

INDIA FOUNDATION JOURNAL



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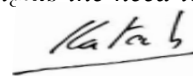
Geopolitical Dynamics in the IOR

Dear Readers,

Geography has given India a centrality in the Indian Ocean which makes her a pivotal player in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Over 80 percent of the world's trade in oil transits through the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean making them strategically the most important in the world. For India, the Indian Ocean is vital, both on economic as well as security considerations. India hopes to double her 2.5 trillion dollar economy by 2025, but this can only come about through linking her trade with the global trade world order, for which the Indian Ocean is the only maritime gateway. Protection of key international shipping lanes is thus of paramount importance to India.

China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean and perceptions that US power in the region is declining has given an impetus to strategic developments in the IOR. China has used its economic heft to fund major infrastructure projects, securing considerable goodwill in the process. Its buildings of ports in Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, a container shipping facility in Chittagong, Bangladesh, and now the development of a port in Kyaukpyu in Myanmar, all point to long term goals to establish a strong naval presence in the region. As of now, China does not possess the naval capability to establish military bases in the IOR, away from the Chinese mainland, and the US still has the largest navy in the region. But the pace at which China is building up her naval capability cannot be delinked from Chinese desires to achieve hegemony in the Indian Ocean, once US power recedes.

India's Act East Policy, formulated by the Narendra Modi led NDA government goes beyond the earlier Look East Policy. While sticking to the goal of leveraging vital relations with India's neighbours to maintain security in the IOR, it looks into commerce, culture and connectivity to achieve the twin objectives of deeper economic integration and a shared mutual security. ASEAN remains at the heart of the Act East policy, with stress being laid on maintaining the openness of these shipping lanes as well as ensuring freedom of navigation in the India Ocean. The emphasis now being placed on regional multilateral frameworks of diplomatic and economic engagement as well as the notion of collective security, best exemplifies the change that the Act East policy seeks to bring. While the political impetus has been swift and decisive, the bureaucratic follow up to political initiatives still remains sluggish and highlights the need to revamp India's administrative organisations.



Indian Ocean: Ocean of the Future

Ranil Wickremesinghe*

Vietnam is a country steeped in a rich history of defiance of spirit, an unbreakable will, and a strong and resilient people. Vietnam in ancient times was a bustling trading hub, deeply connected with the outside world. It was also integral to the creation of crosscurrents of people, goods, and ideas across the Asian lands and seas. The UNESCO World Heritage site “My Son Sanctuary” which dates back from 4-13 Century CE located in central Vietnam close to the ancient port city of Hoi An, is an exceptional example of cultural interchange, with an indigenous society adapting to external cultural influences, notably the Hindu art, religion and architecture of the Indian sub-continent. Historical texts also reveal that the Funan Kingdom which is said to have comprised parts of Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaya Peninsular and Thailand stood as one of the most powerful kingdoms of Southeast Asia ruled by Kaudinya, a Hindu Brahmin King and Queen Soma. There are parallels we can draw with the Indian Ocean region. This region has for many decades resisted domination by a single power. It has been the lifeline of ancient trading routes. It has also continued to remain a melting pot of civilizations, religions, and cultures whilst retaining its essentially multipolar character. It is only appropriate therefore, that the 3rd edition of the Indian Ocean Conference - IOC 2018 is held at Vietnam.



The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is set to define the destiny of the planet in the 21st century. At the centre of this geopolitical turn of events, is the Indian Ocean - an ocean which is increasingly being defined as the Ocean of the Future. In addition, the linkages between the Indian and Pacific Oceans are envisaged to create a maritime super highway that can bring prosperity to all. Those who traversed this great ocean for millennia, the traders, the explorers, the philosophers and religious teachers left behind ideas - ideas that were merged with our own thinking - and began to take a uniquely Indian Ocean character. In the littorals you will find therefore, the harmonious blend of Eastern and Western thinking, systems and approaches. It is in this milieu that a new world order is beginning

**This article is a summary of the speech delivered by H.E Shri. Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka on 27th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation.*

to take shape. The littorals, by geographic design, are integral partners in this process.

