

# 42.9 Australian group to expand activity in India

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Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Sept. 17. — A major Australian mining software event, the Surpac Minex Group Asia Pacific User's Conference, was inaugurated by Mr Manabendra Mukherjee, state information technology minister, here today. The group is planning to carry out some expansion activities in India.

As of now the group has customers such as Coal India Ltd, Tata Steel, Lafarge, ACC, Birla Cement, Sesa Goa and Dempo. The group is committed to India, having several offices and support centres in the country, according to a group spokesperson.

The first Asia Pacific User's Conference is being held in Kolkata, as, according to him, Kolkata is the mining capital of India.

Acknowledging Australia's leadership position in



Mr Jon Barber, director (R), Surpac Minex Group, at the Asia Pacific Users' Conference in Kolkata on Wednesday. — The Statesman

mining software and systems, Mr Mukherjee underlined the growing importance of mining, particularly in West Bengal. The information technology minister also emphasised the capabilities of the state in IT, and urged foreign investors to set up both BPO units and software development centres in India.

The Surpac Minex Group, a wholly Australian-owned company, formed with the merger of Surpac Software, Perth, and ECS International,

New South Wales, has emerged as the largest mining software company in the world. It has a wide suite of products for mining, geology and allied applications, with modularity and across the board compatibility.

Mr Jon Barber, director, coal, Mr, Steve Carter, director, R&D, Mr Andrew Pyne, GM Asia Pacific and Mr Narinderjit Singh, chief, India, were in the city to address the gathering of mining engineers, geologists and software & systems engineers.

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THE STATESMAN

## India, Australia sign MoU on terrorism

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, AUG. 28. India and Australia today signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism. Signed by the Australian Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, and the visiting External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, in Adelaide, the counter-terror protocol was seen by both countries as a qualitative index of the emerging and expanding "strategic convergence" on the bilateral front.

Mr. Downer hailed the MoU as "an agreement to join forces in the battle against regional and global terrorism". Noting that the accord "will forge closer cooperation between.... (the) security, intelligence and law enforcement agencies" of the two countries, Mr. Downer said the anti-terror cooperation was "the focus of the third round of the Australia-India Foreign Ministers' framework dialogue" that was held earlier in the day.

The other subjects discussed ranged from the proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction to North Korea, Iraq as also the situation in South and South East Asia.

Emphasising that the Australia-India "strategic convergence" was also "matched (now) by an expanding commercial partnership", Mr. Downer drew attention to Canberra's "capacity and willingness to support New Delhi's economic expansion". With this MoU, Australia sought to diversify its strategic engagement of key countries.

Mr. Sinha, responding to questions from *The Hindu* in Singapore ahead of today's event in Adelaide, said that "the MoU provides for establishment of a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism".

This would "enable policy-level dialogue at regular intervals (and) it will also strengthen ongoing cooperation at the technical level between law-enforcement agencies of the two

countries".

Noting that it was Australia that took the initiative for this MoU, Mr. Sinha said this "reflects their readiness to engage with us on an issue that has become the biggest security challenge of our times".

It was, therefore, "a good beginning". Without wishing to be drawn directly into commenting on the latest Australian proposal that India, among a few others, could be made a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council but without the veto power, Mr. Sinha identified the "several new initiatives" on the bilateral front such as the framework dialogue itself and the upgradation of the strategic dialogue.

### 'Proof against Pak.'

PTI reports from Adelaide:

Australia today said there was "irrefutable" proof that Pakistan was a source of terrorism and there had been support for terrorist outfits in the country for many years.

THE HINDU

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