

Indian doctor makes to the top in Canada

With most Indian doctors driving taxis in Toronto because of non-recognition of their degrees, few have established themselves in their medical profession in Canada. But Amritsar-born physician Birinder Ahluwalia has made it to the very top of his trade, with his BSA Diagnostic Medical Imaging Centre here rated as one of the biggest and best in this country.

"Last year, we treated a record 70,000 patients and the numbers will be even higher this year. I don't know of any other medical centre in Canada treating more patients than us," Ahluwalia, who is equally well known in cultural circles as one of the founders of the

city's Spinning Wheel Film Festival, said.

For his professional and cultural accomplishments, he was chosen among the top 25 immigrant achievers and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper invited him to accompany him to India last year.

"It was so kind of the Prime Minister to invite me to India. Since we are one of the largest medical centres in Canada, they thought it fit to invite me. Maybe I was included because Canada and India also to increase medical tourism," said the alumnus of Amritsar Medical College where his illustrious father Balbir Singh Ahluwalia also taught.

Like all immigrants, Ahluwalia too began his life at

the bottom after reaching Toronto in 1985.

"Yes I was a qualified doctor from India, but I started here as a courier boy. But that didn't last long as I made quick moves, becoming assistant to the chief of the RDS Diagnostics as well as training as a diagnostic imaging specialist," he recalled.

Luckily for him, diagnostic imaging was just taking off and the young Indian saw a huge opportunity in this field.

"I set up a small facility under the name of BSA Diagnostic Imaging Centre in 1989 and have not looked back since. We have grown many times over to become one of the biggest in Canada. I was lucky to enter this field at the right time and

become financially successful very quickly," Ahluwalia said.

With Toronto earning the dubious distinction of having more immigrant doctors turned taxi drivers than any city in the world, Ahluwalia is angry about the plight of his fellow professionals.

"Canada is making its system inaccessible to foreign trained doctors on the false grounds that their skills may not be up to Canadian standards. It is bigotry. I have hired more foreign trained professionals and we have become one of the best diagnostic centres in Canada. I tell these people: put immigrant doctors through 6-12 months of training, and they will be wonderfully okay," he said.

Indian-origin woman named prof of economics at Harvard

Noted academician Gita Gopinath has been named professor of economics at the prestigious Harvard University, becoming the first Indian-origin woman professor in the institution's history.

Gopinath, 38, has been a member of the Harvard faculty since 2005 and was named associate professor in 2009. Her focus area is business cycles in emerging markets and price fluctuations across international borders.

"Professor Gopinath's research on emerging markets has proven extremely important to our understanding of their business cycles and her studies of price stickiness have been highly influential among macroeconomists," dean of social science in Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences Stephen Kosslyn said here.

Gopinath's research has examined price stickiness at the US border, addressing questions on whether prices are set in the producer's or the consumer's currency and how this transnational pricing responds to

exchange rate shocks.

University President Drew G Faust had confirmed tenure for Gopinath in May, making her only the second internally promoted woman full professor and the third woman to be tenured full professor in the department.

"On campus, she has played a central role in the vitality of our programme in international economics and especially in teaching and advising students in this field," Kosslyn added.

A University of Delhi alumnus, Kolkata-born Gopinath has a Ph.D in economics from Princeton University.

She was an assistant professor of economics at the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business.

She is also an associate of the National Bureau for Economic Research, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, the International Growth Centre at the London School of Economics and Oxford University.

Every 4th person in S'pore an Indian

With the number of settlers from India almost doubling in the past two years, every fourth person in Singapore now belongs Indian community, which is showing a great interest in setting up firms in Singapore, a media report said.

The city has a population of 1.79 million, including expatriates, and out of that 400,000 are of Indian origin, showing a 100 per cent increase in the community size

in two years.

According to report, the number of Indians setting up companies here has also doubled to 3,000 from the 2006 level of 1,500. They are doing business mainly in information technology, finance, trade and food items.

City's friendly environment for foreigners and Tamil being the official fourth language, after English, Chinese and Malay, are the major attractions for

the expatriates who mainly belongs to southern states of India, Nikhilesh Gupta, president of the Bengali Association Singapore, was quoted as saying in the report.

Top professionals from India are moving into the engineering, information technology and finance sectors, while the non-skilled and semi-skilled workers are getting opportunities in construction and marine industries, it said.

Fast track system for dealing with NRK issues: Kerala CM

Kerala Chief Minister VS Achuthanandan said that the government has decided to introduce a fast track system for Non Resident Keralities (NRK) for dealing with their issues related to revenue, police and law.