Let me highlight five main global trends that I believe are critical turning points. These turning points will dictate how economic prosperity and development will be disbursed globally. It will also determine the new world order. Firstly, the world order has become more fragile, polarised and unpredictable. Multilateral frameworks are increasingly under pressure. The ability of the collective to manage interdependence effectively, is at risk. The weakening of state structures and the diffusion of power to non-state actors is creating a complex international environment. The multilateral system's ability to deliver development and growth is being questioned. Movement in multilateral trade negotiations in particular have faced significant challenges. However, for small countries, there is great value in the idea of the sovereign equality of states. It allows us to have a voice in how the world should be shaped. It also allows us to derive benefits from a system of trade and governance for the welfare of our people. The multilateral system advocates temperance, a quality on which the world governance system has effectively functioned in the past few decades. Therefore, the challenges facing a more fragile multilateral system can be highlighted as the first turning point.

Secondly, we are seeing a pushback against globalisation. Trade tensions between economic giants pose significant risk to global trade. The challenges facing the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Brexit negotiations to name but a few. The question is –

are these signs of a retreat from closer integration? Globalisation and closer economic integration has helped countries across the globe to develop and prosper. Without such integration and market access, it would be difficult for small nations like my own, which follow open market policies, to survive. This turning point is closely interlinked to the future of the multilateral system. For instance the success or failure of the Doha Development Agenda will demonstrate whether countries continue to value common rules and standards and are willing to remain engaged in such a process.

Thirdly, there is growing strategic rivalry and military buildup across the globe spilling on to the ocean space. This is the space in which the next great game will take place. There is competition to build spheres of influence and create overarching architectures and a new strategic order appears to be in the offing. There is an abiding interest in maintaining the safety and security of the sea lanes of communication. In the ocean space you see force posture, buildup of naval and air facilities, and the establishment of military bases. The expansion of military presence of major and middle powers in the ocean space, highlight the centrality of the oceans to future development. With such developments, these players stand poised to take advantage of strategic opportunities or step into any perceived power vacuums.

The geopolitical revolution of the rise of Asia, in both political and economic terms can be termed the fourth turning point. The global economy, hitherto dominated by the West will be driven by new actors. China is projected to be the largest

economy in the world by 2050 accounting for 20% of world GDP, with India in second place and Indonesia in fourth. In the period 2016-2050 Vietnam, India and Bangladesh have been identified as the three of the world's fastest growing economies. Economic cooperation has become another area of Indian Ocean geopolitics. Nevertheless, what many see as competition in the development field, host countries treat as complementary. It is important to identify complementariness from the host countries perception as to their own needs for economic infrastructure, FDI and Trade access. A better way to meet these needs is to welcome such initiatives for economic cooperation as important drivers of Asian Growth. Furthermore, the ongoing discussions between the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), BRICS, on building synergies for growth is an important development. The activation of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will also serve as a catalyst for economic integration in Asia. It would be important for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to have a closer engagement with ASEAN on Bay of Bengal trade development. Deepening interactions and integration with the Gulf and East African states, are equally important.

The fifth turning point is the rise of multilayered regionalism differing in range of scale, scope and membership in the Indo-Pacific. These frameworks are attempting to create large economic areas, with multiple new regional leaders driving these processes, giving rise to a

truly multipolar world. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), RCEP, the Free Trade Area of the Asia and the Pacific (FTAAP), BRICS and the Belt and Road Initiative to name but a few.

There is renewed regional constructs that go beyond economic interests and spill over to the political, defence, security, and strategic domains. Hitherto, regional constructs have tended to steer clear from directly engaging and grappling with these issues, focusing instead on improving trade connectivity, people to people contacts, and social and cultural ties. There is renewed acknowledgement of the intrinsic linkage between economic prosperity and security and stability. Another important aspect of these multilayered frameworks is the rise of maritime regionalism.

The multilayered regionalism of the future should push for inclusivity rather than exclusivity and be built amongst countries unrestrained by geographic or other constraints. The multipolar world of the future would be anchored by multilayered regionalism and be built on common understandings, alliances and institutions that are currently taking shape. Maritime Asia and the Indian Ocean Region is central to the rise of multilayered regionalism. These five global trends will have a significant impact on how the world will be shaped in the years to come.

