



Happenings and Events

September 2001

Indo America Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston

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IACCGH Gala 2001

The IACCGH Gala 2001 was held on June 16th at the Hyatt Regency Downtown. The Gala attracted 500 guests who are the movers and shakers of the Houston business community. The Keynote speaker was Mr. Michael Capellas and the Guest of Honor was HE Ambassador Lalit Mansingh. The Gala had an unexpected surprise guest when the External Affairs minister Hon. Krishnam Raju agreed to attend the event as he was on the same continent.

The event started off on a colorful note with the Drums of Africa and dances from around the world by Rathna Kumar and her troupe. The entertainment was followed by eloquent thought provoking speeches by the Ambassador, Mr. Bob Beauchamp (CEO of BMC) and Mr. Michael Capellas

A sumptuous four-course meal followed, with plenty of opportunity for everyone to hobnob and rub shoulders with the who's who of the business world. Visit our website for detailed coverage and pictures of the event. (www.iaccgh.com)

"I do not think there is anywhere in the world that has quite the blend of history, of culture, of philosophy, and oh by the way, of this dichotomy between rich and poor. India is becoming the absolute superpower of software. It is emerging that way and it will continue. We at Compaq know a lot about that, because it was 7 years ago that we started a company that ended up exporting the first intellectual property software outside of India". Michael Capellas, Gala 2001

Flood Relief Check for M.D. Anderson

A check, from the proceeds of the annual Gala held on June 16th, was presented to Dr. Mendelsohn, President of M D Anderson Cancer Research Institute by the IACCGH Executive board. The money is to be used for feeding the poor who were affected by the devastating floods caused by tropical storm Allison.

"A new organization needs three things. Firstly, it needs a vision. Secondly it needs leadership and thirdly it needs patience." Chamberlain George Hrdlicka

Meet the Board of Directors EXECUTIVE

Ashoke Nath -President (Gas-Tel)

Jagdip Ahluwalia- Vice-President (Info-Electronics)

Ashok Shah -President Elect (Compaq)

Durga Agrawal- Past President (Piping Technology)

Subroto Mukerji- Secretary (Digital India)

H.P. Bhagat- Treasurer (Petrochemical Consultant)

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Cozad (Reliance Industries)

Pankaj Dhume (BMC Software)

Rakesh Dawar (Tata Consulting Services)

Steve Iyer (Enron)

Krishna Rao (Exxon Mobil)

Rao Ratnala (Ratnala & Bahl)

Vinodh Shah (ABC Travels)

Dr. Randhir Sinha (Clear Lake
Neurological Surgery, PA)

Deepa Thakur (Law Offices of Deepa
Thakur)

Upcoming Events

In the coming year the chamber plans to arrange two speakers in five different fields. The fields of interest are:

Energy

Technology

Medicine/University

Engineering/Space

**Small Business, Entrepreneurs and
Indian Delegations**

“The old red tape has been thrown in the dustbin” Mr. Ram Naik, Hon. Minister of Petroleum and Gas.

August Networking Dinner

The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH) had its networking dinner at Ashiana Indian restaurant on August 20th, 2001. This event was free for all members and was well attended by representatives of leading business organizations like Reliance, Tata Consulting, Exxon Mobil, Lufthansa, Continental, Delta, Danos & Curole and entrepreneurs like Pradeep Anand (PointCross), Kiran Oberoi (Chirag), Suzanne Grover (ICJ, Inc.), Sulek Jain (Solutions Co.), Ramesh Anand (Intl Personnel resources), Dolly Lallani (Dolly’s boutique), Sasidharan Nair (Supreme Health Care, Inc.) to name a few.

Mr. Ashoke Nath, the new President of IACCGH took over from past President Dr. Durga Agrawal at the annual Gala held on June 16th, 2001. Joining him on the executive board is Jagdip Ahluwalia as Vice-President, Subroto Mukerji as Secretary, H.P. Bhagat continuing as

Treasurer and Ashoke Shah as President-elect for next year. Mr. Nath also introduced the new Executive Director of the chamber Mrs. Chitra Shanbhogue to all the members.

The new board gave an accounting of the chamber initiatives and activities in progress. The list of some of the macro projects, which the Chamber is spearheading, is:

- The Joint venture between M.D.Anderson and All India Institute of Medical sciences. This venture would include Faculty, Student & Patient exchange, clinical trials, and filling the shortage of nurses here in the US.
- A math think-tank joint venture between St. Stephen’s college in Delhi and University of Houston
- Setup of a top-notch teaching institute in India with Rice University, IIT Kharagpur and BIT Mesra.

