

IT NEWSLETTERS AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2009

October 2009

November 2009

Kolkata to get one more Five Star Hotel

Kolkata to get Light Rail Transit System

More Power in the State

Cognizant flourishes in the City

Kolkata firm ties up with Spanish enterprise

DOCOMO lands in Kolkata

Kolkata on Dutch Agenda

US sees greater business opportunity in the State

KMC to build IT Park in the City

Shopping Portal launch in Kolkata

Campus Interviews Get Due Correction

TCS bags prestigious government contract

IT Scene in West Bengal Today

Aliah University in Kolkata

Hardware Investment in Bengal

More Health Care Facility in the State

Assocham to set up Eastern Headquarters in Kolkata

West Bengal to spearhead experiment to replace solar panels

Business plans from budding entrepreneurs in Kolkata

Genpact in Kolkata

Kolkata to get one more Five Star Hotel

Global hospitality major, Westin Hotels and Resorts has joined hands with Kolkata Developer Shristi Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd to come up with a twin tower G+35 Hotels, a first of its kind five star property in the country at an investment of Rs. 800 crores. This will have a roof top Helipad and an high-tech Israeli fire fighting system which is capable to evacuate 150 people in eight minutes. The hotel is coming up at Newtown, Rajarhat and should be completed by end of 2011. Westin Hotels and Resorts with 323 rooms will further add to other forthcoming hotels in the city such as Marriott Courtyard, Emmar-MGF, Holiday Inn and Swissotel Group. With shopping and entertainment arched with state-of -the-art cinemas, the hotel is designed by celebrated Spanish architect Cervera & Pioz who designed New York Stock Exchange and Greece Acropolis Museum.

Kolkata to get Light Rail Transit System

The Southern stretch of Kolkata will have city's first Light Rail Transit (LRT) System which will be connected to the Metro and Suburban Railway Network, thus expanding the Local Railway Network across Kolkata. The circular stretch of Light Rail Transit will cover 80 Kilometers, easing traffic congestion and curbing pollution. The project will cost around 3000 crores.

More Power in the State

Universal Success Group promoted by an N.R.I businessman is ready to invest 11,500 crore to an ultra mega power plant of three units of 660 MW each. This is the third critical thermal power plant in the country and second in the state after JSW Energy Unit at Salboni. The super critical boiler will be imported for which the company is negotiating with power majors. Grade A variety of coal would be used in the plant where fly ash generation will be 20% less. The entire coal would be imported from Indonesia and hence the project is proposed near the Bay of Bengal. The initial plan of 1980 MW production from three units will be operational by 2014 and will be added with another three units later when the combine plant capacity will become 3960 MW.

Cognizant flourishes in the City

Cognizant Technology Solutions takes over UBS India Service Centre which employs 2000 people in India. Cognizant also won a contract to provide various services which include business process outsourcing, knowledge process outsourcing, IT & remote infrastructure management services to UBS divisions worldwide. This is the fourth major take over by Cognizant during this year after US based Pepperweed Advisors, SVC and AimNet. Cognizant has been expanding fast in Kolkata and this development would further enhance the company's strength in the city.

Kolkata firm ties up with Spanish enterprise

The city based start up company Starlite has tied up with a Spanish Enterprise Openbravo to provide open source ERP solutions to small and medium scale companies in India. The Spanish company specializes in web based resource planning and point of sale solutions. The Kolkata company is in the domain of infrastructure management, data warehousing, business technology services, enterprise application services and IT consulting. The company aims at serving the SME segment by offering customize solutions at an affordable price.

DOCOMO lands in Kolkata

DOCOMO arrives in Kolkata with a big bang. 10,000 Tata DOCOMO outlets across the city during launch is the greatest so far by any network operator. Tata Tele Services Ltd brought this GSM service in Kolkata. The Tata group has made an alliance with The Japanese Mobile Operator NTT DOCOMO, a leader in 3G technology. DOCOMO is a pay per second model concept by which customers avoid burden of extra payment that they make for call drops. A TRI survey revealed that the customers make 18 to 25% extra payment for call drops.

Kolkata on Dutch Agenda

The Netherlands Ambassador to India Mr. Bob Hiensch announced a trade office in the city. The Netherlands intends to work more closely with West Bengal to exchange the expertise of both the places. The Ambassador had already discussed the possibilities of collaboration in various sectors. With a trade office in Kolkata, the IT activities between the Netherlands and Kolkata will enhance.

