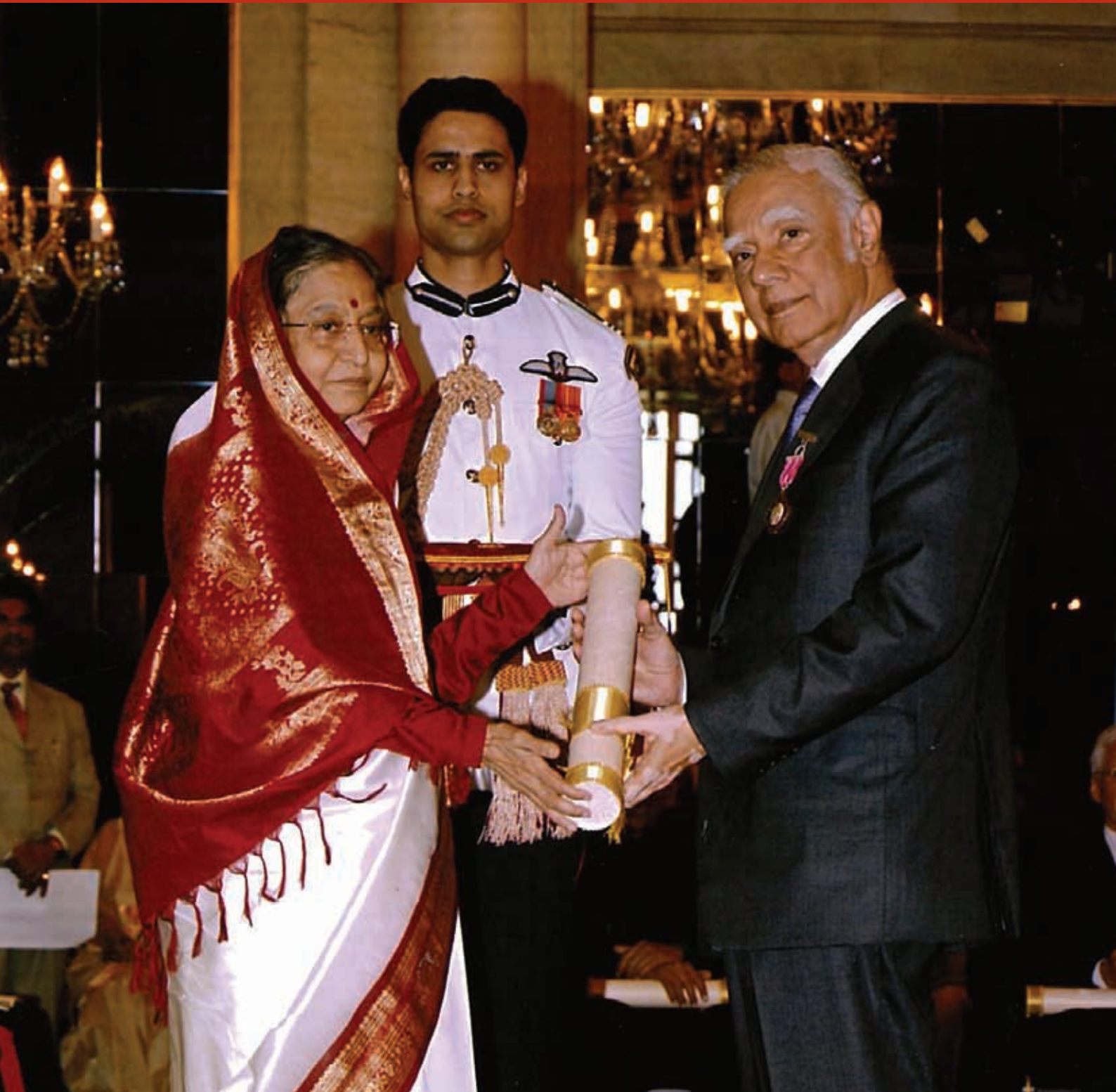


SOUTH ASIA

A Publication of the Institute of South Asian Studies



NUS
National University
of Singapore

iSAS
Institute of South Asian Studies

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Photo: Courtesy of President's Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi

Ambassador Gopinath Pillai (right), Chairman, Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), Singapore, receiving the *Padma Shri* Award from the President of India, Mrs Pratibha Devisingh Patil, at the *Rashtrapati Bhavan* in New Delhi on 4 April 2012.



From the Director's Desk

Dear Readers

For us at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) in Singapore, it has been a happy season of great celebration since the previous issue of *South Asia* was published. This is amply reflected in this issue, with the Cover Story featuring an interview with ISAS Chairman, Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, who was conferred India's *Padma Shri* Award on 4 April 2012. We are also happy to record that India has conferred the *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman* Award on Singapore's former President, Mr S R Nathan, who has been a great source of inspiration for ISAS.

I also take this opportunity to heartily welcome three new Members of the ISAS Board. They are Mr Ng How Yue, Second Permanent Secretary in Singapore's Ministry of Trade & Industry; Mr Girija Pande, Chairman-Asia Pacific, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd., Singapore; and Dr S Nasim, Global CEO, Meinhardt Group International Ltd.

At ISAS, where research is our mainstay, we also focus on subjects which are somewhat off the beaten track and do not always fall under the rubric of scholarly studies. Such output is often reflected in *South Asia*, a slim twice-a-year ISAS publication. Whenever necessary, *South Asia* covers conventional developments as well.

In tune with ISAS' focus on South Asia and the South Asian Diaspora, this issue features an unusual aspect of the Pakistan Day celebrations in Singapore in March 2012. Another article traces how cricket has been a happy distraction in Sri Lanka at the height of its internal conflict. The South Asian Diaspora segment contains articles, among others, on the Malayalee community and the Telugu identity.

Also chronicled in this issue are two of our recent books that relate to the expanding horizon of ISAS – a look at South Asia's links with China. The books are: *A Resurgent China: South Asian Perspectives*, edited by Professor Tan Tai Yong and Professor S D Muni, and *China-India Economics* by Dr Amitendu Palit.

ISAS has also remained on course in studying various developments across South Asia. This can be gleaned from the listing of our publications and events in the months under review. Besides our Seventh International Conference on South Asia in November 2011, we conducted a Workshop on 'Afghanistan in Transition: Beyond 2014?' in January 2012. ISAS held a Closed-Door Dialogue with Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa in February 2012. India's External Affairs Minister S M Krishna delivered a public lecture under the auspices of ISAS in March 2012. I may also mention that ISAS brought together media representatives from India and China for a candid dialogue in Singapore in May 2012.

Amid our public engagements, we intend to keep in touch with you through ISAS research publications and *South Asia*. Please read on! ■

TAN TAI YONG

India Salutes a Singapore Statesman

P S Suryanarayana

Singapore's former President, Mr S R Nathan, has portrayed his illustrious career in public affairs as the unexpected journey to high office. Significantly, his unexpected passage to fame is viewed by the authorities in India, the land of his ancestors, as the manifest destiny of an industrious person of Indian origin like him.

The two views are eminently compatible. The unexpectedness of Mr Nathan's journey in diplomacy and politics signifies a thoughtful individualist perspective. As for the other view, the now-'rising' India is increasingly proud of the achievements of "overseas Indians", wherever they might be residing.

From New Delhi's perspective, there are two distinct categories of "overseas Indians" – the Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) who live outside India but hold its passports, and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), who are citizens of other states. Together, the two categories constitute the *Pravasi Bharatiya* community. Since 2003, New Delhi has been honouring eminent

persons in these two categories who catch the imagination of Indian leaders or, in fact, are brought to their attention. The highest honour being conferred on "overseas Indians" – known as *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award* – is presented to a select few at the annual conventions of NRIs and PIOs at one or another major Indian city.

The convention takes place on 9 January every year in fond reminiscence of the day Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1915. He later led the then British-ruled India to independence through a non-violent movement that earned him the title of *Mahatma*, the Great Soul, and *Father of the Nation*. His unique act of home-coming is translatable, for today's NRIs and PIOs, as actions that could benefit India or raise its ethnic profile on the global stage.

Viewed in this perspective, Mr Nathan, no stranger to India's cultural and social mores, is a person of Indian origin in the most visible spectrum of individual



Photos: Courtesy of High Commission of India in Singapore

Singapore's former President, Mr S R Nathan (left), receiving the *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award* from India's Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Mr Vayalar Ravi, at *India House* in Singapore on 28 April 2012.



Mr Nathan and his wife in the company of Mr Ravi after the award presentation.

attainments in the realm of Singapore's politics and public affairs. Unsurprising, therefore, is the timely manner in which India chose him for this Award soon after he relinquished office as the city-state's President upon completing two successive terms at its centre stage.

In a grand gesture to him, India's Overseas Indian Affairs Minister Vayalar Ravi conferred the Award on Mr Nathan in Singapore on 28 April 2012. The Singapore statesman was earlier unable to travel to Jaipur to be honoured directly by India's President, Mrs Pratibha Devisingh Patil.

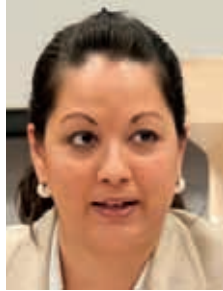
Mr Ravi as well as India's High Commissioner to Singapore, T C A Raghavan, and Singapore Indian Association President, K Kesavapany, eulogised Mr Nathan at the special function held at *India House* in Singapore for this purpose. *India House*, a restored mansion, is known for its elegance as a heritage asset in Singapore.

The official citation, presented to Mr Nathan at the special function, specifies the high offices he has held in diplomacy, strategic affairs, and politics. He is described as "an extremely distinguished Singapore public servant". Another distinguished recipient of the 2012 *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award* is Ms Kamla Persad-Bissessar, a PIO from the political domain of another country,

Trinidad and Tobago. She is that country's Prime Minister. Notable, too, among the 13 other winners of the same high Award in 2012 are Kalpalatha Kummamuri Guntupalli and P V Radhakrishna Pillai. As the Honorary Secretary of the Bahrain Keraleeya Samajam, Mr Pillai has been "recognised for his outstanding contribution to the Indian community". Ms Kalpalatha, the first Indian woman to be President of the American College of Chest Physicians in the United States, is "recognised for her contributions in the field of medicine and for outstanding public service". ■

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Strengthening Regional Security Cooperation in South Asia



Guest writer:
Naureen Chowdhury Fink

The international response to the terrorist attacks on iconic targets in the United States on 11 September 2001 focused largely on measures in the realm of law enforcement. However, in 2006, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Global Counterterrorism Strategy that outlined a more holistic approach to address the climate conducive to the threat of terrorism, in a way designed to prevent and combat terrorism, and ensure human rights as the fundamental basis of all counterterrorism efforts.

