

# India's steel industry shows the potential for a North-South industrial takeoff

*EIR* correspondents Ortrun and Hartmut Cramer conducted the following interviews during a five-week visit to India in March and April, following the March Non-Aligned summit meeting in New Delhi. As the *EIR* correspondents found, the propaganda being circulated in Europe by such proponents of Malthusian policy as the Club of Rome that development projects in the Third World amount to nothing more than "cathedrals in the desert" is refuted by India's steel industry. The current production levels of India's steel plants, the living standards in the towns built with the plants, and particularly the commitment of the engineers, managers, and workers, show how such development projects can transform a nation.

In the 35 years since independence, India has tripled agricultural production, quadrupled coal production, and increased steel and cement production tenfold. Generation of electricity has been increased 20 times and fertilizer production 200 times, and both a machine-building industry and nuclear industry have been built from nothing. As a result of this industrialization, as well as mass education and modern medical programs, India's population has nearly doubled from 350 million in 1947, and includes an industrial labor force of 50 million, and the fourth-largest number of scientists in the world.

Yet India's industry and agriculture are facing two acute bottlenecks: the lack of sufficient energy and water. Proposals for a National Energy Grid and a National Water Grid, both under discussion throughout the nation, could only be realized by international financial and technological efforts—which could be launched by the new world economic order under discussion at the Non-Aligned summit.

India's 35 years of economic miracles were achieved under the dirigist policies of Jawaharlal Nehru, known in India as the "Symphony of Industrialization." This policy was responsible for the creation of the industrial cities of Jamshedpur, Rourkela, and Ranchi. Jamshedpur was built by the founder of India's steel industry, Jamsetji Tata, after he visited the American steel cities of Birmingham, Pittsburgh, Chattanooga, and Cleveland in 1902. Tata built his city, with the help of American engineers and in the face of

severe British opposition, in the heart of India's ore-rich area. Both Jamshedpur and Rourkela, which was designed with the help of German engineers, not only include excellent education, medical, and social facilities, but also sponsor rural development programs for the surrounding villages.

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## Interview: M. M. Bhatnagar

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### 'We have brought vital know-how to India'

*The Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) in Ranchi, one of Asia's largest heavy engineering complexes, was started by the government of India in 1959 with Soviet and Czechoslovakian assistance. It consists of the Roundry Forge Plant, one of the largest in the world; the Heavy Machine Building Plant, the largest of its kind in Asia; and the Heavy Machine Tools plant. HEC is the pioneer of self-reliance in the field in India and possesses the technical know-how, engineering capability, and manufacturing facilities to design, manufacture, and supply a wide range of equipment as well as complete plants to steel and other metallurgical industries on a turnkey basis, from concept to commissioning.*

*HEC's product range includes complete coke ovens, blast furnaces, rolling mills, sintering plants, steel converters, and metallurgical cranes as well as bulk material handling equipment such as wagon loaders, large size excavators, and crushers of various types. Heavy castings, forgings, and a variety of heavy machine tools are designed and manufactured conforming to rigid international standards.*

*HEC has primarily served the Indian core industries like the steel, mining, aluminium, and cement industry, but has also contributed to the heavy electrical industry, the building of ships and railways, and the drilling of deep wells in the drought-affected areas of India.*

*M. M. Bhatnagar, the general manager of the Heavy Machine Building Plant (HMBP) and one of the leading*