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(Centre for International Trade in Technology)

NDS plans to invest \$150 mn more in Bangalore R&D centre

Broadcasting solutions provider NDS plans to invest \$150 million more in expanding its captive research and development centre in Bangalore over the next four years. The company proposes to ramp up its headcount to 1,500 by adding 200 more employees over the next four to six months, said Mr Warren Pearsell, Director, NDS India.

The NDS Group, owned by Permira Funds and News Corporation, creates technologies that allows pay-TV operators to generate revenues by securely delivering digital content to TVs, set-top-boxes, digital video recorders and other devices.

The India R&D centre, largest for NDS worldwide, develops technology solutions both for the local and overseas markets, Mr Pearsell said. Till date, NDS has invested \$130 million in the India R&D centre, which also offers support to local and global operators. NDS serves some 70 platforms across 43 countries including India where it has customers such as Tata Sky and Bharti Airtel. The international customers also include DirecTV, BSkyB, Sky Deutschland, Astro, Foxtel and Cablevision among others.

(The Hindu Business Line, 23 March 2010)

Tata Motors to set up heavy truck plant in Myanmar

Tata Motors has signed an agreement with the Myanmar government for setting up a heavy truck plant in the South-East Asian nation, with an installed capacity of up to 5,000 units annually. The plant at Magwe, near Yangon, would be funded by a line of credit from the Indian government and is expected to be operational by the last quarter of 2010-11, Tata Motors said in a statement.

"The plant is expected to become operational by the last quarter of 2010-11, with a capacity of 1,000 vehicles per year. The capacity can be expanded to 5,000 units," the statement said.

The Magwe facility will include a chassis and frame assembly line, besides a cab manufacturing, painting and trimming set-up, it added. Earlier this month, Tata Motors had signed a contract with Saudi-Arabia based Hafil Transport to supply 1,000 air-conditioned school buses for girl students.

(Business Standard, 23 March 2010)

Dr Reddy's opens Mexico plant for mPEG alcohols

Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd has commissioned its facility at Cuernavaca, Mexico, for the manufacture of pharma-grade mPEG alcohols, a key raw material for activated mPEG used for pegylation with biologic drugs, and for peptides and small molecule pharmaceuticals. The company has also launched its range of activated mPEGs under the brand name 'PEGtech'.

The facility — which comes under the Custom Pharmaceutical Services business of the Hyderabad-based company — is capable of producing a wide range of molecular weight mPEGs and has a multi-tonne annual capacity, the release added.

(The Hindu Business Line, 20 March 2010)

Emerging markets see M&A volume at record high of \$215 bn

Emerging markets have seen a record \$215 billion worth of merger and acquisition (M&A) deals so far this year on increased business activities amid an improving global economic situation.

The largest targeted emerging market deal on record is Prudential's \$35.5-billion bid for AIG's Asian insurance unit AIA Group Ltd. Also the \$10.7-billion bid by Bharti Airtel for acquisition of Zain Telecom's African operations was the third largest deal announced in the emerging market region.

Mexico has emerged as the most targeted emerging market in the first quarter of 2010 with M&A worth \$40.8 billion largely on America Movil SAB's \$24.3-billion bid for Carso Global Telecom, Dealogic said.

However, the activity in the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) region was somewhat muted with the volume plunging to a five-year low. "The BRIC region with M&A activity worth \$69.6 billion accounts for 32% of emerging markets' volume in 2010 YTD, the lowest share since 2004 YTD," Dealogic said.

According to Dealogic, telecommunication is the leading sector to witness M&A in emerging economies. The space has seen deals worth \$54.5 billion in 2010 YTD -- the highest volume for it since 2000 YTD.

(The Economic Times, 20 March 2010)

GPT Infra bags Rs 195-cr Namibia order

The Kolkata-based GPT Infraprojects Ltd has secured a Rs 195-crore contract from Namibia to supply railway concrete sleepers. However, for this, the Indian company has to set up a concrete sleeper plant in that country in partnership with TansNamib, the rail road service provider in Namibia. The country has a rail network of 2,500 route km. GPT Infralogistics will hold 50% stake in TransNamib Holdings, equivalent to Rs 15.5 crore approximately, to implement the project by way of public-private partnership. It might be noted that GPT Infralogistics recently supplied 7,50,000 sleepers in Mozambique for a joint venture of IRCON International and RITES Ltd. It also set up a concrete sleeper plant at Ladysmith, South Africa, to supply sleepers to Transnet Freight Rail. The commercial production of the plant started in April 2009, the release adds.

(The Hindu Business Line, 19 March 2010)