The important roles played by a range of key stakeholders, including states, regional and sub-regional organisations and civil society organisations (CSOs), have been recognised in the Strategy. Moreover, when the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1963 in December 2010, it encouraged its team of counterterrorism experts, the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), to interact with CSOs and other nongovernmental partners in its efforts to monitor the global implementation of Resolutions 1373 and 1624 — the former placing on all states a common set of obligations to strengthen international efforts to address global terrorism.

Civil society organisations and other nongovernmental actors, including academics, think-tanks, practitioners and experts, provide an important platform for local, national and regional efforts to address common security and developmental challenges. They have important roles to play in education, oversight and policy advocacy; they can play a constructive role in the redress of grievances and providing a voice to marginalised groups, often including families of victims and individual survivors of terrorist attacks. CSOs can complement or

support ongoing governmental efforts through the provision of information, analyses, training and outreach. CSOs can also help ensure that counterterrorism measures respect human rights and the rule of law, and that counterterrorism capacity-building measures also have attendant benefits in strengthening national institutional capacities.

On 26 and 27 April 2012, the Institute of South Asian Studies in Singapore and the Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation (CGCC, New York and Washington DC) co-hosted a workshop to explore the roles of civil society and multilateral actors in strengthening regional security cooperation in South Asia. In particular, participants focused on the ongoing activities in areas recognised by the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy as relevant to efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism. Among some of the issues considered were, for example, the role of the media in creating or mitigating an atmosphere conducive to the spread of extremism and terrorism; the role of women in addressing crucial development and security issues which might underscore grievances that lead to terrorism; the efforts of think-tanks to forge national and regional strategies promoting a whole-of-government approach to counterterrorism; and how efforts to promote better governance, the rule of law and human rights underscore and contribute to these initiatives.

The meeting was opened by Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow at ISAS and former Foreign Advisor (Foreign Minister) of Bangladesh, and Alistair Millar, Director, CGCC. Participants included senior representatives of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF), the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), the Alliance of Civilizations (AOC) as well as academics and experts representing think-tanks, universities, non-governmental organisations and civil society actors from throughout South Asia.

This workshop reflected the more holistic approach to counterterrorism taken by the international community and embodied in the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy. As states and regions confront more “non-traditional” and transnational security challenges posed by non-state actors operating across political boundaries, they have increasingly recognised the importance of a



Photo: Mr Muhammad Yusuf, ISAS

Photo taken on the occasion of the workshop on 'Promoting Regional Security Cooperation in South Asia', co-hosted by Center on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation (CGCC), New York, and ISAS, Singapore. Seated (from left): Mr Farooq Sobhan, Bangladesh's former Foreign Secretary; Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh's former Foreign Minister who is now Senior Research Fellow at ISAS; Mr Alistair Millar, CGCC Director; Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Chairman, ISAS; and Professor Tan Tai Yong, Director, ISAS.

collective regional and international effort to address these challenges. The UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) is already working with law enforcement officials and frontline counterterrorism practitioners, including prosecutors and police officials, from all South Asian states to support collaborative approaches to training and capacity-building in the region. The April 2012 workshop at ISAS represented an innovative mirror process, focused on the role and potential of civil society to contribute to regional efforts to implement the measures embodied in the relevant protocols of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and the UN.

Earlier, in November 2008, CGCC hosted a workshop on "Countering Terrorism in South Asia: What role for multilateral engagement?" The deliberations of that conference resulted in an outcome report of that same name. In October 2011, a follow-up roundtable was held in New York, bringing together UN officials, academics and experts from South Asia and key stakeholders. Together, these discussions highlighted three key inter-related areas in which efforts contribute to countering terrorism and violent extremism, promoting human rights and good governance and strengthening the rule of law.

At this ISAS workshop, these three areas formed the basis of the discussions and it is anticipated the follow-up workshops will delve deeper into the specific regional priorities and challenges within these issue areas,

highlighted by the participants. Moreover, these workshops will represent not only opportunities to enhance skills and capacities of civil society organisations, but also to strengthen collaboration among them throughout South Asia.

Since the inception of SAARC, terrorism has been factored prominently on the agenda of this regional organisation. In 1988, member-countries adopted the Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. In 2006, an Additional Protocol aligned it with the obligations mandated by the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 for all states to criminalise the support and financing of terrorism. These workshops represent an effort to strengthen collective efforts in South Asia and the United Nations to uphold and implement these common values to protect the sovereignty, integrity and development of the states and their citizens in South Asia. ■

For more information, visit www.un.org/terrorism and www.globalct.org.

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New Branding of Pakistan-China Links

P S Suryanarayana

The current international political discourse often resonates with proclamations about relations among major states. Sample some of these diplomatic brands: 'the most important bilateral relationship in the 21st Century (i.e., the United States-China equation)', 'the indispensable partnership (i.e., the US-India engagement)', and 'the all-weather friendship (i.e., the China-Pakistan ties)'. Bangladesh is also said to enjoy 'all-weather friendship' with China.

Truly interesting in this overall context is a political pun on the numerical identity of this century. Newly minted in Pakistan's non-official circles, the pun reads: '21:21 – We together make 21 per cent of the world in the 21st Century'. It is easy to guess the emphatic point that is being made. China and Pakistan together are said to constitute 21 per cent of the global population at this stage.

What is relevant is not the arithmetical exactitude of this assertion at any point in time. Noteworthy, instead, is the attractive manner in which the pun has been put to use in Islamabad and also propagated during Pakistan's National Day celebrations in Singapore in March 2012.

As part of the celebrations in Singapore, a cultural troupe of young Pakistani school children presented a dance-drama in Mandarin. The focus was on such themes as the ancient Indus Valley Civilisation and the Silk Route, a historical trade link. Featuring colourful costumes and specific musical tunes, the programme was designed to showcase the efforts of young Pakistani children at learning the Chinese language and applying it to understand their own historical heritage. A blend of Confucian thoughts, Chinese martial arts, and Buddha's imprint

on the Asia-Pacific region was also at the core of the programme design, according to a Pakistani diplomat closely associated with this cultural performance in Singapore.

The show can indeed be seen as an integral part of a private sector initiative in Pakistan to popularise at home the long-flourishing diplomatic bonhomie between Islamabad and Beijing. And, the choice of Mandarin as the medium for this enterprise at the non-political level of young school children has made the programme relevant to audiences outside Pakistan and China. And, Singapore's close familiarity with Mandarin makes the city-state a natural venue for such a programme.

The child-artistes were from the Chinese Language Department of the Roots School System (RSS), said to be one of the largest educational networks in Pakistan. Interestingly, the Chinese Language Curriculum for the young school children is branded as "Class 21:21". The adult-appropriate flourish of this brand can be traced to the efforts at introducing young Pakistani children to China and its culture within the ambience of "all-weather friendship"



Photos: Courtesy of High Commission of Pakistan in Singapore

Pakistani children participating in a Mandarin dance-drama event organised by the High Commission of Pakistan in Singapore in March 2012.



The Pakistan High Commission in Singapore has, in a press release, profiled the school’s overall image. The RSS has co-branded an information technology curriculum with Intel, a global IT leader. “Intel Singapore, Intel US and Intel Pakistan have collectively approved this curriculum”, says the Pakistani statement, also noting that the Intel-RSS Joint Curriculum “has emerged as a benchmark in South Asia.”

biotechnology ... [and] medical science”, the Pakistani High Commissioner to Singapore, Syed Hasan Javed, says that the route to long-term prosperity of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) goes through Pakistan. ■

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Referring to Pakistan’s attainments in not just IT but also “nuclear science and technology, genetics and



Cricket and Conflict in Sri Lanka: Building Temporary Bridges

Gloria Spittel

Cricket in Sri Lanka is not a religion. It is a welcome distraction that grew to a national pastime especially after the Sri Lankan national team won the International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup in 1996. The game was a pleasant distraction during the long years of the war between the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL). The game provided unusual space in which the population could feel a semblance of 'normalcy' through the joy and trappings of competitive sport.

The national team has instilled pride and hope in a society ravaged by war and it continues to be an example of how Sri Lankans of all races and social classes can work together in the pursuit of a common goal. Questions and discussions on the role of cricket in post-war reconciliation gained momentum in 2011. The discourse remains pertinent.

In 2011, Sri Lanka jointly hosted the 10th edition of the ICC World Cup. It was the second time Sri Lanka played host to the games, the first was in 1996. However, the environment in which the games were played had changed. In 1996, the West Indies and Australia forfeited playing their matches in Sri Lanka owing to the then-ongoing war. By 2011, the war was over, but heavy security restrictions, including a long list of prohibited items, were imposed on the spectators. Regardless, the stadia were packed, the atmosphere was rife with merrymaking and anticipation, as the Sri Lankan team progressed to the final for the third time, the earlier appearances in the final being in 1996 and 2007.

There was an overwhelming desire for a Sri Lanka win in the 2011 final: not simply for the sake of the game and national glory, but also for a symbolic pair of victories to emphasise that the country and the team had triumphed

over terrorism. The dream was not realised but cricket, as a Sri Lankan passion, was not the loser.

In 2007, while Sri Lanka faced Australia during the ICC World Cup final in the West Indies, the LTTE called off a self-proclaimed cease-fire which was declared for the games – carrying out an air raid on Colombo. As a result, a distinctive part of the memories of the 2007 final was the sight and noise of the Sri Lankan Air Force air-defence systems going into gear coupled with an electricity blackout for some time during the game. Ironically, the team, separated by thousands of miles from its home turf, was playing in semi-darkness due to the weather conditions at the venue of the final. Sri Lanka lost that game.

In March 2009, the bus carrying the national team to the Gaddafi (previously Lahore) Stadium in Lahore, Pakistan, where Sri Lanka had won the World Cup in 1996, came under fire by armed gunmen. The team survived the attack, with some players sustaining gun-shot injuries. Simultaneously in Sri Lanka, the war was at its height and security conditions in Sri Lanka had worsened. The touring national team shared the tribulations of the Sri Lankan populace. As such in 2011, winning the trophy became something Sri Lanka 'deserved', it was not to be.

