

## News from Belfast

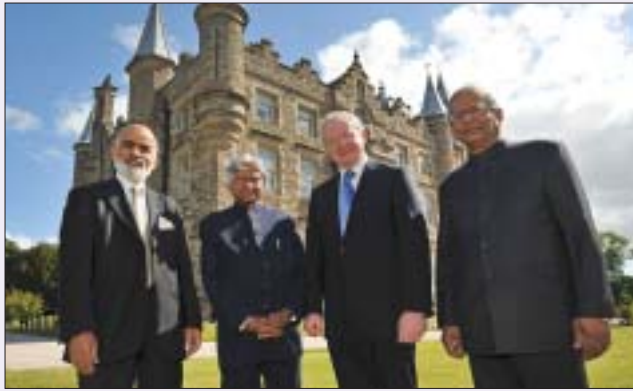
### Dr Abdul Kalam honoured in Belfast

During his visit to Queen's University Belfast, former President of India, Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has been conferred an honorary Doctorate of Laws for distinction in public service by the university.

Queen's Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Gregson said: "It is a significant honour for Queen's to host this visit from the former leader of one of the world's most thriving and exciting countries. A number of distinguished Indian institutions hold a special place within the Queen's family of academic partners and Dr Kalam's visit is a tangible example of the educational, research, business and cultural links between India and Northern Ireland." Dr. Kalam was one of three leading Indian scholars taking part in Queen's University India Lecture Series 2009. The others were historian Professor Romila Thapar and economist Professor Deepak Nayyar.

Queen's links with India include student exchanges between the School of English and Hyderabad University under the Prime Ministers Initiative and a research partnership with the National Institute of Immunology, Delhi which focuses on cancer biology and is supported by the Ministry of Biotechnology.

Last year Queen's opened the East India Water



Dr. Kalam is pictured at Stormont Castle in Belfast with Martin McGuinness (second right), Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland, and left Lord Diljit Rana, Honorary Consul for India in Northern Ireland, and Shiv Shankar Mukerjee, Indian High Commissioner to the U.K.

Research Centre in partnership with Bengal Engineering and Science University and India's Institute of Environmental Management and Studies.

The event was the latest development in Queen's ever-strengthening connections with India, with which the university has recently forged several dynamic academic partnerships.

### Belfast Mela to be held in August

The Belfast Mela is scheduled to be held in Belfast's Botanic Gardens on August 30. The event, organised by ArtsEkta, an Indian-led community arts body, will be an international festival of music, dance, art and food.

It will include stages featuring live international music and dance, a world food market, eco-friendly area, craft village, ethnic bazaar, cultural workshops and cookery demonstrations, street entertainment, Bollywood films, fun fair, and rickshaw rides.

The popular event is expected to be launched by Belfast Lord Mayor Naomi Long and will be the biggest ever held in the city. Around 10,000 people are expected to participate.

Indian dance will also feature during Belfast CityDance 09 to be held in the city's popular Crescent Arts Centre on June 20th. The event will also feature dance workshops.

## News from Birmingham

### Twinning of Ludhiana with Leicester

The Punjab Link Council, Leicester led a delegation to Ludhiana from May 7-10. The delegation included Lord Mayor of Leicester, Cllr. Manjula Sood and former Lord Mayor, Cllr. Piara Singh Claire. The delegation discussed the proposal to twin the two cities of Ludhiana and Leicester to enhance business relations, people to people contact and enrich the existing economic relations. Mayor Hakam Singh Gaspura of Ludhiana and Lord Mayor, Cllr. Manjula Sood signed a MoU to enable the concerned administrative bodies to interact further in the areas that would be mutually beneficial.



Navin Malhotra, Pravin Bansal Snr. Dep. Mayor, Baljit Singh CEO, Ludhiana Mayor Hakam S. Gaspura and Leicester Lord Mayor Cl.

### Business Promotion

A meeting was held by the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) in Wolverhampton on May 29. The UKIBC is a partner of the Wolverhampton India Project and aims to be the point of reference for companies in the U.K. looking to do business with India. The meeting was held particularly to draw the attention of U.K. business to the opportunities that awaited them in the emerging cities of India. About 50 important busi-

nesspersons from West Midlands and representatives from UKTI, BCCI, BCABA, Black Country Chamber of Commerce, etc., attended the meeting and benefited from the presentations by Ms. Sharon Bamford, CEO of UKIBC, Mr. Peter Mathews, President of Black Country Chamber of Commerce and Sir Thomas Harris, Vice Chairman of Standard Chartered Capital Markets (who is a former U.K. diplomat and UKTI Director).

### Elected

Cllr Balvinder Singh Gill has been elected as the new Mayor of Royal Leamington Spa on May 16. He was the Mayor earlier in 1998-99. A Warwick District and Royal Leamington Spa Town Councillor (former Charter Trustee) since 1991, he has served on every committee on the District Council including the executive in 2005-07. His charities for the year in office are Cancer Research U.K., Age Concern and Sikh Sewa (Service) Punjab.

### Celebrated

Maharaja Jassa Singh Ramgarhia Day was celebrated on May 25 by the Ramgarhia Sikh Temple, World Ramgarhia Sikh Organisation and Ramgarhia Welfare Association at Maharaja Jassa Singh Ramgarhia Hall, Graham Street, Birmingham. Followers paid tribute to Maharaja Jassa Singh Ramgarhia – one of the greatest Generals of Punjab. The celebration also marked the presentation of the Ramgarhia Awards for the year 2009.

### Condolence



Baba Bhagat Singh Bilga (1907-2009), a veteran freedom fighter and last survivor of the Gadar Movement, passed away on May 22 in Birmingham. A condolence meeting was held in this regard at Holyhead School, Handworth, Birmingham on May 30. Consul V.V. Narayanan represented the Consulate to pay homage to the departed soul.

### Inaugurated

Consul-General Mrs. Jordana D. Pavel inaugurated the EEP-organised India Pavilion at SUBCON-2009 at the National Exhibition Centre-UK, Birmingham on June 9. The Engineering Export Promotion Council of India participated in the event with ten companies. The Consul General encouraged the exhibitors to further augment their export efforts and wished them success in their endeavour.

## News from Edinburgh

### Tea Board of India participates at Scotland Show

Tea Board of India, London participated for the first time at the Gardening Scotland 2009 Show held from May 29 - May 31, at the Royal Highland Centre in Edinburgh. The Tea Board of India was part of the India Tourism stall, and apart from distributing promotional literature, also offered free tasting of Indian tea which proved to be a great attraction. Director of the Tea Board Mr. Ali Rizvi was present on the occasion.



### India Tourism in Scotland

India Tourism, London participated at the Gardening Scotland 2009 Show held from May 29-31, at the Royal Highland Centre in Edinburgh.

India Tourism London had erected a very attractive stall and distributed a wide variety of publicity material. The Indian stall was formally opened by Acting Consul General S.N. Srinivasan.

### Poetry book released

A book of Punjabi poems entitled "Pyar di Talash Vich" written by Dr. D.L. Bhatti "Noor Bharti" was released by the Acting Consul General S.N. Srinivasan on June 11. The book is a contribution to Punjabi literature, on social and cultural themes. Author Noor Bharti is a retired Justice of the Peace, City of Glasgow district, as well as senior travel consultant and an active member of the Indian community.