Peace and Stability in the IOR is our mutual interest. This region has enormous economic potential and is the lifeline of global trade. Given its geo-strategic and geo-economic significance the region is constantly being defined and redefined along sub-regional, pan-regional and super-regional lines. The concept of the Indo-

Pacific is a case in point. The Indo-Pacific does not as yet have an accepted identification of its territorial limits with the economic and military rise of Asia. Common geopolitical issues have arisen. The Indian Ocean trade is vital to both. For the United States, the Indo-Pacific stretches from the west coast of the United States to the west coast of India and is a combined economic and security vision. Prime Minister Modi described the Indo-Pacific concept recently as a natural region with ASEAN countries as the main connect between the two oceans in both geographic and civilisational sense. He also stressed that the Indo-Pacific should stand for a free, open, inclusive region that encompass those that are located geographically in the region and those that have a stake in it. Both Japan and Australia have also spoken in terms of a free and open Indo-Pacific. The Belt and Road Initiative spearheaded by China is also gathering momentum. In this context of super regional constructs, what is the role of the Indian Ocean littorals? Where do we stand and in fact do we need to take a stand? Both constructs offer opportunities for development for littoral states.

Super regional constructs should not compel the littoral states to choose or take sides. Such constructs should be inclusive and open. They should also be conscious of the aspirations and preferences of the region's own approaches when being consolidated. The littoral states and the stakeholders must participate in deciding any new regional architecture being proposed. The role of the littoral states in managing great power rivalry and competition is an important one. Within any new construct being proposed, including the Indo-

Pacific, the Indian Ocean must maintain its own distinct identity. Even during the World War II there were two commands – South East Asia with British accepting the surrender and the Pacific command with America accepting the surrender. The commands however did not work in isolation.

It is our view that in order to uphold order, mechanisms for cooperation need to be explored. Certain cooperation constructs have emerged such as the QUAD which is weighted towards the Pacific and has no input from littoral states. The other option is to strive at an arrangement where littoral states can actively participate and contribute. For example arrangements such as the CGPCS and the CMF worked well to suppress Somali Piracy. IONS, Shangri-La Dialogue, naval exercises, trilateral maritime security cooperation between India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives and our own Galle Dialogue are important fora which provide opportunities for networking of the security communities at strategic and operational levels. We also believe that there is a significant need for enhanced Indian Ocean Region (IOR) regionalism that focuses on augmenting cooperation across the maritime domain. Such regionalism should strive to create closer linkages between ASEAN, IORA and BIMSTEC given the rising imperative for cooperation that spans the entire Indian Ocean Region.

China's economic expansion has led to a specific focus on the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean sea routes are vital to the economic interests of China. USA has been in the Indian Ocean since Diego Garcia and has been a key stakeholder. A free and open ocean is vital to Japan and its economy. India is the territorial power with a direct

stake in the Indian Ocean. Security and economic challenges arise from both complimentary and competing interests of these large stakeholders as they interact with each other in the Indian Ocean Region. The geopolitics of the Gulf can also spillover and impact on Indian Ocean trade. Littoral states, especially the smaller states oppose domination of the Indian Ocean by the great powers. Such states have an important role to play in managing great power competition. Regional constructs that exist, were constituted prior to these new developments and therefore lacks the capacity to respond to this situation. The preference is for a rules based order in the Indian Ocean that benefits all.

Sri Lanka has been deeply involved in developing ocean governance processes since the time of negotiation of the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Located as we are, at the centre of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka has significant interest in actively contributing to events that are currently unfolding in the region. Our geostrategic location includes Trincomalee, one of the finest deep-sea harbours in the world. Trincomalee is also the second largest natural harbour in the world, with a 500 metres wide entrance channel. Historical incidents have demonstrated that Sri Lanka's location can impact on the security not only of the Indian Ocean but also other area such as South East Asia, Middle East, Eastern Coast of Africa and even the Pacific.

