

Trade-Technology E-Zine 6
(Centre for International Trade in Technology)

Indian steel cos form JVs for high-value auto-grade products

TATA Steel's decision to enter into a 51:49 JV with Nippon Steel Corp for the production and sales of automotive cold-rolled flat products at Jamshedpur marks the advent of locally produced high-value auto-grade steel in India. Nippon Steel will transfer its technology for producing high-grade Cr steel sheet for automotive application, including skin panels and high-tensile. For Japanese steelmakers, the interest in local manufacturing in India is a hard-nosed business decision. By 2010-11, India is set to produce 2 million cars annually with an accent towards small cars.

(The Economic Times, 29 January 2010)

Manufacturing policy to identify strategic industries

The proposed National Manufacturing Policy expected by June would redefine manufacturing and set sector-specific job creation goals, than just focusing on achieving a certain share of the country's GDP. Redefining manufacturing will be a major strategy shift as currently manufacturing sector includes even the associated services.

The Policy will identify and promote 'strategic industries' based on the domestic demand. For instance, sectors like telecom and power equipments, for which there is a major demand in the country but less domestic production, will be promoted as strategic industries.

Consultation process is on to finalize incentives, including subsidies, grants and tax sops, for value-added manufacturing. The policy will also promote R&D for making products using high-end technologies, cluster building for better access to cheaper credit and to build a supply chain, increasing usage of green technologies and IT, skill-building, as well as marketing and branding of products.

(The Hindu Business Line, 29 January 2010)

Traditional knowledge: Concern on access pact

The access agreement that India has signed with the European Patent Office (EPO) and US Patents and Trademark Office (USPTO) to share Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) in the form of a 'prior art' could undermine its confidentiality. 'Prior art' is meant to encompass everything that has been published, presented or otherwise disclosed to public on the date of patent and includes documents in foreign languages disclosed in any format in any country.

TKDL contains approximately 2.08 lakh formulations based on Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Yoga. These have been transcribed in five international languages viz. English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese, with the objective of preventing its misappropriation at international patent offices.

(The Hindu Business Line, 25 January 2010)

Siemens gets Rs 2,491 cr order

Siemens Limited announced that a consortium of the Company and Siemens AG, Germany has won an order from Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa), Qatar worth Rs 2,956 crore. The contract value for the Company is approximately Rs 2,491 crore. The scope of work for this turnkey project includes complete design, engineering, supply, erection, civil, testing and commissioning of 14 new substation, five modification substation and five cable diversions. The commissioning of the project is scheduled to be completed in April 2013.

(The Financial Express, 20 January 2010)

Private SEZs told to reserve 10% space for small-scale units

Small-scale units may now get a better deal in allocation of space in private SEZs. The Centre has now said that minimum 10% of the space in IT/ITES SEZ may be reserved for SSI IT/ITES units. All other SEZs were asked to allocate 10% space for SSI units.

Also, IT/ITES SEZs have been advised to set up incubators of minimum 200 seats. Currently, IT/ITES SEZs are mainly promoted by the private sector.

(The Hindu Business Line, 19 January 2010)

FICCI seeks duty on imported capital goods

The government should impose duty on imports of capital goods as the domestic industry is facing cost disadvantage of 11-22%, a FICCI study said. Exemptions from import duties for various projects have led to over five times increase in India's imports from US\$6.5 billion in 2003-04 to US\$30 billion in 2008-09.

Various exemptions like zero customs duty on capital goods imports and other disability factors, the cost disadvantage to the domestic industry as compared to foreign suppliers comes in range of 11-22%, it said. To help the Indian industry against duty free imports, the study suggests excise duty exemption for the domestic supplier of equipments to mega power plants. FICCI also sought 15% price preference in private sector mega power projects for domestic manufacturers of capital goods. Presently, this preference is given only in case of public sector projects.

(The Economic Times, 18 January 2010)

Emerging countries more Tech-hungry

The Accenture 2010 Consumer Electronics Products and Services Usage Report, based on a survey of 16,000 consumers in four 'mature' countries – the US, Germany, France and Japan – and four 'emerging' countries – India, China, Malaysia and Singapore – has thrown up spending and usage patterns across 19 consumer technologies. Such technologies included smartphones, high-definition TVs and computers.

(The Hindustan Times, 18 January 2010)