

AsianBusiness

BUSINESS NEWS THAT MATTERS

Every week, **AsianBusiness** gives you the latest news, whether it's about a country or a company. We are the place to find out what's happening with Asian-run businesses in the UK, developments in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Send your press releases and pictures to editor@easterneye.eu if you want to tell us what's going on with your business.

'UK MUST STOP INDIA AID NOW'

MPs call for end to poverty hand-outs

by NADEEM BADSHAH

THERE is mounting pressure on the government to stop giving money to India - after it denied making a U-turn on aid pledges.

Reports that Britain will axe aid to India have been rubbished by the Department for International Development (DFID).

Despite the public sector cuts, Britain will still give around £1 billion over the next four years to tackle poverty in the sub-continent.

The pledge has sparked fury among MPs who argue India can afford nuclear weapons, a space programme and has three times as many billionaires as Britain.

But leading charities say India has the largest concentration of people living below the World Bank's poverty line of \$1.25/day (76p), while 46 per cent of kids aged under three suffer malnutrition.

On Tuesday (14), a report from MPs on the Commons international development committee slammed Britain for not having a long-term aid strategy in India. One critic is Tory politician Philip Davies.

The MP for Shipley told *EE*: "My view is India has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, spends \$35 billion (£21bn) a year on defence, \$700 million (£427m) a year on a space programme and has started developing its own overseas aid budget.

"In that context, it is totally unjustifiable for us to continue giving aid to India."

The international aid budget and health budget is protected from the public sector cuts. But Andrew Mitchell (*pictured*), the international development secretary, has said the UK would not continue to fund programmes in India "for very much longer".

In a TV interview last Sunday (12) he revealed: "India is a place where there are more poor people than the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. Britain's programme is de-

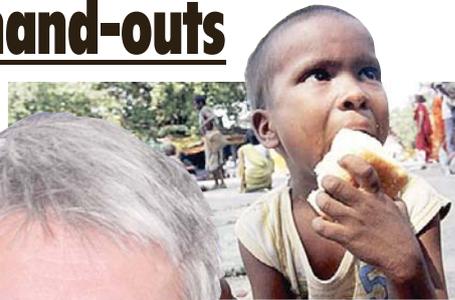
monstrative, it shows how we can get more people into school, and women particularly.

"These programmes are massively scaled up by the Indian taxpayer. British know how is making a huge contribution - now is not the time to stop the programme in India, but I don't think we will be there for very much longer."

But charities warn that aid to India should continue. An Oxfam spokesman said: "British aid to India should continue as long as it is needed."

A DFID spokesman said: "We will maintain the level of our current programme at £280m a year for the next four years, but we will change the nature of what we do to focus more on the poorest people in the poorest states.

"We will not be in India forever but the time has not yet come to end the aid completely."



TEMPORARY OVERSEAS WORKFORCE WORRY

BUSINESS leaders have warned that government plans to create a 'temporary overseas workforce' will hamper the economic recovery.

The government aims to prevent some skilled migrants from outside the European Union (EU) from settling permanently.

Amit Kapadia (*pictured*), executive director of the Highly Skilled Migrants Programme Forum, told *EE*: "The govern-



ment's new proposals of delinking work visas from settlement is going to make it difficult for Britain to lure highly skilled migrants in comparison to other countries like Australia and Canada where migrants enter those countries on a permanent settlement.

"The government just recently (April 2011) applied retrospective settlement criteria to existing migrants on tier 1 and tier 2 visas which in itself was draconian.

"We are concerned the government may apply these new proposals unlawfully yet again on existing migrants who are due for their settlement, even though the courts have earlier ruled such retrospective changes to be unlawful."

Under current rules, migrants who work in Britain for five years are allowed to settle here permanently.

The proposals will break the link between working and automatic perma-

nent settlement, except for a limited number of highly skilled workers.

Adam Marshall of the British Chambers of Commerce said: "Turving out valuable migrant workers who are turned down for settlement would be incredibly disruptive to companies of all sizes, and to the United Kingdom's economic recovery."

Home secretary Theresa May said: "Britain will continue to attract the brightest and best workers who will make a strong contribution to our economy and society during their stay, then return home."

Shetty's food chain in ruins

AN Indian restaurant chain partly owned by Bollywood babe Shilpa Shetty has gone into administration.

V8 Gourmet Group, where Shetty has a 30 per cent stake, is with London-based administrators Re10 despite attempts to save it.

Shetty pumped £6 million into the group in 2009, before stepping down as a director last year.

Gourmet Creations and V8 Gourmet was producing a range of ready-meals and chutneys by Shetty.

The group owns restaurant chains Bombay Bicycle Club, Tiffinbites, VAMA, as well as the airline catering arm Khana by VAMA and Silk Events.

V8 Gourmet Group has 264 employees on over 17 restaurant and takeaway sites, serving Indian cuisine.

Last month, HM Revenue & Customs petitioned for a winding up order.

Seminar offers business help

'HOW to start a business and run a shop' are some of the topics that will be covered in a business seminar organised by the National Congress of Gujarati Organisations (JUK).

Taking place at the Sattavis Patadar Centre in Wembley, London, it will cover a multitude of business issues, including subjects such as taxation, security and legislation.

A variety of speakers will be giving advice and tips.

For more information, contact mahendra.jadeja@jardins.co.uk

99p store to increase staff

THE 99p Stores has revealed plans to create 1200 new jobs.

The chain of budget shops will open 30 new branches by next January.

It announced record profits for the year ending January 2011 from £1.8m to £6.3m.

Its turnover increase from £183m to £231m was mainly down to the introduction of a wider range of products including the 99p sandwich, milk, dairy, meats and eggs.

Owner Hussein Lalani said: "We began as a one-man band opening up in less affluent highly populated parts of the UK. Now we are a national brand with stores in the leafy parts of the country. Britain's consumers have an insatiable appetite for a bargain."

JOBS • DIVERSE EMPLOYER'S GUIDE • JOBS

www.jobbuster.com

DEG EMPLOYER'S PROFILES ON BRITAIN'S BEST ETHNIC RECRUITMENT WEBSITE