Sri Lanka's initiative on Freedom of Navigation in the Indian Ocean is primarily aimed at maintaining a rules based order. Our aim is not to draft a new code but to initiate a process. Our

purpose is to create a platform for dialogue where Indian Ocean littoral states and major maritime users are able to convene and discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. It is always important to anticipate challenges and work towards practical solutions based on UNCLOS which continues to serve as the Constitution of the Seas. Towards this end, Sri Lanka hosted a track 1.5 dialogue in Colombo on the 11 and 12 of October 2018 on the theme "The Indian Ocean: Defining Our Future". This track 1.5 dialogue is a lead up to a multilateral diplomatic conference which Sri Lanka hopes to hold in 2019 with the aim of developing a common understanding amongst Indian Ocean littoral states and major maritime users. Resolving issues concerned will speed up the process of multi-stakeholder dialogue in the Indian Ocean Region. As we progress through these fora let us aim for deeper discussion which would ultimately facilitate a common understanding and decision making amongst the multi-stakeholders with an interest in the Indian Ocean region. It is important for the Indian Ocean littorals to take the lead in this process. I see all these developments, including the Indian Ocean Conferences that have been held thus far in Singapore & Sri Lanka, and the one being held today in Vietnam, as important forerunners and complimentary exercises. The 4th Indian Ocean Conference can be one where we endeavor to move from generalisation to specific modalities of cooperation.

The Indian Ocean is the Ocean of the Future. It constitutes cultures emanating from ocean-based civilisations and colonial era systems, practices and values which are compatible with international

standards and norms. Regional institutions as presently constituted lack capacity to effectively respond to the geopolitical developments of the region. Any new regional architecture envisaged should be multilayered and must recognise the distinct identity of the Indian Ocean Region and the intrinsic role of the littoral states. The new regional architecture must also be multi-stakeholder and therefore include the littoral states and those with an interest in the region. It should discuss and resolve issues pertaining to the Freedom of Navigation and also seek to engage with ASEAN as the link to the Pacific.

This is a critical juncture in global history. International relations of the future will be determined in a more maritime and Asia-centric world. The rise of the East also foretells a unique opportunity for Asia to introduce its own model of international relations underpinned by maritime salience of the Indian Ocean Region, its civilizational traditions and historical circumstances. Indian Ocean trade networks date back at least 4000 years and the people of Asia were connected by seagoing commerce centuries before the arrival of Europeans. These robust trade routes with ships plying were unique in that neither nationality, race, religion nor culture were an issue

when it came to trade. Voyagers across the Indian Ocean went to the Southeast Asia and the Far East and westwards to the African, European and Mediterranean regions. There were no obstacles to travel or trade. These ancient trade routes clearly epitomised the idea of freedom of navigation and rules based order. Recreating the open and free spirit of trade and commerce that existed in ancient times across the Indian Ocean would be of benefit for global trade and maritime Asia in particular. Should this not be our unique contribution to the new global order? The spirit of maritime trade and commerce that is inclusive, plurilateral, stabilising and rule based and one which empowers the littorals and give them their due place as direct stakeholders.

We are living in transformational times. The future generations depend on us to make the right choices. We can create a world where strategic mistrust and competition is allowed to reign. Alternatively, we can rise above rivalry and antagonism and work together towards recognising that when we do so, we can derive greater benefits for the welfare of our people. Before us is a unique opportunity to create a fair, equitable and prosperous world that leaves no one behind. We should seize this moment.



Indian Ocean Region: Need for an Overarching Vision

Sushma Swaraj*

India had the honour to host H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Vietnam along with the leaders from ASEAN for the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in January 2018. This was followed by the State Visit of H.E. Tran Dai Quang (President of Vietnam who expired while in office on 21st September 2018) to India in March 2018. India and Vietnam agreed to further strengthen their cooperation in the maritime domain, including on anti-piracy, security of sea lanes and exchange of white shipping information. They also agreed on the importance of the early conclusion of an ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement. In this context, they intend to accelerate the establishment of direct shipping routes between the sea ports of India and Vietnam. India and Vietnam are connected not only by the common waters that wash their shores but also by a shared vision for peace and prosperity. Hanoi is therefore a particularly appropriate setting to discuss developments in the Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific region.

In an inter-dependent world characterised by enhanced economic and trade linkages, the importance of sustainable use of our ocean resources cannot be overstated. For us in India, the seas around us have nurtured our links of commerce and culture with our extended neighbourhood over millennia. This is evident in



our shared cultural ties, stretching from Africa to Asia. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that in Indian mythology the Indian Ocean was known as 'Ratnakara' – the creator of gems. The waters of this great ocean were considered as the source of riches and prosperity. The economies of its littoral states depended directly and indirectly on the Indian Ocean. Today, it does not just support trade, but sustains livelihoods.