US sees grater business opportunity in the State

The US envoy Mr. Timothy Roemer once again affirmed the state business potential and felt that the state is on the track of recovery. There are many positive factors which will bring more American investments in the state, said Mr. Romer. Mr. Romer met the Hon'ble Chief Minister and representatives from Chamber of Commerce and assured continuous investment from United States. Mr. Romer's visit came immediately after visit of US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Sates for South and Central Asian affairs, Mr. Michel Owen for strengthening the linkage between two countries. He said that all the US companies are scaling up their presence in Bengal.

KMC to build IT Park in the City

In a bid to create an IT Park in the heart of the City, Kolkata Municipal Corporation joined hands with IT Department and State Nodal Agency, Webel. This will be a multistoried high-status address, next to Science City, with more than two lakh Sq. ft. constructed area. More than 5000 people will be accommodated in the building. Taking into consideration the growing demand of IT space in Kolkata Municipal area, for the first time KMC is coming into an IT Park venture

Shopping Portal launch in Kolkata

Kolkata base MJunction Services launched its first online shopping portal www.straightline.in in Kolkata. The company is a joint venture between Tata Steel and Steel Authority of India. MJunction Services acquired all its technical support from IBM and Cognizant. The portal would compete the established portals such as eBay and Amazon.com. The company expects to achieve 30% market share of online retailing and will have most of the private levels of top brands in apparel, jewellery, watches, electronics, home appliances, kitchenware, books, music, computers, games and luggage that are sold through its group companies Trent and Tata Sky. The company will take full responsibilities of delivery of products using real-time tracking of the consignment and will get assistance from its own group company, Driver India Enterprises Solution Ltd. The portal will be used for online auction as well for various commodities.

Campus Interviews Get Due Correction

Economic slowdown has brought about some positive changes on the campus recruitment procedure. It has been observed during the IT peak time that the campus selection used to be conducted from third year students of engineering. This experienced a negative impact as the students who were selected by the companies were generally found to be reluctant in their further studies. The academicians were not very happy by the way students were neglecting their studies soon after they get an offer letter. Nasscom - the premier association for IT and ITes industry has requested all the Technological Universities and Institutions to hold the placement procedure only at the final semester in order to protect the interest of the students and the industries. All the IT Companies and Institutes now have come to an understanding that only the final year students will be allowed to sit for the placement. The sixty-plus engineering colleges under West Bengal University of Technology, Bengal Engineering College, Jadavpur University and other engineering colleges in the state have agreed to hold the campus every year to select only the final year students..

TCS bags prestigious government contract

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), the largest IT exporter from Kolkata has bagged another strategic deal from City Council of Cardiff in U.K. TCS will help the strategic transformational change to improve the quality of services by the council. With this contract TCS strengthened its position in the U.K. and also enters the lucrative government sector. TCS plans to build a new innovation centre to develop and deliver new approaches of public service. TCS, Kolkata will benefit by this development as it has a very strong U.K. offshore development centre at Kolkata.

IT Scene in West Bengal Today

Despite the economic downturn which adversely affected the Information Technology among other sectors, the IT sector in West Bengal has shown a growth of 25% in the current year over the previous year. There has also been an increase in employment in the IT sector in West Bengal which is incredible as per the industry observers. The state has recorded more than 100% growth in employment in three years time and allotted 300 acres additional land at Rajarhat, Newtown, 130 acres at Bantala and 10 acres at Nonadanga to major IT companies and IT infrastructure developers. Apart from Kolkata, satellite towns such as Siliguri, Durgapur, Kharagpur, Haldia and Kalyani are coming up as emerging IT destinations. Both in Durgapur and Siliguri 25 acres of land has been awarded for public private partnership SEZ project. The state nodal agency Webel is also developing incubation centers in Kolkata, Siliguri and Durgapur among other emerging IT destinations. The key factors for such success has been attributed by the industry observer as talent pool, low attrition, low operational cost, good connectivity and solid government support.