These events led to discussions on the role of cricket in Sri Lanka. In 2007, when the LTTE declared a ceasefire for the games, there was much euphoria on how cricket had 'united' the country and could possibly pave the way to peace. In 2009, the dignified way in which the cricketers reacted to the terror attack on their convoy provided an example for the populace to deal with the worsening security environment. In 2011, the discussions focused on cricket's ability to unite the war-torn communities and society in Sri Lanka in general, owing to the



Photo: Ms Gloria Spittel, ISAS.

Cricket enthusiasts at the ICC 2011 World Cup semi-final between Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

atmosphere of unity at the games.

But does cricket in Sri Lanka really provide space for reconciliation amongst the communities? To this end, current and ex-cricketers have set up training camps in the North, and they are involved in philanthropic activities. The cricketers have also been fielded in paid advertisements, emphasising the theme of a united Sri Lanka inclusive of all races and social classes (Mobitel's 'I am Sri Lanka' campaign).

Can sport accomplish reconciliation in Sri Lanka? Perhaps! Cricket has provided a common ground to break the ice between communities. But some signs of linguistic and ethnic partisanship among the Sri Lankan spectators, especially towards the teams from other countries, are problematic for segments of society in Sri Lanka. The GoSL has ushered in a language policy aimed at breaking the language barriers between communities. However, it is only through a careful government policy, designed to address communal differences and grievances, that the temporary bridges of reconciliation, forged at a cricket match, can be converted into permanent bridges of national harmony. ■

The national team has instilled pride and hope in a society ravaged by war and it continues to be an example of how Sri Lankans of all races and social classes can work together in the pursuit of a common goal. Questions and discussions on the role of cricket in post-war reconciliation gained momentum in 2011. The discourse remains pertinent.

Ms Gloria Spittel is Research Associate at ISAS. She can be contacted at isasgloria@nus.edu.sg.

The Telugu Identity

Anusha Thallam

An edition of the World Telugu Conference was held in Singapore in 2002. Another version is scheduled to take place in Malaysia towards the end of 2012.

In 1994, when *Raj Reddy of the United States* won the highest global award in Computer Science – the *A.M. Turing Award* – he did the global Telugu community very proud indeed. He was in fact the first Asian-origin person to win this highly coveted Award, the equivalent of *Nobel Prize* in the post-modern domain of Computer Science.

Interestingly, another Asian-origin computer scientist, *Andrew Chi-Chih Yao of China* was conferred the *A.M. Turing Award* in 2000.

The Indian state of Andhra Pradesh (inclusive of Telangana, as of June 2012), the ancestral home of Telugus all over the world, has long been heir to *Nagarjuna's* ancient Buddhist philosophy and the old Buddhist art of *Amaravati*, both of which spread to East Asia. And being adept now at Information Technology (IT), a favoured subject of specialisation among the Telugus, they have made a distinctive mark far outside India.

There is, however, an interesting legacy-aspect of British India's sway over the Malaya peninsula and Singapore. The identity of many Telugus long settled in this part of the world (especially the identity of the Telugu-origin people from India's Tamil Nadu state) remains subsumed, by and large, in the identity of the Tamils in Singapore.

Such a legacy-aspect is beginning to change, with the

new Telugu migrants to Singapore seeking an exclusive identity within the overarching globalised identity of this city-state. Telugu is one of India's acknowledged classical languages, the others being Sanskrit, Pali, Tamil, and Kannada.

Historically, Telugu-speaking people have migrated to different parts of the world and are still doing so in search of better economic and living opportunities. They are well settled in various parts of the developed world, most notably in the US. Among the Asian countries, Singapore has been a sought-after destination for many Telugus, essentially for its geographical proximity to India and better economic opportunities.

Apart from the British colonial-era migration of Tamils and Telugus, the presence of Telugus in modern Singapore can be traced to a number of factors. In the beginning, the Telugus migrated to Singapore as workers in marine industry and as traders etc. However, since the advent of the latest wave of globalisation, many Telugu people from all over India moved to Singapore and other countries to work in various sectors like the IT industry, banking & finance, health & medicine, education, and engineering, shipping, construction, hotel industry, and theological institutions.

In December 2002, when the Fifth World Telugu Federation Conference took place in Singapore, the city-state found a more positive place on the radar of Telugus. And their migration to Singapore has been increasing thereafter.

Contemporary Telugus in Singapore can be broadly divided into highly-skilled professionals and personnel in the shipping industry. The highly-skilled professionals are prominent in the IT and banking sectors, followed by the hotel industry. The workforce in shipping industry is dominated by people from Visakhapatnam, the port-city in Andhra Pradesh and one of India's naval hubs. These Telugu workers rank next only to the Tamils. However, one sees very few Telugus migrating to Singapore either as transient workers or as business entrepreneurs.

Some contemporary Telugu professionals look upon Singapore as a launch-pad for future prospects in other parts of the developed world. These professionals move to Singapore on a transitory basis. They say that the work experience obtainable in Singapore is highly prized in other countries like the US, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia.

There are also many Telugu migrants who envision Singapore as their second home after India. They prefer Singapore as it offers better economic and living opportunities while being very near home. After a few years of stay in Singapore, these migrants tend to become full members of the Singapore society by taking up permanent residence and citizenship.

Besides the professional and working community, there is also an increasing inflow of students from Andhra Pradesh into Singapore. They prefer Singapore as it is home to many international schools and universities that cater to varied student bases. The city-state is also a hub for offshore campuses of several universities from the US, Australia, the UK, and other developed countries.

The Telugu students emphasise that the academic courses offered in Singapore are of high international standards and hold a very high level of acceptance in India and elsewhere. It is very often seen that a good number of these students secure jobs in Singapore and settle in the city-state itself. It is estimated, unofficially, that student-migrants account for almost 10 per cent of the current Telugu Diaspora in Singapore.

Demographically (and apart from the Telugu-origin people from Tamil Nadu), most of the Telugus in Singapore have come from East & West Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Guntur districts of Coastal Andhra, besides places like Kurnool and Kadapa of Rayalaseema and Hyderabad and Karimnagar in the Telangana region. They cheerfully gather for celebrations of big Hindu festivals.

The Singapore Telugu Samajam (STS) has been endeavouring to preserve and propagate the Telugu cultural heritage and maintain a unified identity for all people of Telugu origin – within the overall cosmopolitan milieu of the city-state. The STS has been serving as a platform for Telugu literary, cultural, educational, social, recreational and charitable interactions. Very recently, as before, STS brought together Telugus from different walks of life to celebrate *Ugadi*, a festival that heralds the Telugu New Year.

As they welcomed the year *Nandana* with great pomp and grandeur, the STS brought out the annual edition of *Ugadi* souvenir, called *Telugu Velugu*, which showcases, among other themes, the literary talents of the Telugu-speaking *Netizens* in Singapore!

It is observed that the Hindus among the Telugus generally share worship places with their fellow-Indians. It is only during special occasions and festivals that STS organises services in Telugu language. Interestingly, the Telugu Christians, soon after their settlement in Singapore, sensed a need for and finally set up the Singapore Telugu Methodist Church (STMC) in 2008. They say that STMC could not have been established without the help of the Tamil Methodist Church.

There are also some specialised Andhra restaurants and restaurants serving Andhra food in Singapore. Well known in this category now are Andhra Curry House, Sankranthi, Hyderabad-Biryani @ Tampines, Mughals Hyderabad Biryani Restaurant, East India Curry, Heritage, and Hyderabad-Biryani @ Stanley Street.

In recent years, the ties between Singapore and Andhra Pradesh have extended beyond the professional realm or the student migration. This suggests that the flow of Telugu migrants to Singapore will further increase in the coming years. ■

Ms Anusha Thallam was Research Associate at ISAS until mid-May 2012. Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs) at ISAS, contributed some text and data.

A Malayalee's Musings

The 'Chilli-Padi' Community in Revival Mode



Guest writer:
P N Balji

Malayalees form the second largest ethnic group within the Indian community in Singapore, constituting an estimated 20 per cent of the Indian population, or about 35,000, in a total population of five million in the city-state. In recent years, large numbers of expatriate Malayalees have hit the Singapore shores.

There used to be a cruel joke about the community that crops up regularly at Singapore Indian dinner parties, which goes something like this: When you see a Malayalee and a snake, strike at the Malayalee first! Indeed, Malayalees have had a tradition of riding on snakes. In 2010, new immigrant and local-born Malayalees in Singapore competed in a snake boat race or "*chundan vallams*" akin to the Aranmula Boat Race that takes place in Kerala, India, to celebrate *Onam*, the biggest festival of the community.

This don't-trust-the-Malayalee joke is an unfair indictment on a community that has punched above its weight in Singapore. The top man at Singapore's central bank is a Malayalee. The top editors of the two leading English newspapers are Malayalees. You will find them doing good work in business, medicine, teaching, research and banking.

Their number is a drop in the Singapore demographic ocean. So what makes them stand out?

It goes back to the DNA that originated in Kerala, a narrow strip of land in the south-west of India. A state known for its vibrant politics, obsession with education, small size and an international outlook forced upon its population. Except for the politics, the modern-day Malayalee-Singaporean is a microcosm of his ancestors in Kerala. Of the other three factors, education stands out whenever the talk is focussed on this group.

From early days, education was embedded in the Malayalee household in Singapore. If I look back at my childhood days, the herculean efforts my mother took to educate my brother and me are the stuff that makes powerful movies. She would do anything, practically anything, to make sure the home environment was peaceful and conducive and the money was somehow found to send us for tuition.

I remember asking her many years later why she was so obsessed with educating the two boys. I am glad I asked her that question because her response was very illuminating. "That was the only way to take us out of our wretched life."

The Malayalee society is very matriarchal, and that might explain the community's ability to make its presence felt. The women rule the roost at home, even though they don't display this power on their sarees. A visitor to the Malayalee home is likely to go away with the impression that, like in all Asian households, the men call the shots. But it is the women who supply the bullets. This innocuous influence has a big impact on how the children are brought up and how they eventually turn out.

The fathers provide a different kind of influence. Generally, they help to expand the children's minds with their knowledge of world affairs, culture, drama, movies.

I still remember the profound influence my father had on me as he wrote and recited poems, became an active trade union official, acted in dramas, took me to watch films and engaged me in endless discussions on the deeper meanings of those movies.

The Malayalees have an opinion on nearly everything under the sun. And they are not afraid to articulate them publicly.

I grew up at the old Naval Base in Sembawang, once celebrated as the Kochu Keralam (mini Kerala). It was the hotbed of political movements, vibrant cultural and entertainment activities and language emersions.

