large, and foreign investment is beginning to flow, although last year's influx of \$6 billion was only a tenth of the amount that China attracted.

There is far to go. But India has begun to develop a growth model that differs from China. That country's fabulous economic growth over the past two decades has come from manufacturing on behalf of companies elsewhere, mainly in the United States. The boom in telecommunication and computer use has occurred largely on gadgets made in China. At the same time China has invested massively in new roads, buildings and other physical infrastructure. A big Chinese city is a forest of cranes and construction projects.

India has, by common consent, invested far too little in roads, railways and airports. That is now starting to change – a great project called the

Golden Quadrilateral is connecting the country's four largest cities with four and six lane highways in the world's largest single road building project.

Manufacturing has grown relatively slowly, burdened by bureaucracy and bad investments. But India has built a service sector that now accounts for more than half the country's economy. That includes IT services such as software design or repair and the outsourcing of business processes such as call centres and other back-office services. IT services are still only a tiny part of India's economy- 3 per cent-but growing at a stupendous rate.

India is also building a group of companies with global reach. IT offers the most striking examples, with companies such as TCS and Infosys. Services sold across the ether do not suffer the interference and obstructions that thwart physical exports from India: bureaucracy, officials, overcrowded airports and chaotic ports. But India has a growing number of companies, for instance in engineering and pharmaceuticals that are making a mark on the rest of the world: companies such as Mahindra in truck manufacturing and Ranbaxy in pharmaceuticals, that are building markets and buying companies in other parts of the world.

This breakneck expansion, though, has sparked a national debate on the quantity and quality of education, and particularly of higher education. India's burgeoning new industries, many keen to move upmarket, have an insatiable demand for well educated young people. Employment in Indian IT companies has been growing by about 25 per cent a year. The three biggest employers, Wipro, TCS and Infosys are each recruiting roughly the equivalent to the entire output of 14'000 IT graduates from American universities. Not surprising, demand has shot ahead of supply.

For years, India has had appallingly low levels of literacy; until recently the country had half the world's population of children who were not in

school. The effects of such neglect will handicap India for years to come : a study of the population in 2000 found that 44 per cent of the people over 15 had no education, compared with only 18 per cent in China. Now, there is a drive to achieve primary education within the next decade.

At the university level, the numbers are mind boggling. The number of people attending universities in India has nearly doubled in the last decade, rising from 5 million to about 10 million today. And India has some of the best universities in the developing world. The Indian Institute of Technology and Management attract the country's cleverest young people, who are then snapped up by the employers from all over the world. These graduates tend to rise to the top of global universities and companies, as in the case of Arun Sarin, chief executive of Vodafone and a graduate of India's largest IIT at Kharagpur near Calcutta. But the institutes are the Oxbridge (Oxford/Cambridge) of India: they educate only a tiny minority of students. The seven IITs between them take about 3'500 students each year.

What of the rest ?Most of the Indian students go to one of the 16'000 or so colleges loosely affiliated to giant universities that administer examinations and distribute degrees. These colleges account for 89 per cent of the undergraduate students, 66 per cent of post graduates, and 82 per cent of faculty. The system was designed to allow a relatively small number of prestigious universities to supervise the education of large numbers of students. Thus Bangalore University has 600 affiliated colleges; Mumbai University more than 300 and Delhi University 80.

Some of these are enormously prestigious institutions. But far too many are badly run and inadequately resourced. Many are tiny, with a faculty of 100-200, often without doctoral qualification. A series of scandals has shaken public confidence.

In an article in the *Hindu* newspaper last year that attracted widespread attention, Dr. V.C. Kalundaiswamy, former Vice Chancellor of Madurai Kamraj University savaged the whole system: "The entire higher education in India takes place only in the ill-equipped, understaffed, affiliated colleges" he growled. "Many... are a trace better than higher secondary schools". The central

problem is that India has far too few universities for a country of its size and aspirations.

India's universities are under scrutiny as never before. The path to growth that India has chosen requires top quality education. Small wonder that the quality of the average graduate of such institution now alarms Indian employers. Last year, a report from NASSCOM, the trade club of India's software industries, and McKinsey forecast that India could capture half the world market for offshore services by 2010. That would add one percentage point a year to the country's economic growth and employ nearly 9 million people, directly or indirectly. But what seized the attention was the report's accompanying warning that only a quarter of India's technical graduates and 10-15 percent of general college graduates were suitable for employment in India's IT industry.

Alarmed by the slow approach of government, some Indian companies are looking for ways to tackle the shortcomings of education directly. For instance TCS, India's largest software company, has been developing a simple system for teaching adults to read. Applied with sufficient vigour,, says the company, it could end illiteracy in three to four years. Some industrialists have moved into higher education business: Vinay Rai who made a fortune in steel and telecoms, now runs a chain of 16 campuses that make up Rai University and concentrates on vocational subjects such as accountancy and management. Other companies are wondering whether to set up corporate universities of their own (as American companies have done in the past) in order to expand the horizons and deepen the skills of the graduates on their staff.

As for India's army of eager students, more and more of those who fail to get a place at one of the top institutes turn to study abroad. However, India still sends far fewer young people to study abroad than China does: young Indians account for 4 per cent of students studying overseas, compared with China's 10 per cent, the world's largest number. But the numbers are rising fast.