Aliah University in Kolkatanal

West Bengal established, first of its kind in the country, a University for the minority community called Aliah University in Kolkata. The University which started its academic session in 2008-09, offers a blend of tradition and modernity, and aims to emerge as a unique institution of higher studies and research. In spite of being a minority institution, its prime objective is to provide education to the people of any race, creed, caste or class, especially for the socially and educationally backward classes belonging to the minorities. The university will impart education not only in natural science, engineering, humanities or social science but also focus on different languages like Bengali, Urdu. Parsi etc. The University will also offer five years integrated masters course in all the streams. With the first campus of the University at Salt Lake almost complete the second campus of the University at Park Circus is under construction.

Hardware Investment in Bengal

The upcoming hardware park at Andal near Durgapur is going to attract substantial investment from Taiwan. The 100 acre hardware park will not only house hardware and component industry but also aims at solar cell projects. The solar cell project with a Taiwan solar company is at an advanced stage. This year the state has attracted Rs. 30,136 crore investment in all the sectors together and despite uncertain economic climate, the state has performed better than other leading states in the country.

More Health Care Facility in the State

Apollo Gleneagles has major plans in West Bengal to bring in quality medical facilities to the state. The medical group is already present with it's super speciality hospital in Kolkata with 425 beds. The hospital intends to scale it up to 1000 beds hospital very soon. The hospital has launched a knee clinic which is supposed to be one of its kind in Eastern India that ensure prevention and early diagnosis, with a dedicated operation theatre and a post operative rehabilitation centre. Apollo also plans to roll out its premium mother and child care facility **Cradle** in Kolkata and also a fifty bed speciality cancer hospital. Besides, Apollo has lined up a 100 crore plus expansion plan to roll out three of its smaller concept hospital Apollo-Reach in smaller towns like Asansol, Bardhaman and Siliguri. Each of these facilities will have 150 beds, 40 critical care beds to treat patients across all major medical disciplines. Besides, a super speciality hospital with 320 beds with dedicated hubs in cardiac sciences, neuro-science, nephrology, orthopedics and gastroenterology will start operating in Kolkata from January, 2010 in the first LEED certified Green Building in the country. The hospital will offer services at 30 to 60 percent cheaper than any other private city hospital.

Assocham to set up Eastern Headquarters in Kolkata

The apex industry body Assocham, in a bid to regenerate investors' interest in Bengal has decided to open a dedicated office in Kolkata. This will commence operation from early next year as Assocham Eastern Regional Headquarters. The body is organizing a business summit during first week of January in Kolkata. Assocham Secretary General said that West Bengal offers enormous scope to companies willing to set up base here.

West Bengal to spearhead experiment to replace solar panels

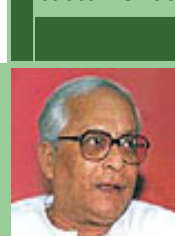
The state run West Bengal Green Energy Development Corporation has initiated a project to replace the large and cumbersome black solar panels with hair-thin wires embedded with nano particles to trap solar energy and convert them to electrical energy. The initial work has begun at Kolkata University Nano Technology Centre where scientists from West Bengal Green Energy Development Corporation, West Bengal State council of Science and Technology and a US university are working together. Experiments to develop such wires are also underway in Japan and US. WBGEDC has already held discussions with the Japanese and US counterparts so that the scientists in Kolkata can share mutual knowledge. Further, the state has planned to generate business worth Rs.10 thousand crore from solar power over next ten years.. Already country's first Mega-Watt-level solar photovoltaic power plant is in operation in the state. The state also is in a position to cater to the need of clean energy in the north-eastern state and may emerge as the major hub for the solar infrastructure industry.

Business plans from budding entrepreneurs in Kolkata

The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE), a global organization promoting entrepreneurs, has partnered with Kolkata based seed fund, Seedres which will provide seed capital to promising young entrepreneurs in the Information and Communication Technology domain. TIE, Kolkata with IIM, Calcutta and National Entrepreneurship Network invited business plans from students and young aspiring entrepreneurs. The response has been overwhelming as in the current year the number of applications have doubled compared to previous year. The business plans are being short listed through an elaborate process.

Genpact in Kolkata

Genpact, which has a very strong presence in Kolkata is exploring possibilities of acquiring companies in India as well as overseas markets such as US, China and Europe. The company is looking across verticals such as finance and accounting, health care and supply chain. Genpact has also won a five year contract from new telecom licensee Unitech Wireless to provide customer service solutions. Genpact's move may enhance its ongoing expansion program in Kolkata



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