

The honchos at **Godrej Properties** had no idea that its annual Golf Challenge would be so popular and go this far, according to **Girish Shah**, executive vice president, marketing and sales. "We have always believed in engaging with customers on a personal level, which goes a long way in cementing the bond of trust we have built over the years with our customers," says Shah, who announced that the international finals of the fourth season will be held in Thailand on 23 January. While the previous two seasons of this event for



amateur golfers saw winners of both handicap categories, 0-12 and 13-24, qualify for the finals, this season has had one final spot on offer to competitors in each of the seven club rounds, he says. An estimated 1,200 golfers participated in these rounds, with seven men from Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata, Bangalore, Delhi and Chennai qualified to play on the Nick Faldo-designed course at Bangkok's Summit Windmill Golf Club. The tournament is in continuation of Godrej Properties' philosophy that collaboration is the essence of excellence. ♦



**CESC Limited**, the power utility major of RP-Sanjiv Goenka group is now developing a residential cum commercial complex at Haldia in West Bengal with an investment of ₹150 crore. "We would build about 500,000 sq ft on a three-acre plot at Haldia. There would be 330 high and medium end residential tower and 120,000 sq ft commercial shopping complex," says **Sanjiv Goenka**, chairman of the group. The property will be developed by CESC Properties, a wholly owned subsidiary of CESC. The company will soon float

tenders for design and build the tower which is expected to be ready by 2017. CESC will keep 100 flats for its officials working in the recently commissioned power plant in Haldia and the balance would be sold to the market. This would be CESC's first venture into residential complex. A year back, Goenka had set up *Quest*, the first luxury mall of Kolkata, spread over three acres of land. "We are in the process of identifying unproductive land of our group companies for more such commercial developments," Goenka adds. ♦

Recently, **Sula Vineyards'** Dindori Reserve Shiraz featured on Wine Enthusiast's Top 100 Wines of the Year. "After some difficult years, the industry is once again experiencing strong growth of 15-20 per cent annually with exports growing even faster to markets like the UK and Japan, delivering a boon to the fast-developing wine regions of the world's latest wine power, India. This year, we will crush close to 10,000 tonnes of grapes, up 20 per cent from 2014. Total farmer payments will cross ₹40 crore," explains **Rajeev Samant**, CEO, Sula Wines. Sula works with over 300 grape growers in Maharashtra and Karnataka with 10-year assured buyback contracts. "In the 15 years since we began operations, we have built very strong relations with our growers whose ranks are growing every day. We haven't had a single contract dispute since we began, surely an amazing fact to celebrate today, our first day of harvest," adds Samant, and he is all set to launch SulaFest 2015 on 7 & 8 February. From March, India is likely to export the fruit to the US market. Currently, EU, Russia and the UAE are the biggest markets for Indian grapes. Total grape exports from India in 2013-14 stood at 192,000 tonnes, valued at \$279.50 million. ♦

When **Paranjape Schemes** started the construction of its special economic zone (SEZ), the commercial space market was gloomy with little signs of early recovery, company chairman **Shrikant Paranjape** points out. "Moreover, it was the time when SEZs were getting de-notified and the developers were hesitant to enter this field despite the government's efforts to encourage it," says Paranjape, who announced a deal with Singapore-based Ascendas Property Fund Trustee to sell the second phase of the SEZ his company is developing. "We take



pride in having been among the few developers across the nation to successfully deliver value by constructing

a quality product as per customer requirements." Ascendas is paying about ₹640 crore to the special-purpose vehicle Flagship Developers Pvt. Ltd for the 1.5 million square feet development, with a first instalment via listed non-convertible debentures an amount of ₹260 crore. The first phase of the Paranjape SEZ is ready and leased out, while the second is expected to be completely occupied by 2016 with big Indian as well as international names. "We are planning to come up with a third phase adjacent to the existing development," he says, adding that prospects seem 'really promising'. ♦



As India is becoming a talent pool for consultants globally, **CGN & Associates**, a business consulting firm which specialises in the field of supply chain design and improvement, with a specific focus on three industries in this region: engineering, automotive and consumer goods, looks to tap into the strong skill sets that are available here to make the most of a significant shift in manufacturing from West to East and from North to South, as markets and manufacturing bases in Asia expand. "Growing in India, China and SE Asia is a strategic focus for CGN & Associates," says **Alagu Balram**, partner & managing director, India Operations, CGN & Associates. "As such, India is considered a strategic market for us globally." CGN India works with companies



that are establishing bases in India and with medium to large Indian companies has historically focused on markets in the North and the South, both engineering and automotive hubs, but it has now increased its attention to western Indian states – Maharashtra and Gujarat. ♦



**Samsung Mobiles** launched four new mid-segment Android smart phones – Galaxy A3 & A5 and Galaxy E5 & E7 for the Indian market. With the Galaxy A3 & A5 phones, which are the slimmest Samsung smartphones made so far, Samsung has introduced full metal unibody design in its range. Samsung Galaxy E5 & E7 had a global launch in India, highlighting Samsung's focus on the Indian market. Quality of the phone display and selfie taking abilities have become a significant feature. And Samsung is following the trend here. "We are confident that the launch of these new devices will further expand our presence in the mid-segment of mobile phone market in India," says **Asim Warsi**, vice-president, marketing, mobile & IT, Samsung India. ♦