In spite of India's historic link with Britain, America is by far the most popular destination, followed by Australia. A larger number of Indian than of Chinese students goes to study in America and more Chinese than Indian come to Britain).

American universities have dug strong roots in India, whereas British universities have preferred to concentrate on China. As a result the best of today's ambitious young Indians who go abroad for university head for Stanford and Wharton, not Oxford or Cambridge. That may start to change: The visit to India in March by Lord Patten, the University's Chancellor, was a first small Step to putting Oxford back on the map.

British universities have been dismally short sighted in ignoring India for so long. For India will increasingly benefit from the advantages that China does not possess.

First, it has the world's second largest pool of English speaking people, after the United States: at least 7 per cent of the population speak good English, now the default operating system of the world economy.

Second, although India has terrible bureaucracy and stultifying state intervention, it has also better institutions of governance than China. It still takes longer to start a business in India than in most other parts of Asia, but India has a stronger network of courts and better institutions of, for instance, anti-trust than China does. And its tradition of free press and furious public debate are an essential part of any country that wants to innovate and to nurture intellectual property.

Third and most important, India will be a country of the young long after China is a land of the aged.

In less than 20 years, as a recent study of Goldman Sachs points out, China's population will be older than that of the United States. The aftermath of the one child policy means that China will grow old before it grows rich, and will have to divert much of its increased wealth to sustaining its old folk. India, by contrast, will be one of the few countries outside Africa and the Middle East where the population of working age continues to grow as a share of the total population. Its numbers will overtake those of China in the mid 2030s to make it the most populous nation on earth. That will be a tremendous economic strength.

A well educated and youthful India will be a powerful competitor- not just to provide call centres and back office services but as a source of innovation and ideas.

Helping India to build a system of higher education which can deliver, that is a marvellous opportunity for the world's top universities. One day India will probably attract students from America and Britain to study (for fees well below for what comparable universities in their own countries would charge).

But not yet.
For now, the task is to supply top graduates to one of the world's fastest growing markets for young brainpower.

Social and Cultural Events

Swiss India Society Zurich

27th August 2006 11.00 **Classical Indian Music**
 Museum Rietberg
 Park Villa Rieter
 Gaurav Mazumdar Sitar
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Museum Rietberg

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Indien kommt !
Abschied von Gandhi ?
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 Park Villa Rieter

Völkerkundemuseum Zurich

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3/06	Information Bulletin	End September 2006	7 August 2006
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 SICC - Bulletin

The annual subscription of the SICC-Bulletin is CHF 20.—

 Invitation Upcoming Events

Please send me an invitation for the next event

The *Swiss Indian Chamber of Commerce* was founded in 1985, in Switzerland, as a private non-profit association. Its main purpose is to promote the economic and business relations between Switzerland and India based on the principle of reciprocal benefit. The Chamber serves as a forum for all firms, institutions, government bodies and individuals interested in bilateral relations between Switzerland and India.

The Swiss - Indian Chamber of Commerce offers its members a comprehensive range of services at preferential terms:

- **Success** – All Board members have first hand experience on and in India and willingly advise members. We have a strong representation of small and medium-sized enterprises in Switzerland and India.
- **Business Contacts** – We provide assistance in establishing business contacts and penetrate the fast-growing Indian market in locating suitable agents, representatives, manufacturers and suppliers. We offer you well-established links to Indian and Swiss authorities and local embassies. We act as a contact point for Swiss industry whenever questions arise with regard to bilateral economic relations. We offer you direct access to senior executives and their vast knowledge acquired by experience and above all, a person-to-person interchange opportunity.
- **Connections** – We offer you access to over 140 Swiss and Indian members, active in different fields, such as IT services, banking, HR, consulting, transportation, automotive industry, trading, engineering and manufacturing.
- **Communication** – We organize regular luncheon and dinner meetings with leading speakers and address issues of our members at the Swiss-Indian Joint Commission.
- **Business Advice** – We provide you unique access to people and institutions which affect your business and offer you opportunities to meet with professional staff to discuss general or specific issues on the Indian market. Chamber luncheons allow you

to meet, learn from, and interact with CEO's of major corporations or with decision-makers from the public sector.

- **Exchange of Experience** - We help you to establish business relations with business people and official bodies in India. We offer our experience to link Swiss and Indian companies for rewarding business opportunities.
- **Information Services** – We offer you diversified, up-to-date information and documentation services including database access, enquiries about and from India. Our web-page: www.sicc.ch, has contacts, extracts from our bulletin, useful addresses and a schedule of upcoming events.
- **Publication** – We offer you the quarterly publication of the Chamber, the "*SICC Information Bulletin*" which keeps you on track with developments in India, including a brief summary of the economic and political situation, the budget, customs issues and special reports. Members can publish their company news and experiences related to India and take advantage of advertising space at reasonable costs.
- **Government/Economic Relations** – We keep regular contact with Swiss and Indian government agencies, economic organisations and private firms. Members may benefit from this network by obtaining access to these organisations through our Chamber.
- **Delegations** – We assist trade delegations from and to India in their visits and give support to Swiss business people going to India.

The Chamber is open to all business sectors and Indian business activities - not only exports to India and imports of Indian products, but also for investment, licence production, services and R&D. As part of its membership, a company is incorporated into a comprehensive network of contacts to which it may refer at any time.

Our Chamber is headed by a board representing most sectors of the Swiss industry and trade. (see page 2).