Watching Malayalam movies while growing up in the backwaters of Singapore became a cherished activity. The movies explored themes of revolutions, extra-marital affairs and contrarian values with a sharp artistic eye borrowed from the likes of Satyajit Ray.

This tradition, though being undermined by modern cinema now, continues to display itself in at least a few movies every year.

As Malayalees here became more and more Singaporean in outlook and thinking, there was a worry that the bedrock of their values and culture will be lost. But the immigration of people from Kerala is beginning to ease that concern.

Their presence in cultural activities and life in general here is beginning to see a revival of things Malayalee. Associations like the Singapore Malayalee Association are beginning to show a new spring in their step, the spoken language is seeing a mini revival and the entertainment scene is getting a boost.

Those older Malayalees who worried about their culture, values and spirit being blown away by the winds of change can rest somewhat reassured.

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The Malayalee society is very matriarchal, and that might explain the community's ability to make its presence felt . . .

The Malayalees have an opinion on nearly everything under the sun. And they are not afraid to articulate them publicly. //

Like the chilli-padi, the community is keeping its fiery punch alive and kicking. ■

(Chilli-padi is an ingredient used in Asian food to make it spicy. It is small in size but packs a fiery punch when eaten.)

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Winning

Professionalism

Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Chairman of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), ranks high among those who have made the city-state famous as a thought-leader and a pragmatic player at home and abroad.

As a versatile entrepreneur with a significant business imprint in Singapore and several other countries, including India, and as Singapore's diplomat, Ambassador Pillai has been steering ISAS at the helm since it was formally launched in 2005. He was also intimately associated with the thought process that led to the formation of ISAS.

Ambassador Pillai's winning professionalism has been recognised by the authorities in India who chose him, along with a select few Indians and foreigners, for its Republic Day Award of *Padma Shri* in January 2012. The Award was conferred on him by the President of India, Mrs Pratibha Devisingh Patil, at the opulent *Rashtrapati Bhavan*, the presidential mansion, in New Delhi on 4 April 2012.

It was a solemn and stately function, at which another Singaporean, former Foreign Minister George Yeo, was among those decorated with *Padma Bhushan*, another high category of India's Republic Day Awards.

The *Padma* awards are presented with much pomp and ceremony that match the splendour of the achievements of recipients from diverse fields.

Ambassador Pillai has to his credit several notable awards won in Singapore and elsewhere. In a broad-spectrum perspective in this context, the ISAS fraternity looks upon the *Padma Shri* honour conferred on him as signal recognition of the Institute's impact in India and also of the role he has played in the domain of international trade and industry. The award citation does indeed praise ISAS for raising the level of awareness of India in Singapore.

South Asia wishes to share with its readers Ambassador Gopinath Pillai's perspectives on the charm and



Photo: Courtesy of High Commission of India in Singapore

Singapore's former Foreign Minister, Mr George Yeo, speaking after being felicitated at *India House* in Singapore on 30 April 2012. At left is High Commissioner of India to Singapore, Dr T C A Raghavan. Mr Yeo is a recipient of India's *Padma Bhushan* Award.

significance of *Padma Shri* and the other awards he has won over the years.

In a wide-ranging interview to *South Asian Diaspora* before receiving *Padma Shri*, Ambassador Pillai traced a panoramic preview of the South Asian Diaspora Convention 2013 (SADC 2013) as well. SADC 2013 will be organised by ISAS. Drawing upon his deep insights, he also counselled the youth, but cautiously so, on how to make a lasting contribution to global affairs in their respective domains of endeavour.

The interview was conducted by *Ashutosh Ravikrishnan* and *Anjali D'Mello* for ISAS South Asian Diaspora website (<http://southasiandiaspora.org>)

Sir, how does it feel to have won the Padma Shri Award?

Ambassador Pillai : Well, I must say that I was a bit surprised; not many foreigners get this Award. I felt very honoured that the Indian Government, India being a very large country, recognised [me]. It was very flattering and I felt humbled. There are so many people engaged in Indian business in Singapore but that I was captured on their radar is a very good feeling.

You have received many other awards as well. What would you define as the motivation [the driving force] behind your success?

Ambassador Pillai : I've never worked for awards. I've won government awards and trade union awards. I treasure the first trade union award I won, the 'Friend of Labour' award. I received it in recognition for my contribution in building up the supermarket chain NTUC FairPrice [of Singapore's National Trades Union Congress]. I was very interested in the labour movement from a young age and therefore felt the title bestowed a certain honour and recognition on me.

The Friend of IT award is another award I received. I'm not an IT [Information Technology] man at all, so it's a little ironic! I was given this award for another initiative I started. The Malayalee community [in Singapore] celebrated its first *Onam* celebration in 1998. They never used to get together much, so this was the first time they decided to hold a function. Mr Lee Hsien Loong, [Singapore's] Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) at the time, was the Guest of Honour.

I suggested we do something, besides just giving out an award or a book. I wanted to do something good for the entire [Singapore] Indian community. I thought of providing computers to low-income families. So, we

devised a scheme whereby we collected old computers, refurbished them and supplied them at a very low price to low-income families.

This was announced by the DPM – he thought it was a very good gesture and initiative and gave it full support. The Computer Society thought it was a very good initiative as well and gave me this award. What was more gratifying was that several other community-organisations picked up this idea and did the same. The [Singapore] Government later decided to get involved and suddenly there were not enough old computers to go around. The government said that they would collect the computers and distribute them. They gave low-priced computers to all low-income families.

Some awards have a special significance for me but I did not seek them. There is no motivating factor for achieving the award[s]; you do something and as a result somebody says, 'Oh, that was a good thing', so why don't we recognise it? ■



Scroll of Honour.

Continued on page 20



President of India, Mrs Pratibha Devisingh Patil, presenting the *Padma Shri* Award to Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Chairman, ISAS, during a stately function at the magnificent *Rashtrapati Bhavan* in New Delhi on 4 April 2012. Seated in the front row facing the President are Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh (third from right); Vice-President of India, Mr Hamid Ansari (fifth from right); and Mrs Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of India's ruling United Progressive Alliance (sixth from right).



Photo: By Special Arrangement

What impact did [the South Asian Diaspora Convention 2011] SADC 2011, have?

Ambassador Pillai : I think it was an impactful event. It was the first effort to bring the South Asian diaspora together.

There have been many diaspora events: the Gujaratis have got together, Sindhis have got together, Malayalees, Tamils, Telugus. Nobody had thought of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and so on coming together. We worked on the assumption, the belief, that South Asians outside South Asia (the diaspora) don't carry the baggage they carry within their own country.

In other words, they will have prejudices against one another – Indians may not be very comfortable dealing with Pakistanis or Sri Lankans may not be comfortable with Indians. Whereas once they're outside, they all look the same. They integrate much faster and become very friendly [towards one another]. For instance, in the US [United States], I know many Indians and Pakistanis who are the best of friends. They have so much in common, culturally and in terms of heritage. They come together naturally.

If you held this in Colombo or Dhaka, it might be very difficult. The baggage comes in. Whereas if you have an event like this in a place like Singapore, a neutral city with no vested interests or agenda, it can be very successful. This was the first one; we will have the second one in 2013 and we think it will be better attended.

What can we expect from SADC 2013?

Ambassador Pillai : I wish I could tell you in some detail, because we do have a programme but nothing is cast in stone yet. We want to get a globally recognised name to be the keynote speaker. We want to have a sizeable segment of business people so that they can interact. At the end of the day, we are trying to get, for example, Indians and Pakistanis to jointly invest in Pakistan. India is by far the largest power in the area. People coming from India should feel free to invest regionally.

We will have a segment for business. We are also planning a third segment devoted to literature – there are so many excellent writers in South Asia. I have invited Mira Chand, a well-known writer in Singapore, to help us coordinate this. There is another segment looking at policy issues. These segments will be very powerful and we will run it over a couple of days.

We will also feature some very good cultural shows. The

last time, I wanted to hold a *Bollywood* and cricket show. I wanted to get Imran Khan and Amitabh Bachchan together because cricket and *Bollywood* are the two passions of South Asia. *Bollywood* is popular throughout South Asia, be it in Sri Lanka or Bangladesh. Its impact is like *Kolaveri Di* – it's known all over South Asia. There are so many common things, but we're very shy to admit it. In their own territories, people become very protective, but when they come to Singapore, things will be much better.

What I'm hoping is that there will be greater economic integration. Regional or country-to-country integration is very difficult.

Business-wise, there was a proposal made at the last diaspora event [SADC 2011]. An Indian delegate, namely Tarun Das, suggested that India should do away with all tariffs [on goods from] other South Asian countries. As the big power and the most successful economy, it can afford to say, 'I will collect no taxes [on] any of the products made in the neighbouring countries'. I think, this is an excellent idea – everybody will flourish!

However, India must take the lead. But of course, the bureaucrats will start worrying first. Products from China may be labelled 'Made in Bangladesh' when they enter India. That is their fear. But you can be afraid of things and not do something. It is better to do something and face it. You take action against it. You don't say, 'No, it can't be done'. It seems like a very negative approach to a problem which can be easily solved.

What advice do you have for young people trying to make their mark on the world?

Ambassador Pillai : I'm always worried about telling young people things (laughs). Young people nowadays feel that they have all the answers, so they aren't going to take very kindly to someone from another generation giving them advice.

I've always gone where my heart dictated. I've never been worried about whether it gives you position or money. If you keep chasing money, I think, that is the wrong way to go.

If you like to write, or you like to draw, do it. Eventually, it may bring you great success, eventually, it may bring you money. Maybe nothing will happen and you might just be another unrecognised writer or artist. But at the end of the day, it will give you satisfaction that you have done something that you have always wanted to.

But I do agree that you can't starve – I like to write poetry but it won't put bread on my table. I have to balance it somewhere. In life, balance is very important. When you learn martial arts, the thing they teach you first is: balance. You lose your balance and even the weakest fellow can defeat you. There are so many factors which affect you in life, but you keep your balance.

There are times when you must let your hair down and 'explode' a little. It's better to let it out, but at the end of the day, you must find balance. ■

HALL OF FAME

It is indeed unique that **ISAS' Patron, Mr Goh Chok Tong**, Singapore's former Prime Minister who is now Emeritus Senior Minister, is a distinguished recipient of India's highly prestigious award: the *Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding*. Mr Goh received the 2003 Award.



Mr Goh Chok Tong (with pen in hand) officially launching ISAS on 27 January 2005.