In a written reply, in the state Assembly he said the problems related to the three issues of revenue, police and law could be taken up with the fast track system that would come up at the Norka Cells affiliated with the Collectorates.

Acuthanandan said the Pravasi Identity cards were being distributed through the various Norka Cells.

To another question regarding the commissioning of the new terminal of the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport, he said he hoped Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would commission the terminal in October.

A letter stressing that the Prime Minister himself should commission the terminal had been sent, he added.

Hepatitis on rise in India: Experts

World Hepatitis Day observed in Delhi recently, with doctors stated that lack of awareness was the cause for increasing spread of the virus in India.

"The overriding reason for the spread of Hepatitis is the lack of awareness of the disease and its prevention," said Subhash Gupta, senior consultant of liver transplant at the Indraprastha Apollo Hospital. According to a World Health Organisation report, nearly 75 per cent of those suffering from Hepatitis live in Asia. In India, around 1.09 crore people suffer from

chronic Hepatitis C with a greater proportion of cases reported from the northeast.

"Despite Hepatitis being the second biggest preventable cause of cancer after tobacco, every one in 12 persons worldwide suffer from either chronic Hepatitis B or chronic Hepatitis C," Gupta said.

Hepatitis is a viral infection which is communicable in nature. It is spread through body contact and fluid exchange. There are five varieties of Hepatitis - Hepatitis A, B, C, D and E.

"Nearly 10 per cent of Hepatitis B victims battle

long-term liver infection and Hepatitis C is very difficult to treat. In many cases, Hepatitis B causes irreparable liver damage, leading to death," Gupta said.

"While Hepatitis A and E are spread through food and water, Hepatitis B, C and D are spread through contaminated blood and blood products, infected needles," he added.

He said Hepatitis can be prevented with simple precautions. "Prevention is possible through avoiding consumption of contaminated food and water. Vaccination is also available," he said.

Fourth generation knee joint implant

DePuy, an arm of Johnson and Johnson, has launched the fourth generation knee-joint implant in India. The surgical solutions company said the Sigma CR-150 helps preserve bone unlike in the normal knee replacement procedures in vogue.

"It will give a flexion up to 150 degrees, allowing all natural movements," Dr A.V. Gurava Reddy, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Sunshine Hospitals, said.

Demonstrating the features of the new procedure here on Saturday, he said there was an increased incidence of wear-out of knees due to overweight and squatting habits.

"About 50 per cent of all people above the age of 60 years need an intervention. Of late, even middle-aged people are suffering from knee pains," he said. It was believed that only people above 60 should undergo knee replacement keeping in view the shorter longevity of the implants. "But the new device offers longer life as it uses cobalt chrome at the joints giving little scope for wear out. The design also ensures conservation of bones at the place of intervention," he said.

The procedure would cost Rs 1.50-2 lakh, which is Rs 15-20,000 more than the cost for normal knee replacement procedure.

Panel working on subsidised healthcare

The Planning Commission is considering a proposal for a private-public healthcare model that will offer affordable or subsidised medical service to different sections of people, it was said at the Healthex expo in New Delhi.

The plan will see a few 250-bed hospitals across the

country under the PPP mode offering service at different layers of charges - normal, subsidised and also free service for BPL patients, according to Dr Anupam Sibal, Group Medical Director, Apollo Hospitals. Such a plan involving private hospitals in the public delivery of health was still being

evolved, he said at a conclave of CEOs of hospital majors. Top healthcare executives called for an urgent shift to modern, 21st century healthcare systems including remote or tele-health and adoption of new technologies.

Dr K. Ganapathy, President, Apollo Telemedicine Network, Chennai, said the

mobile platform should be tapped for providing healthcare on the lines of m-banking or m-entertainment.

According to Dr Nandakumar Jayaram, Columbia Hospitals, integrating different medicine systems would be "a marriage that will not work." Manipal Hospitals' COO.

UN names Mukesh Ambani to key advocacy group

Reliance Industries chief Mukesh Ambani has been named by the United Nations to a key advocacy group on Millennium Development Goals, whose mandate includes finding ways to fight

socio-economic evils such as poverty. Ambani is the only Indian to be a part of the MDG Advocacy Group that comprises eminent international personalities including Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, philanthropist Ted

Turner and Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, among



achieve by the year 2015. These include reducing extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, fighting disease epidemics such as AIDS and developing a global partnership for development. The MDG Advocacy Group will support the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in building political will and mobilising global action, says the world body.