Like in any other sectors, digital marketing is also making its presence felt in the Indian real estate market in a big way. Leading from the front, Pune-based **Amura Technologies** is providing end-to-end solutions for real estate companies which are showing keen interest in setting up efficient marketing platforms in an intensely competitive marketing place. Backed by its holistic approach, the company is currently working with over 70 real estate developers, ranging from Lodha, Shapoorji Pallonji to Oberoi Realty, Sobha and K Raheja Corp, and has helped sell over ₹5,000-crore worth inventory for the calendar year 2014. "We are devised various models of digital marketing and sales for our clients depending upon their clients. In most of the cases, we act as their partners who can help them put up an efficient marketing channel. In a short span of time, our efforts have generated tremendous response," says **Vikram Kotnis**, founder, Amura Technologies, which has offices in almost all major cities. The company is currently on an expansion mode and looking to expand its base to smaller cities. It has grown at a CAGR of about 150 per cent in the last two years. ♦



It's been a good year for **Riyaaz Amlani**, CEO & MD, Impresario Entertainment & Hospitality Pvt Ltd, who recently launched his latest brand, Social, in Bangalore, Delhi and Mumbai. Amlani is now busy chalking out plans to grow the company further in what he terms as an "exciting market, with lots to look forward to". "People are increasingly looking for value now, and with concepts like these, we're able

to sweat the asset a lot more, what with them being open all day," he says. "We're also able to juggle the table turn-around and Average (revenue) per cover (APC) better." Amlani adds that they are looking at setting up some 20-25 stores (largely Smoke House Deli and Social over the next year or so. The company is also looking at raising \$20 million in a third round of funding, which will be used to scale up its brands. ♦



There are exciting developments here. A homegrown new economy company like Flipkart is taking on Amazon. That is an exciting development to watch. Then there are companies like Housing.com. But what I am disappointed with is that India is really falling behind on data. We need high bandwidth sources like 3G and 4G," said **Nitin Nohria**, dean, **Harvard Business School**. However, he feels India is falling behind on data and this could adversely affect the growth of new economy companies. Nohria, who will be completing five years in July as the dean of



the world's best business school (ranked by *Financial Times*), lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Make in India campaign, saying if India could focus on advanced manufacturing, it would be good. Lauding the efforts of the IITs in the sphere of entrepreneurship, Nohria said, "There is latent entrepreneurship energy in India and I am a big booster of the current efforts by the IITs." According to Nohria, entrepreneurs in India succeed despite the system and there is little being done to be fundamentally supportive. ♦



**Merck KgaA**, the German drugs and chemicals group, which made a few acquisitions in the speciality chemicals and pharma solutions space in 2014, wants to consolidate its position in India. The group's life sciences solutions division Merck Millipore – a leading provider of technology solutions and services to drug makers – will significantly benefit from the \$17 billion global acquisition of Sigma-Aldrich

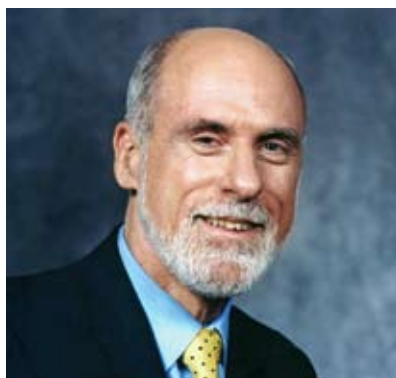
Co plc to strengthen its position in India. Sigma offers a whole range of products used in the development and manufacture of drug formulations and ingredients. Merck Millipore has a large customer base including most top pharmaceutical companies in India. In early 2014, in a \$2.48 billion deal, Merck also purchased AZ Electronic Materials SA, which makes high-purity specialty chemicals for the electronics market to expand its speciality chemicals business. AZ Electronic Materials also had a sizable business and manufacturing facility in India. "The products available in Sigma's portfolio is completely complimentary to the technology solutions and services currently provided by Merck in India, a priority market for us," said **Udit Batra**, the new global president and chief executive officer of **Merck Millipore**, during his visit to the country recently. ♦

**CFA Institute** of the US is witnessing significant increase in the number of participants registering for its exam globally, held twice a year, in June and December, and its managing director, **Paul Smith** believes it's on course to achieve record registration this year. "We're likely to achieve record levels this year," says Smith. "However, it's not clear why we're seeing this uptake." The reason, according to Smith could be economic growth returning in western countries and the growth of financial services in emerging economies. Participants from India are currently third highest, after US and China. But, given India's size and population and increasing penetration of education and rising awareness, Smith believes, at some point in the future, the candidate base in India



would be several times than that of US. Towards that, CFA Institute has already opened an Indian subsidiary in Mumbai in December 2014. The institute's Claritas Investment certificate programme, targeted at 90 per cent of the staff of asset management companies has found great resonance in India. ♦

Hailed as the 'Father of the Internet', and co-designed with Robert Kahn the protocols and basic architecture of the Internet, **Vinton G. Cerf** is currently chief Internet evangelist at **Google**. Last fortnight Cerf met minister for communications and information technology Ravi Shankar Prasad to discuss the role the search engine giant can play in



supporting the government's vision for a digital India. "It is a very early stage of discussion. Google is interested in being helpful (to the Digital India project). We have some ideas. We want to share with them those ideas to find out which of them make sense. Maybe they will have better ideas than us," said Cerf. "It

is clear that the private sector is going to play a major role, but it will not work unless basic infrastructure that the government proposes to bring in, is put into place," he added. The government's ambitious Digital India project aims to connect all *gram panchayats* by broadband Internet, promote e-governance and transform India into a connected knowledge economy. ♦