Mr Sat Pal Khattar

In 2011, **Mr Sat Pal Khattar**, a high-profile Singapore entrepreneur, was among the recipients of *Padma Shri*. He is a Member of the ISAS Board.

India-Japan Ties: Global, Strategic and

Mamta Sachan Kumar

September 2011 began quite remarkably for India-Japan ties. With two contrasting events, this autumnal month unwittingly charted an evolution in the countries' bilateral relations, especially reflecting the evolved representation of 'Indians' in contemporary Japan.

The first was a poignant encounter in their shared history – the annual commemoration of Indian lives lost in the Great Kanto Earthquake. The event was simple, intimate and humbling. A modest crowd of 50 gathered around the memorial fountain at Yokohama's Yamashita Park to pay their respects. Erected as a tribute in 1939, the fountain bears the following words on its marble pillar: "The Drinking Fountain / Presented to the City of Yokohama / In Memory of / Our Countrymen / Lost in Earthquake, September 1, 1923. / The Indian Community". Among the crowd was a Japanese yoga teacher cum classical Indian dance enthusiast, a well-known Sindhi tea merchant and father-figure in the Tokyo-Edogawa Indian community, Japanese personnel representing Air India, the Vice-Chair of the Yokohama India Centre and members of the Yokohama Indian trading community.

The second event marked the inaugural India Japan Global Partnership Summit (IJGPS). It was a grandiose gesture for future growth and one apparently 15 years in the making. The Summit was held from 5th to 7th September and had an impressive audience of over 2,000 people; was elaborate, ministerial and overwhelming. The author witnessed snaking lines of Indian state leaders, diplomats and a sea of big, black-suited businessmen – Indians and Japanese alike. There was also the line-up of former Japanese premiers from Yoshiro Mori, to Naoto Kan – the latest to be dethroned. The highlight of the event was the appearance of current Prime Minister (PM), Yoshihiko Noda, who had just assumed premiership the week before. His showing enhanced the status of the event as the very first 'foreign' affair to receive an address by the new PM.

As different in get-up and intention as these two events are, it is necessary that we understand them as a continuum in the evolving context of India-Japan ties. In this respect then, it is misleading to celebrate a mere 60 years of India-Japan relations on 28 April 2012, even if



Snap-shot of an undated picture showing India's national poet, Rabindranath Tagore (seated, second from left) with Indian revolutionary-in-exile, Rash Behari Bose (standing, left) in Tokyo at the height of India's struggle for independence. The original photo was on display at the India-Japan Global Partnership Summit in Tokyo on 5 September 2011.

specified in terms of their official diplomatic ties. While the formal partnership does not preclude the legacy of past dealings in the countries' joint history, it does inadvertently relegate earlier points of contact to the background. These include the over century-old presence of Indian traders in Japan, who arrived during the Meiji Revolution in the late 1860s, and visits to the country in the early 1900s by Indian personalities like artist and poet Rabindranath Tagore and the revolutionary Rash Behari Bose. Indeed, outside the conference halls at the Summit stood a lonely booth displaying Tagore paraphernalia for sale, in order to commemorate the legend's 150th birth anniversary. It was a well-intentioned but cosmetic set-up in comparison to the stately affair of hordes of bureaucrats, many of whom walked past the booth unaware.

After the resolution of the diplomatic row of Japanese disappointment at India for conducting nuclear tests in Rajasthan in 1998, then PM Mori and former Indian PM Atal Behari Vajpayee are credited with renewing relations between the two countries. Since then, i.e. the year 2000, India-Japan relations have progressed but at snail's pace. At the turn of the 20th century, there were only tens of individuals of Indian origin based in Japan, most of who were scholars, textile merchants or dignitaries. According

Historical in Scope

to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as of October 2010, there are 22,500 registered Indian nationals in Japan and a more modest figure of 4,500 Japanese resident in India. With a 150-year history of commercial exchange and an even more ancient religious linkage, more can be done to facilitate greater people-to-people connectivity between India and Japan. The recently effective Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and the US\$15 billion currency swap deal in December 2011 between the countries have taken their contemporary bilateral ties to a higher stage of development. One hopes that it is not momentary, and also that their diplomatic engagement – for the longest time fixated on the likes of India being Japan's largest ODA (Official Development Assistance) recipient – goes beyond being celebratory.

The rhetoric of 'global' and 'strategic' partnership began with the Mori-Vajpayee era at the start of the millennium. It was later supported by the Singh-Abe administration in 2006 and finally honoured grandly at the IJGPS in 2011. However, as they engage in this discourse, it is

critical for the leaders to consider the nascent state of activities at the grassroots level. Leaders of both countries should welcome and respond to the challenge of creating more opportunities for civil society exchanges alongside the great economic investments in the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor and the Dedicated Freight Corridor projects. Noda has begun well and differently by appealing to the Indian masses through Japanese popular culture – the cartoon characters of *Ninja Hattori* and *Doraemon* that are a hit with Indian children. ■

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Photos: Ms Mamta Sachan Kumar, ISAS

The 2011 annual gathering at the Memorial Fountain in Yamashita Park, Yokohama City, Japan.

Cultural Focus on South Asian Diaspora

Hema Kiruppalini

Established in 2009, the SAARC Cultural Centre (SCC) in Colombo aims to promote cooperation across South Asia and among South Asian diaspora in the non-political domain of culture. SAARC is a popular acronym for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

The SCC in Colombo is engaged in an effort to foster greater people-to-people interaction in South Asia and forge a South Asian identity. From 15-18 March 2012, the SCC organised a regional conference on the 'Circulation of Cultures and Culture of Circulation: Diasporic Cultures of South Asia during 18th to 20th Centuries'. The conference took place in Galle, Sri Lanka's historical southern city that is home to the Galle Fort which is a world heritage site and believed to be one of the largest remaining colonial-era fortresses in Asia. Chandima Weerakkody, Deputy Speaker, Parliament of Sri Lanka, was the chief guest at the conference.

Except for Nepal, there was representation from all the member-states of SAARC. Some of the objectives of the conference were: (1) to trace and assess diasporic cultures of the South Asian region, (2) to zero in on the gaps in research topics that require to be filled in the existing diasporic literature, and (3) to brainstorm approaches and methods for future research on diasporic cultures of the region. The conference marked the initial stage of a larger project to study the diasporic cultures of South Asia during the 18th to 20th centuries and to identify themes and sub-themes that require greater research.

Within the three broad themes of 'Circulation of South Asian Peoples and Commodities'; 'Circulation of Ideas and Cultural Expressions'; and, 'Monetary and Trade Networks', participants of the conference focused on various aspects of diasporic studies within and outside South Asia. Altogether there were 21 papers presented over three days. I presented a paper on the 'Circulation of Ideas and Cultural Expressions vis-à-vis the Sri Lankan and Nepali diasporas in Singapore'. Others included Amit

Kumar Mishra's (Centre for Indian Diaspora, Hyderabad, India) paper on the 'Making of the Indian Diaspora'; Minhaj ul-Hassan's (Hong Kong Baptist University) paper on 'The Changing Pattern of Pakhtun Culture under the influence of Diaspora'; Harka B. Gurung's and Tshering Choki's (National Library and Archives, Bhutan) collective paper on 'Nepali Diasporic Culture of Bhutan from 18th to 20th Century'.

During the farewell dinner that was held at the Hotel River House in Balapitiya, participants were treated to authentic Sri Lankan cuisine, various cultural performances and a grand display of fireworks as a finale to the conference. On the last day, the conference organisers also arranged a trip to Katargama which is regarded as a multi-religious complex dedicated to *Skanda-Murugan* also known as *Katargamadevio*. At the ancient site of Katargama, the co-existence of Hindu and Buddhist temples and traditions, and the Sinhala-Buddhist adoption of the Hindu *bhakti* traditions continue to draw debates pertaining to religious syncretism and/or appropriation. Apart from providing a platform for academic discussions on diasporic cultures, the conference organisers also gave the participants an opportunity to get a good feel of the history and cultural civilisations of Sri Lanka. ■

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Diaspora and Development

Md Mizanur Rahman,

Mamta Sachan Kumar and Hema Kiruppalini

The current thinking by academics in diaspora and migration studies and the preference of relevant policy-makers as well as donor-agencies is to foster diaspora engagement to stimulate economic and social development in the countries that these communities trace their origin to.

With the trend-setting South Asian Diaspora Convention in July 2011, ISAS pioneered and led the effort to connect the global South Asian diaspora and promote economic integration between these overseas communities and their countries of origin. In line with this emergent and growing interest in South Asian diaspora studies, ISAS is now organising an academic workshop to understand the roles that these diasporic groups play as a resource for development in their countries of origin, i.e. in South Asia.

The global South Asian diaspora is over 50 million strong and continues to grow. Many of its members proactively maintain strong social, economic and cultural connections to their countries of origin, while others vie for political rights such as dual citizenship and the right to vote. They also engage in various causes and promote institutions that directly benefit their home countries and the people there. Often these connections are mediated and sustained through extended family, kinship, Regional Associations (RAs) and 'Home Town Associations' (HTAs) amongst other avenues. Diaspora engagement involves a myriad of dedicated activities directed towards the origin country where the two entities – the 'diaspora' and the 'origin country' should be understood neither as necessarily fixed in nature nor should their relationship be conceived as one-way or even simply bilateral but much more complex and dynamic.

This workshop seeks to shed light on these various forms and fields of diaspora engagement that include entrepreneurship, philanthropy, international relations, portfolio investment, remittances, advocacy, peace-building, trade such as in ethnic goods, political engagement, socio-cultural linkages and religious or spiritual movements, amongst many other categories.

Any form of these engagements has the potential to advance growth and development in the origin country and merits scientific inquiry. However, despite immense development potential, there is little systematic work on development-related engagement among the South Asian diaspora groups. This workshop attempts to address and close this gap in the existing literature.

Event : International workshop on
'South Asian Diaspora Engagement'

Venue : University Town, National University
of Singapore

Dates : 27–28 September 2012

Some specific questions that this workshop aims to address are: What is the relationship between diaspora engagement and development? What is the structure of diaspora engagement in South Asia? What are the existing diaspora engagement policies in South Asian countries individually and how could they be regionally integrated? What role do the different spheres of diaspora engagement play in stimulating development in the countries of origin? What sorts of conditions are necessary in order to create an enabling environment for diaspora engagement in the countries of origin? And, what implications would these changes in the environment and the increased engagement have for the origin countries and South Asian regional integration? The workshop targets empirically-based research relating to South Asian countries (i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and South Asian diaspora members/communities/groups living and working across the globe. ■

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ISAS Seminar: Prospects of the Indian Economy 2012

A Lot Done, a Lot More to Do

Pratima Singh

The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) organised a half-day seminar on 'Prospects of the Indian Economy: 2012' at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The event, held on 28 February 2012, the eve of the presentation of India's annual Budget, addressed two major themes: macroeconomic challenges facing the Indian economy, along with the way forward for economic reforms.