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The IACCGH was proud to welcome twenty-three new members to the organization and introduce them at the networking dinner.

Mr. Rinzing Wangdi had words of support and praise for the new board and the Chamber. He said the board of the Chamber “is a very powerful and high quality board, with very good professional experience and quite impressive”. He said that “India is in a take-off stage” and all Indo-American should take advantage of this unique opportunity to bring commerce to the United States and take commerce to India. Mr. Wangdi, along the same lines as Ambassador Mansingh’s message at the Gala, stated that Indo-Americans community is behind politically and we could make a political impact if we made an effort to do so.

Attendees enjoyed a delicious dinner while Prajit Dutta of Artsindia.com gave a brief talk on “Collecting Art as an Investment”. Prof. Dutta was in town showcasing Indian artists both known and upcoming. Prof. Dutta is an Economics professor in Columbia University in New York. The networking dinner gave members an opportunity to enjoy a relaxed evening with peers and get a lot of useful contacts to further their business interests.

Activities in Progress

Proposal to set up a world- class Teaching & Research University in India

Dr. Malcolm Gillis, President of Rice University and honorary advisor to the IACCGH, is leading the initiative to explore the possibility of establishing a teaching and research university in India. The focus would be on cutting-edge technology like nano technology and bio-science. Initial contacts have been established between Rice, Texas A&M, Birla Institute of Technology and IIT Kharagpur.

MD Anderson Initiative to tie up with TATA cancer institute or other Indian Centers for Medical Excellence

A delegation of IACCGH board members led by the Hon. Rinzing Wangdi, Consul General met with Dr. John Mendelsohn, President of M.D.Anderson Cancer Center to discuss the possibility of using the high-tech resources of MD Anderson and the knowledge base and skills of an institute of excellence in India to jointly work on technology transfer, product development & clinical trials in the field of cancer research. Efforts are in motion to bring MD Anderson and Tata Institute of Cancer Research together for transfer of technology and faculty exchange.

Initiative to get Continental Airlines to fly non-stop into India

Dr. Malcolm Gillis contacted Mr. Gordon Bethune, CEO of Continental to discuss setting up of a direct flight from Houston to India. Mr. Bethune has said they would give serious consideration to the suggestion.

BMC Software’s Foray Into India

Mr. Bob Beauchamp, BMC President and CEO and an Honorary advisor to the Chamber said that his company had done a lot of research on different countries before concluding that India would be the most profitable investment for the company and its stockholders. He indicated that he had a lot of confidence in India’s engineering capabilities. Mr. Beauchamp added he was sure that the Indian Government would make every to provide Intellectual Property Protection, which is a major cause of concern in the software industry.

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Mr. Pankaj Dhume, one of the directors of the chamber is leading this initiative into India. He has taken over as President & CEO of BMC Software Pvt. India Ltd. in Pune. The Chamber wishes him and his family all the best.



"I am very pleased to be here as the youngest, and also the newest member of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce" Bob Beauchamp at the Annual Gala 2001

Junior Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber has initiated the setup of a Junior Chamber of Commerce, which will complement the existing IACCGH. This Chamber will bring the young entrepreneurs into the fold and address issues and concerns of those who are starting to explore the world of Commerce.

Established members of the IACCGH will be part of mentor groups to guide and troubleshoot new ventures.

The names proposed to set up this Junior Chamber of Commerce are Vivek Menon, Sanjay Rambhadran and Jonathan Faulkner.

We will keep the members updated as and when this initiative is formalized.

Advisors to the Chamber

Hon. Rinzing Wangdi (Consul General of India)

Bob Beauchamp (CEO, BMC Software)

Michael Capellas (President, Compaq)

Dr. Kenneth Lay (CEO, Enron Corp)

Dr. Malcolm Gillis (President, Rice University)

Vijay Goradia (Chairman, Vinmar Group)

George Hrdlicka (Chamberlain, Hrdlicka et al)

Dr. John Mendelsohn (President, M.D. Anderson Cancer Research Inst.)

Advisors' Dinner

On December 17th the annual Advisors' dinner will be held at the Rice University faculty club.

At this meeting the Board will give an accounting of the Chamber activities to the advisors and seek their valuable input regarding future Chamber activities.

As of now Dr. Gillis, Dr. Mendelsohn, Consul General Wangdi, Mr. Bob Beauchamp, Mr. Capellas, Mr. Goradia and Chamberlain Hrdlicka have confirmed their attendance.

(This newsletter will be sent out quarterly. The next edition will be in January)