One of the first tasks of the Advocacy Group is the preparatory process for the MDG Summit in September this year. The MDG Summit is being seen as a turning point in the collective effort to achieve the goals by the 2015 target date.

Ambani's appointment to the advocacy group comes at a time when the 2010 Millennium Development Goals report card paints a dark picture for South Asia, including India. Ambani is a member of the Prime Minister's Council on Trade and Industry, government of India, and the Board of Governors of the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi.

Fortune list has eight Indian firms

Eight Indian companies, including Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), have made the cut on the list of the world's 500 largest companies compiled by Fortune magazine.

The league of 500 elite companies for 2010 is topped by U.S. retailer Wal-Mart Stores, followed by Royal Dutch Shell and Exxon Mobil, in that order.

The other Indian companies on the list are: Tata Steel, Tata Motors, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corpo-

ration Limited (HPCL), ONGC and the State Bank of India (SBI).

Tata Motors has made an entry into the list for the first time this year, while seven other Indian entities, which were part of the list in the previous year, are also featured. The list also features Citigroup, ArcelorMittal, Pepsico and Motorola, led by people with Indian roots. IOC has the highest rank of 125 among the featured Indian companies, followed by RIL at the 175th spot, SBI (282), BPCL (307), HPCL (354), Tata Steel (410), ONGC (413) and Tata Motors (442).



Artificial colours in kids' food linked to cancer risk

Australia may soon ban artificial food colours after a new research showed it may pose a cancer risk, as well as causing hyperactivity and allergic reactions in kids.

The study conducted by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) in the US recommended the common colours should be banned. "These synthetic chemicals do absolutely nothing to improve the nutritional quality or safety of foods, but trigger behaviour problems in children and, possibly, cancer in anybody," said Michael F. Jacobson, CSPI executive director, co-author of the report, Food Dyes: A Rainbow of Risks.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), along with its American counterpart

Drinking too much tea may harm your bones

A new research by Medical College of Georgia has shown that black tea contains higher

concentrations of fluoride than previously thought.

"The additional fluoride from drinking two to four cups of tea a day won't harm anyone; it's the very heavy tea drinkers who could get in trouble," said Dr. Gary Whitford, Regents Professor of oral biology in the School of Dentistry. Most published reports show 1 to 5 milligrams of fluoride per litre of black tea, but a new study shows that number could be as high as 9 milligrams.

Fluoride is known to help prevent dental cavities, but long-term ingestion of excessive amounts could cause bone problems.

Whitford discovered that the fluoride concentration in black tea had long been un-

derestimated when he began analysing data from four patients with advanced skeletal fluorosis, a disease caused by excessive fluoride consumption and characterized by joint and bone pain and damage. "When we tested the patients' tea brands using a traditional method, we found the fluoride concentrations to be very low, so we wondered if that method was detecting all of the fluoride," Whitford said, noting that the tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*, creates a quandary when measuring fluoride. Unique among other plants, it accumulates huge concentrations of fluoride and aluminium in its leaves. When the leaves are brewed for tea, some of the minerals leach into the beverage.

Monsoon diseases and prevention All about Jaundice.....

(Continued from previous issue)

How jaundice is diagnosed? Doctors will most likely diagnose jaundice based on the patient's history and a physical exam, paying close attention to the abdomen. Doctors will be feeling for masses (tumors) in the abdomen and/or checking the firmness of the liver; a firm liver indicates cirrhosis, while a rock-hard liver indicates cancer.

The severity of jaundice is determined by several tests, the first of which is a liver function test to find out whether or not the liver is functioning properly.

If the cause of the symptoms cannot be identified, then doctor may require blood tests to check levels of bilirubin and evaluate the composition of the blood.

Treatment of Jaundice

There are some remedies available for treat-

ment of jaundice. The root cause responsible for onset of jaundice symptom plays a greater role in selection of type of treatment.

Like other liver associated diseases, jaundice can also produce certain health complications. If not treated in time, jaundice may affect the other body parts and can also worsen the pre-existing jaundice symptoms. If the jaundice in new born is not treated properly it could lead to kernicterus.

Jaundice symptoms

The symptoms of jaundice are extreme weakness, headache, fever, loss of appetite, severe constipation, nausea, and yellow discoloration of the eyes, tongue, skin, and urine. The patient may also feel a dull pain in the liver region. Obstructive jaundice may be associated with intense itching.

(Concluded)