The growing lack of international confidence in the Indian economy has been exacerbated due to the slow growth figures and the high inflationary trend that determined the market sentiment during most months of the previous fiscal year. These can be attributed to certain fundamental problems in the Indian economy.

The primary purpose of the seminar was to outline the issues, understand what is being done to address them, and look ahead. Johnson Paul, Senior Associate Director, ISAS, welcomed the participants and spoke of the situation in India as perceived from outside. The panel discussions then commenced, with K P Krishnan, Secretary to the [Indian] Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, presenting an overview of some of the challenges faced by the Indian economy such as the lack of fiscal consolidation, limited financial market integration and a macroeconomic policy that was still characteristic of a closed economy. Subhashis Gangopadhyay, Trustee at India Development Foundation and Dean Social Sciences at Shiv Nader University, focused on the globalisation aspect, stating that India should capitalise more on South-South cooperation and intensify trade with Latin American countries. He also outlined the importance of promoting evidence-based policy-making and a knowledge-based economy.

Abheek Barua, Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist, HDFC Bank, said that the economy should think of a new, slightly lower 'normal' rate of growth and that the government should identify how much of the deceleration in growth was due to a gloomy global outlook and how much due to domestic structural problems. Placing India in the context of the global economy, he stated that India's situation was made worse by its huge current account deficit. In his view, 'the bond markets are getting increasingly impatient about the government's attitude towards fiscal consolidation'

which could, in fact, lead to a rise in the yields on government securities. Barua also discussed the market's perception of the government's lack of credibility in day-to-day macro management. Chairing the panel, S Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, concluded the session by giving his insights and putting the discussions in the context of the 2012-2013 Budget.

The second panel focussed on India's economic reforms, with Amitendu Palit, Head (Development & Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, giving a brief background on the reforms since 1991 and the current state of reforms in the country. He pointed out that the earlier stages of economic reform involved subjects mainly on the Union List and, therefore, faced less resistance. The current reforms, on the other hand, would require legislative action and were already more contentious in the political circles. Bibek Debroy, Research Professor at the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi, emphasised that India had made almost no progress in reforms since 2004, reflecting the overall sluggishness of the domestic economy. He put forward thoughts on 'policy paralysis', claiming that it was essentially this inability to take decisions that was bringing the economy down, on issues ranging from obtaining forest and environment clearances to difficulties in land acquisition or mining. Sunil Jain, Opinion Editor at the Financial Express, concluded the discussions by stating that the 2012-13 Budget must address the issues of falling consumption, savings and investments and the increasing current account deficit. Pointing out that public savings had gone down sharply; he said it was important for the government to attend to oil prices and railway losses immediately.

Overall, the seminar brought together a diverse array of speakers including people from academia, government, business and industry specialists. The variety in the seminar produced a rich range of views and encouraged highly stimulating discussions. ■

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South Asian Perspectives

China's Unique Identity

P S Suryanarayana

Scholars must explore the true characteristics of China's sense of being an exceptional power. Only then, those studying China will be able to understand the political and economic impulses that drive the country's dynamism in diverse fields.

Exhorting scholars on these lines, India's Vice-President, Mr Hamid Ansari, released the book titled *A Resurgent China: South Asian Perspectives*. Published by Routledge, simultaneously in India and the United Kingdom, the book's Editors are ISAS Director Tan Tai Yong and ISAS' Visiting Research Professor S D Muni.

Besides the *Introduction* by Professor Tan Tai Yong, and *An Overview* by Professor Sukh Deo Muni, the other

contributors include three current ISAS scholars: Head (Partnerships and Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Dr Amitendu Palit; Senior Research Fellow and former Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury; and Visiting Senior Research Fellow and former Finance Minister of Pakistan, Mr Shahid Javed Burki.

Presenting the first copy of the book to Mr Ansari, ISAS Chairman, Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, emphasised the growing importance of the nuanced South Asian perspectives on the phenomenal rise of China.

The book release function, held at the India International Centre in New Delhi on 23 April 2012, was overwhelmingly attended. All the seats were fully occupied, and a number of the select invitees had to settle for standing space to witness the event. Those present included India's distinguished academics and strategic affairs scholars besides former diplomats and former civil servants – M K Rasgotra, Abid Hussain, Leela Ponappa, and Air Com. Jasjit Singh were among those present.

Mr Ansari observed that there was no compelling need to make a final judgment on China at this stage. At the same time, he drew attention to the indisputable fact that China was already resurgent and rising. It was now economically vibrant, militarily strong, and politically vocal. Historically, China had looked upon its neighbours as



A Resurgent China: South Asian Perspectives being released by Vice-President of India, Mr Hamid Ansari, at a function in New Delhi on 23 April 2012. Flanking Mr Ansari are Co-Editor of the book, Professor S D Muni of ISAS (left); Ambassador Gopinath Pillai (second from left), Chairman, ISAS; and Professor Tan Tai Yong (second from right), Director, ISAS.

tributary states. So, the relevant issue to be carefully studied now was whether Beijing's current foreign policy was governed by similar perceptions and calculations. Mr Ansari saw this as an intellectual and policy-planning challenge which confronted China's neighbours today. He also quoted a China-scholar as saying that the West had been dominant and assertive for several centuries so far while Beijing's calling card of the future might well be an overbearing sense of superiority with a hierarchical mentality.

Mr Ansari expressed the hope that the collective wisdom of today's Asia would exceed that of the West. The trend-lines of relations among the Asian countries and the nature of their ties to the West might therefore be different from the nuances of global events of the past. In these circumstances, if the claim of an Asian Century were to be realised, mutually cooperative and beneficial relations among all states of the continent would be a requisite now. It would be essential in this context to study China's current and potential foreign policy impulses. With China having a number of neighbours, it was essential to know why they were today looking at China through different lenses, Mr Ansari emphasised. ■

Mr P S Suryanarayana is Editor (Current Affairs) at ISAS. He can be contacted at isaspss@nus.edu.sg

Bridging China-India Information Gap



Professor Wang Gungwu (second from right) and Professor T N Srinivasan (third from right) receiving copies of the book, *China-India Economics: Challenges, Competition and Collaboration*, from Ambassador Gopinath Pillai (right), Chairman, ISAS in Singapore on 17 May 2012. At left is the author, Dr Amitendu Palit of ISAS.

Copies of the book were presented to Professor Wang Gungwu, Chairman of Singapore-based East Asian Institute (EAI), and Professor T N Srinivasan, Yong Pung How Chair Professor at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, and Professor of Economics at Yale University in the US.

P S Suryanarayana

As Asia's two most populous and progressing countries, China and India need a high dose of confidence-building measures (CBMs) for stable neighbourly relations and for sustainable economic development at home.

A number of spectacular achievements by both sides have underscored this truism over many years, the most recent event being India's successful testing of the Agni-V long-range ballistic missile. China's manned space missions and its anti-satellite test, as also India's *Chandrayaan-1* or Lunar mission, have indeed raised the profiles of the two countries and their stakes for CBMs. At the grassroots level, though, there is a simple but truly profound reality that needs to be addressed quickly – the absence of adequate information in each of these two mega-states about the other. Accurate information can indeed form the bedrock of viable CBMs.

Shining the spotlight on this critical aspect at the grassroots, ISAS Chairman, Ambassador Gopinath Pillai has said: "China-India relationship is ... one of the oldest relationships in the world. China has progressed tremendously. India has progressed but at a slower pace. *There has been a deficit in the information [about each other] or [in] the understanding of these relations by the two countries.* There has been a gap and this is where ISAS is trying to fill this gap so that both countries understand each other better".

Ambassador Pillai was speaking at the launch of the book, *China-India Economics: Challenges, Competition and Collaboration*, in Singapore on 17 May 2012. The book, authored by Dr Amitendu Palit, Head (Partnerships & Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at ISAS, has been published by Routledge UK.

The book launch in Singapore was co-organised by ISAS and EAI, which was hailed as "an excellent partner" of ISAS. The launch was followed by a panel discussion on China-India Relations: Role of Media and Business.

Ambassador Pillai said: "In the month of April [2012], we launched a book called, *A Resurgent China: South Asian Perspectives* in New Delhi. It was a great success. Then, [earlier] today, we have had a closed-door meeting of media [from India and China] because we feel that the role of the media is extremely important. China has become a major player in South Asia and particularly in India. If you look at the power industry, if you look at the capital industry, as a direct investor, China is really creating value. But the information gap remains, and that is our [ISAS'] role to try and bridge. Sometime in November [2012], we will hold a much bigger two-day conference on India-China relations where scholars from both countries will come and interact".

On the relevance of Singapore to this intellectual venture, ISAS Chairman said: "Singapore has always had an interest in the relationship with South Asia and China ... If you read the book by my colleague, [ISAS] Director, Professor Tan Tai Yong, he talks about Singapore's 700-year history. Now, this history sees commerce moving from Europe, from the Middle East, from Africa to India and China and probably passing through Singapore. Southeast Asia was a meeting place of Indian and Chinese traders together with the Arabs and others. But it was also a meeting place for cultures between countries – and today, it is going to be an important venue for meeting of these two great countries [India and China]". ■

Mr P S Suryanarayana is Editor (Current Affairs) at ISAS. He can be contacted at isasps@nus.edu.sg.

