

South Asia Times

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THERE'S ONLY ONE CHOICE



No APEC membership for India

By our correspondent

Sydney: The recent APEC meet in Sydney decided not to admit any new members until 2010. The ten-year moratorium on expending membership expired this year. But reports indicate that India was among the countries frozen from

membership. Australia's Foreign Minister said he would like India to join APEC, but it is one of 12 countries interested in becoming a new member.

An AFP report quoting a Philippine official said India's entry was seen by certain Western members as making the Asian presence in APEC stronger. They were not opposed to new membership of smaller non Asian nations.

(Left) While India did not find place in APEC, the most famous Indian Mahatma Gandhi found place among the anti-Bush protests in Sydney on September 8. Photo by Kerryn Williams (Green Left Weekly)

"My private view is that APEC would benefit from India being a member. But there's certainly, from our discussions over the last few months, there's certainly not been any emerging consensus for expanding the membership of APEC," he said.

Aside from India, other potential APEC candidates include Pakistan, Colombia, Ecuador, Macau, Mongolia, Panama, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

G'day mate, get ready for citizenship test

By our analyst

Melbourne: If you are planning to become an Australian citizen then you should be ready to acquire the basics like G'day mate, cricket and much more under the new citizenship test announced on August 26 this year. You should also be in a position to identify the country's national flower and know the first line of Australia's national anthem. Knowledge of English is considered essential for an aspiring citizen. These are some of the citizenship application procedures outlined in a 40-page document, where the government has also detailed the history and political institutions of the country.

The proposed tests have come under heavy criticism. The ACT Multicultural Affairs Minister John Hargreaves has rejected the

of Australian values - would ultimately alienate members of the community who come from diverse backgrounds.



new draft citizenship guidelines, saying the testing system is fatally flawed. The minister said the proposed citizenship test - which assesses an applicant's knowledge

"Such a test cannot possibly ascertain a person's suitability for citizenship or commitment to Australia. The most this test can achieve is an assessment of a person's literacy and memory, neither of which are appropriate determinants of whether or not a person should be able to become an Australian citizen, he says. The Victorian government, for example, believes that by introducing the citizenship test "The greatest risk is the potential exclusion of valuable members of the Australian community

(Continued on page 34)



Indian President, Mrs. Pratibha Devisingh Patil presenting the Best Film Actor Award for the year 2005 to Mr. Amitabh Bachchan for his role in the Hindi Film "Black", at the 53rd National Film Awards function, in New Delhi on September 14, 2007. (Report on page 34)

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