ISAS EVENTS

November 2011 - May 2012

- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Ambassador Antony Phillipson, High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to Singapore, '**The Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2011: Current Objectives and its Place in UK Policy Making**', 16 Nov 2011.
- Seventh International Conference on South Asia, '**South Asia and Southeast Asia Engagements: Realities and Opportunities**', 23 – 24 Nov 2011. Keynote speaker: Mr Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Education, Republic of Singapore.
- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Ambassador Doug Chester, Ambassador of Australia to Singapore, '**Australia-South Asia Relations**', 29 Nov 2011.
- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Dr T C A Raghavan, High Commissioner of India to Singapore, '**Looking East in India's Foreign Policy: General Reflections**', 2 Dec 2011.
- ISAS-RIS Joint Workshop on '**India and its East Asian Neighbours**', 5 Dec 2011, New Delhi.
- ISAS-SICCI Business Networking Session on '**Corporate and Capital Market Integration in South Asia**' and launch of publication on by Mr Ameerali Jumabhoy, 19 Dec 2011.
- Workshop on '**Afghanistan in Transition: Beyond 2014?**', 9 – 10 Jan 2012.
- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Ambassador Olivier Caron, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France, '**Asia and the Non-Proliferation Treaty**', 30 Jan 2012.
- Closed-door Session with **H E Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka**, 16 Feb 2012.
- Seminar by Mr Mohsin Hamid, '**Novel Approaches to Politics in South Asia**', 16 Feb 2012.
- Joint Event with Arts House, **World Voices presents Mohsin Hamid** (author of '*The Reluctant Fundamentalist*'), 16 Feb 2012.
- Book Launch: '**More than Maoism**', 22 Feb 2012, India International Centre, New Delhi.
- Joint Panel Discussion with The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library: '**More than Maoism: Politics, Policies and Insurgencies in South Asia**', 23 Feb 2012, New Delhi.
- Panel Discussion: '**Prospects for the Indian Economy 2012**', 28 Feb 2012, New Delhi.
- Public Lecture by **H E Mr S M Krishna**, Minister of External Affairs, India, '**India's External Environment and Current Foreign Policy Challenges**', 9 Mar 2012.
- Joint Seminar with High Commission of India in Singapore and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), '**The 2012-13 India Budget and Prospects for the Indian Economy**', 21 Mar 2012.
- Closed-door Discussion with Dr Rajiv Kumar, Secretary General, FICCI, '**India's Economic and Strategic Prospects**', 21 Mar 2012.
- Joint Seminar with Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, '**India Budget 2012**', 23 Mar 2012.
- Panel Discussion: '**Analysing the Uttar Pradesh Elections: People, Parties and Trends**', 3 Apr 2012.
- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Mr David Sevigny, High Commissioner of Canada to Singapore, '**Canada's Changing Asian Priorities**', 18 Apr 2012.
- In-House Discussion with Professor William Maley, Director, Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy School of Regulation, Justice and Diplomacy, Australian National University, 20 Apr 2012.
- Seminar by Dr Muhammad Reza Kazimi, Academic and Writer, Pakistan, '**Revisiting Partition**', 23 Apr 2012.
- Book Launch: '**A Resurgent China**', 23 Apr 2012, India International Centre, New Delhi.
- Closed-door Workshop on '**Promoting Regional Security Cooperation in South Asia: What Role for Civil Society?**', 26 – 27 Apr 2012.
- Distinguished Visitor Lecture by His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein, Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations, '**Atrocity Crimes: Why are Asians, including South Asians, seemingly so indifferent?**', 10 May 2012.
- Closed-door Workshop on '**China-India Media Mediation**', 17 – 18 May 2012.
- Panel Discussion on '**China-India Relations: Roles of Media and Business**' and launch of book, '**China-India Economics**', 17 May 2012.
- Seminar by Mr Jimmy Engineer, Artist and Social Activist, Pakistan, '**Journey of a Personified Painter**', 22 May 2012.
- Seminar (Ambassadors' Lecture Series) by Ambassador Alisher Kurmanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Singapore, '**Uzbekistan and South Asia: A Historic Relationship**', 24 May 2012.
- **Fifth India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue**, 28 - 29 May 2012.

Photographs of Key Events



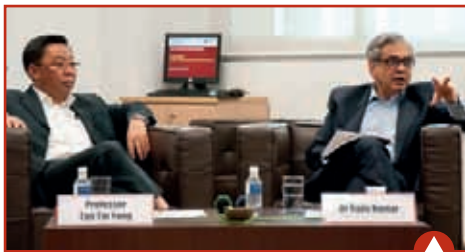
Seminar by Mr Mohsin Hamid (left) on "Novel approaches to politics in South Asia". Prof Robin Jeffrey (right), Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, chaired the discussion, 16 February 2012.



Distinguished Visitor Lecture by Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein, Jordan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on 'Atrocity Crimes: Why are Asians, including South Asians, seemingly so indifferent?'; 10 May 2012.



Chinese journalists, Mr Li Yang and Ms Tan Furong participating in 'China-India Media Mediation', 17-18 May 2012.



Dr Rajiv Kumar (right), Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry, speaking on 'India's economic and strategic prospects'. Prof Tan Tai Yong, Director, ISAS, chaired the discussion, 21 March 2012.



India's External Affairs Minister, Mr SM Krishna (left) and Ambassador Tommy Koh (right) sharing a lighter moment during the Q&A session after a Public Lecture by the Minister, 9 March 2012.



Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa (centre, at the dais), President of Sri Lanka, participating in a closed-door dialogue, 16 February 2012.

Seventh International Conference on South Asia



Mr Heng Swee Keat, Singapore's Education Minister, delivering the keynote address on 23 November 2011.



Dr S Narayan, Head of Research, ISAS, chairing a session.

ISAS Ambassadors' Series



Dr T C A Raghavan (left), High Commissioner of India to Singapore, answering questions after his address on 'Looking East in India's Foreign Policy: General Reflections'. Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, chaired the session on 2 December 2011.

Seminar



Mr Jimmy Engineer (right), Pakistani artist and social activist and Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury (ISAS) listening intently to a question at a seminar on the "Journey of a Personified Painter", 22 May 2012.

Workshop on Afghanistan in Transition: Beyond 2014?



A session in progress on 9 January 2012.



Mr Ali A Jalali, former Interior Minister of Afghanistan, and Ms Fawzia Koofi, Afghan parliamentarian, during the discussions.

ISAS PAPERS

November 2011 - May 2012

(These papers can be accessed at: www.isas.nus.edu.sg)

ISAS Brief

- **India-Afghanistan Strategic Agreement: Opportunity for Peace and for Pakistan**, Professor Sajjad Ashraf, Adjunct Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 18 Oct 2011.
- **Pakistan, India and the Security Council: Thinking the Unthinkable**, Iftekhar Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 4 Nov 2011.
- **India and Pakistan Prime Ministers' Meeting: Looking to the Future**, Dr Rajshree Jetly, Research Fellow, ISAS, 21 Nov 2011.
- **The Afghanistan Enigma - Jostling for Influence will Jeopardise Peace**, Professor Sajjad Ashraf, Adjunct Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 22 Nov 2011.
- **The Mohmand Mayhem and its Impact on Pakistan-US Alliance: For the Friendship a Blush, for the Ties a Tear!**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 Nov 2011.
- **Atomic Fuel for Australia-India Synergy**, Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 15 Dec 2011.
- **US-Pak relations: Reflecting on 2011**, Dr Rajshree Jetly, Research Fellow, ISAS, 27 Dec 2011.
- **The Lokpal Bill: An opportunity for the Government and the Economy**, Dr S Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 28 Dec 2011.
- **Politics, Strategy and the Lokpal Bill**, Dr S Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 Dec 2011.
- **India Eyeing a New Gateway to Southeast Asia**, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 26 Jan 2012.
- **Painful Politics in 'Paradise': Changes in the Maldives**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 13 Feb 2012.
- **A Musharraf Order Haunts Pakistan**, Professor Sajjad Ashraf, Adjunct Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 13 Feb 2012.
- **Pakistan's Economic Troubles**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 21 Feb 2012.
- **Is the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership in Doldrums?**, Dr Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, Research Fellow, ISAS, 23 Mar 2012.

- **The Haves and the Have-Nots**, Ms Pratima Singh, Research Associate, ISAS, 26 Mar 2012.
- **India's Diaspora Vote**, Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 28 Mar 2012.
- **An Indo-Pak Search for the China-India Model**, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS and a Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, 09 Apr 2012.
- **Zardari's Pilgrimage to Ajmer: Is Time for a Thaw in Relations Nigh?**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 Apr 2012.
- **Taliban, Spring offensive and Transition in Afghanistan**, Dr Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, Research Fellow, ISAS, 18 Apr 2012.
- **Beyond the Sparks and Fumes of India's Agni-V Test**, Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 23 Apr 2012.
- **Capital Loss for Congress in India**, Dr Nalin Mehta, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 25 Apr 2012.
- **A New Myanmar on South Asia's Borders: Changes and Challenges**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 May 2012.
- **Performance of the Indian Rupee: A Comment**, Dr S Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 22 May 2012.
- **Politics of the Indian Presidency**, Dr Nalin Mehta, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 23 May 2012.

ISAS Insights

- **India-Pakistan Detente: Its Significance is More Than for Restoring Bilateral Relations**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 Nov 2011.
- **Obama's Asia-Pacific Doctrine: India's Options**, Professor Sukh Deo Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 25 Nov 2011.
- **WTO Accommodates RTAs: A Triumph of Pragmatism over Pristine Theory**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 Nov 2011.
- **India and China's 12th Five Year Plans: A Comparison of Changing Priorities**, Ms Suvi Dogra, Research Associate, ISAS, 6 Dec 2011.
- **China-India Strategic Economic Dialogue: Avoiding Unavoidables?**, Dr Amitendu Palit Head (Development & Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 7 Dec 2011.
- **Of Diasporas and Displacements: What does it mean to be Sri Lankan?**, Ms Hema Kiruppallani, Research Associate, ISAS, 14 Dec 2011.
- **Imran Khan's Political Rise**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 27 Dec 2011.
- **Visit of Prime Minister of Japan to India: Economic Synergies**, Dr S Narayan, Head of Research and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 Jan 2012.

- **Life at 60 in Japan-India Relationship**, Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 14 Jan 2012.
 - **Panic in Pakistan: The Makings of a Meltdown**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 16 Jan 2012.
 - **Uttar Pradesh goes to Polls**, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 6 Feb 2012.
 - **New Dynamic in China-India Dialogue**, Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 7 Feb 2012.
 - **Pakistan and the Not-So-Distant Thunder!**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 9 Feb 2012.
 - **China and the United States: Will the US visit by Xi Jinping make some difference?**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 28 Feb 2012.
 - **Bangladesh and Paschim Banga: 'Why this Kolaveri di?'**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 5 Mar 2012.
 - **Quran Copy Burning in Afghanistan and the US 'exit' Strategy**, Dr Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, Research Fellow, ISAS, 5 Mar 2012.
 - **State Polls and National Echoes in India**, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 12 Mar 2012.
 - **Pakistan's Baluchistan Problem**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 13 Mar 2012.
 - **Change of Guard at Pakistan's ISI: Some Implications**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 15 Mar 2012.
 - **Pakistan's Political Transition: One More Step Forward**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 2 May 2012.
 - **Bhutan: Shades of 'Shangri-La' in a Haven of 'Happiness'**, Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 3 May 2012.
 - **Hillary Clinton Visits India: Understanding the Unstated**, Professor S D Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 15 May 2012.
 - **State of Bangladesh Economy: A Prognosis for the Future**, Mr Ishraq Ahmed, Research Associate, ISAS, 23 May 2012.
- ISAS Working Paper**
- **Inclusive Growth: How is India Doing?**, Professor John Harriss, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 29 Nov 2011.
 - **India's Engagement with Afghanistan - Developing a 'Durable Policy Architecture'**, Mr Daniel Norfolk, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), 12 Dec 2011.
 - **America's Asia Policy**, Mr Shahid Javed Burki, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 13 Jan 2012.
 - **Migration between South and Southeast Asia: Overview of Trends and Issues**, Ms Rupa Chanda, Professor of Economics, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, 2 Feb 2012.
 - **Migration between South and Southeast Asia: Role of Interstate Cooperation**, Ms Rupa Chanda, Professor of Economics, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore, 2 Feb 2012.
 - **Moving to Europe: Bangladeshi Migration to Italy**, Dr Md Mizanur Rahman, Research Fellow, ISAS and Mohammad Alamgir Kabir, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Malaya, 6 Feb 2012.
 - **Sino-Pakistan Strategic Entente: Implications for Regional Security**, Dr Rajshree Jetly, Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 Feb 2012.
 - **From Isolation to Partnership: The Evolution of India's Military Diplomacy**, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 21 Feb 2012.
 - **Stabilising the Neighbourhood?: India's Flip Flop Approach to Maldives Crisis**, Professor S D Muni, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 16 Mar 2012.
 - **India as a Security Provider: Reconsidering the Raj Legacy**, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 19 Mar 2012.
 - **India's Unilateral Tariff Withdrawal for South Asian Countries**, Ms Pratima Singh, Research Associate, ISAS, 20 Mar 2012.
 - **Economic Reforms in India - Perpetuating Policy Paralysis**, Dr Amitendu Palit, Head (Partnerships & Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 29 Mar 2012.
- ISAS Special Report**
- **Focus on peace beyond the present (ISAS Workshop: Afghanistan in Transition: Beyond 2014?)**: Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 13 Jan 2012.
 - **A Formula to Face Maoism in India**, Mr P S Suryanarayana Editor (Current Affairs) ISAS, 22 Feb 2012.
 - **China is a Priority for India: S M Krishna (ISAS Interview Series: Exclusive with Mr S M Krishna**, India's External Affairs Minister): Mr P S Suryanarayana, Editor (Current Affairs), ISAS, 9 Mar 2012.
 - **Speech by Mr S M Krishna**, External Affairs Minister, Republic of India, ISAS Public Lecture, 9 Mar 2012.
 - **India Budget Fever in Singapore!**, Mr P S Suryanarayana Editor (Current Affairs) ISAS, 23 Mar 2012.
 - **ASEAN-India Relations: Future Directions**, Professor S D Muni, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, and Ambassador See Chak Mun, Adjunct Senior Fellow, ISAS, 25 May 2012.

New Members of ISAS Board



Mr Ng How Yue, Second Permanent Secretary of Singapore's Ministry of Trade & Industry (MTI), assumed the office in October 2011. Before that, he was Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister of Singapore from September 2008.

As Deputy Secretary (Trade) at the MTI in 2007, he was responsible for Singapore's trade and external economic relations. His mandate included the negotiation and implementation of free trade agreements with Singapore's key trading partners, as well as the promotion of Singapore's interests at regional and multilateral fora such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Mr Ng, who has held several other postings in his career as civil servant, was awarded Singapore's Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 2004. Graduating from the University of London, Imperial College of Science & Technology, with a Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical and Electronics Engineering (1st Class Honours), Mr Ng also attended the prestigious Sloan Fellows Program, where he received a Master of Science in Management.

Besides his position as ISAS Board Member, Mr Ng is currently a member of the Singapore Central Provident Fund (CPF) Management Board. ■



Mr Girija Pande, Chairman-Asia Pacific, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Ltd., Singapore, holds an engineering degree and MBA from the prestigious Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad.

TCS is one of Asia's largest information technology companies, and Mr Pande played the pioneering role in setting up the company's Asia Pacific entities. He has been involved in the technology transformation of many financial institutions and other businesses in Asia and Australasia. He is also Vice Chairman of TCS JV with the Chinese Government in Beijing and he serves as the Economic Advisor to the Mayor of Guangzhou in China.

As a former member of the steering committee of Singapore Government's (IE)-Network India for over eight years and as Chairman of the India Business Forum, which was set up by the Confederation of Indian Industry in Singapore, since 2007, Mr Pande has contributed to the advancement of relations between India and the City-State. He is also associated with the South Asian Business Group of Singapore Business Federation.

As a well known personality in Singapore's infocomm and management circles, Mr Pande is a recipient of *Leading CEO Award*, conferred by the government-owned Singapore Human Resource Institute. In India, he has served on many high-level policy-planning committees, ranging from those of the Reserve Bank of India to chambers of commerce and industry. ■

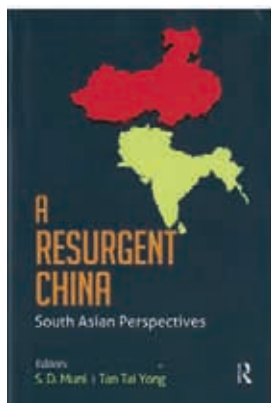


Dr S Nasim is Global Chief Executive Officer (Global CEO) of Meinhardt Group International Ltd. He is concurrently the Managing Director at Meinhardt (Singapore) Pte Ltd and Managing Director of Meinhardt International Pte Ltd. From 2002 to 2010, he was CEO of Meinhardt Middle East as well.

A structural engineer by profession, Dr Nasim pursued higher studies in Singapore and Honolulu, winning post-graduate and doctoral degrees. He has to his credit a number of publications in professional journals. He is also closely associated with several professional organisations at very high levels.

Dr Nasim is the recipient of the *Top Entrepreneur of the Year Award* conferred by Rotary-ASME Singapore in 2004 and *Tamgha-I-Imtiaz* conferred by the Government of Pakistan in 2006. ■

Latest Books



A Resurgent China South Asian Perspectives

Edited by S.D. Muni, ISAS & Tan Tai Yong, ISAS,
Published by Routledge (January 2012).

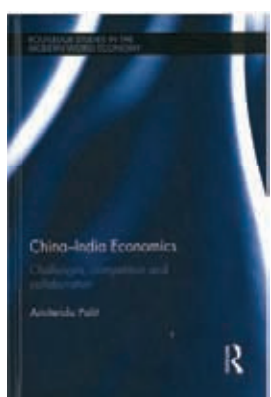
Bringing together a range of South Asian perspectives on rising China in a comparative framework, an attempt has been made, for the first time, to identify and examine the political, economic and socio-cultural stakeholders and constituencies that influence the respective policy of individual South Asian countries towards China. The essays also project how their mutual relations are likely to be shaped by these. The book is especially relevant today owing to China's growing weight in Asian and global affairs.

To purchase a copy, please contact Ms Brenda Foo at Tel: (65) 6741 5166 or via email at info@tandf.com.sg, or visit www.routledge.com

China-India Economics Challenges, Competition and Collaboration

By Amitendu Palit

Published by Routledge (January 2012).



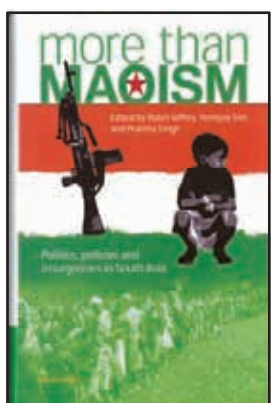
A review of the existing literature on the China-India comparative theme conveys the distinct impression that the literature largely projects China and India as intrinsically competitive entities. While much has been written on where and why China and India are contesting, particularly from a political sense, very little attention has been devoted to mutual collaboration, whether existing or potential. Such possibilities are at their greatest in economics, which will dominate the future China-India relationship. This book explores Sino-Indian ties from a comparative economic perspective and argues that it is erroneous to visualise the ties either from exclusively competitive or collaborative perspectives. The future relationship between the two countries will be characterised simultaneously by two 'C's: competition and collaboration, which are both linked to common challenges facing them. Arguing that while competition in the economic sphere is inevitable, given their size and aspirations, the book contends that negative externalities from competition will encourage both countries to collaborate and expand the scope of such collaboration. The book's refreshing angle makes it a must-read for those interested in Sino-Indian relationship.

To purchase a copy, please contact Ms Brenda Foo at Tel: (65) 6741 5166 or via email at info@tandf.com.sg, or visit www.routledge.com.

More than Maoism Politics, Policies and Insurgencies in South Asia

Edited by Robin Jeffrey, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS; Ronojoy Sen, Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS; Pratima Singh, Research Associate, ISAS.

Published by Manohar Publishers (March 2012).



India's 'Maoist movement', erupting in the village of Naxalbari in 1967, claims to struggle for the rights of exploited tribal people and poor peasants. To Indian governments, however, the movement is fomented by crazed ideologues exploiting vulnerable citizens. Since 2003 when a landmine nearly killed the Chief Minister of the state of Andhra Pradesh, hundreds have died in clashes between armed police, guerrillas and rival militias. Why should a movement that takes its name from a dead Chinese dictator lead the Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, to dub it 'the greatest threat to our national security'? There is much more than Maoism to this story. Drawing on rich veins of scholarship and journalism, this book brings together diverse perspectives on a bloody struggle. Its 24 contributors analyse and reflect on Maoist ideas, organisations and history across South Asia. The contributions include interviews with policemen, administrators and Maoists, as well as essays by journalists and scholars of South Asian society, politics and economics. Specially drawn maps, and photographs from the places of conflict, make the book a valuable tool and an engaging companion.



The Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), established in July 2004, is an autonomous research institute at the National University of Singapore. ISAS is dedicated to the study of contemporary South Asia. Researchers at the Institute conduct long-term and in-depth studies on social, political and economic trends and developments in South Asia and their impact beyond the immediate region. In addition, ISAS produces regular up-to-date and time-sensitive analyses of key issues and events in South Asia. ISAS disseminates the information to policymakers, the academia, business community and civil society.

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