With the eastward shift of the engines of the global economy, there can be no doubt that the Indian Ocean is at the centre of the emerging 'Age of Asia'. The economic importance of the Indian Ocean and its vital role in the continued prosperity and development of the littoral nations is well established. This region is host to the world's busiest waterways and three-quarters of that traffic is headed for destinations beyond this region. As

**This article is a summary of the remarks made by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister for External Affairs, Government of India, on 27th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation.*

an important trade and energy waterway, carrying half the world's container shipment, one-third of its bulk cargo traffic and two thirds of oil shipments, the Indian Ocean clearly assumes importance well beyond its immediate shores and its littorals.

Nurturing a climate of peace and stability in Indian Ocean region is therefore an important priority for India's foreign policy. India believes that despite the region's diversity, the challenges they face are quite similar. India's vision for the region is one of cooperation and collective action. We cannot tap the bounty of the Indian Ocean without ensuring maritime peace and stability. Economic prosperity and maritime security go hand-in-hand. Security is an all-encompassing concept and includes traditional, non-traditional and newly emerging threats. These include maritime terrorism, smuggling, transnational crimes, drug-trafficking, illegal immigration, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, piracy, unregulated private maritime security companies and proliferation of sensitive items. It is further compounded by natural disasters, oil spills and effects of climate change, to which our region is highly prone. It is self-evident, therefore, that those who live in this region bear the primary responsibility for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean. It is equally valid that it is only through collective action that we can meet these challenges.

India sees ASEAN as central to the regional maritime architecture. This was recognised by our leaders during the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in January this year. In the Delhi

Declaration issued to mark this occasion, we reiterated the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, stability and maritime safety and security, and freedom of navigation and overflight in the region. India supports the lawful uses of the seas and unimpeded lawful maritime commerce and to promote peaceful resolutions of disputes, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, notably the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The diverse nature of the challenges before us require effective partnerships, both at the regional as well as multilateral level. India considers the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as an important instrument for achieving peace and security in the region. We commend Indonesia's leadership in conceptualising the first ever IORA leaders Summit in Jakarta in March 2017, which resulted in the Jakarta Concord. This has infused fresh momentum into IORA activities. We are supportive of the invigoration of IORA activities, including blue economy and renewable energy. The focus of the IORA on maritime safety and security promotes a shared understanding of maritime issues, and helps develop cooperative mechanisms. Taken together, these will also enhance the regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capacity in cases of natural disasters and crises. We share a common vision for the Indo-Pacific.

In March 2015, Prime Minister Modi put forward the concept of SAGAR, proposing a holistic vision for India's engagement with this region. SAGAR in Hindi means ocean. Prime

Minister Modi's vision is that in this century SAGAR should stand for 'Security and Growth for All in the Region'. In its implementation, this approach includes: (a) projects to promote hinterland linkages and strengthen regional connectivity, (b) linking South Asia to South East Asia (Act East) and to the Gulf (Think West), and (c) playing an active and constructive role in strengthening regional maritime security. Let me elaborate briefly on India's approach to each of these three elements.

The first part is India's focus on developing hinterland linkages & regional connectivity. Under Indian Government's 'Sagarmala' project, initiatives taken including building new ports and modernising old ones, developing inland waterways and hinterland development are all aimed at a robust maritime logistics infrastructure. India's eastern seaboard is a particular focus and can help recreate an integrated hub and spoke model for regional connectivity in the Bay of Bengal. Carrying this focus beyond its borders, India is today devoting more resources and assigning greater priority to building connectivity, contacts and cooperation in its immediate neighbourhood. This is manifest in projects in sectors ranging from rail and road transport to power generation and transmission, from port and waterways transport to educational and health exchanges.

The second element is the expanded interpretation of what constitutes India's neighbourhood. This is reflected in the renewed emphasis in India's "Act East" Policy and the new "Think West" policy towards West Asia and Gulf

region. India's Act East Policy is at the heart of its eastward orientation and ties in with its broader approach to the Indo-Pacific. Over the years, India's approach to the region has matured into a broader strategic engagement – with the ASEAN and its related frameworks like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) as also with countries further east, including Japan, South Korea, Australia and the Pacific Islands.

India therefore accords high priority to key infrastructure projects such as the Kaladan multi-modal transport project that links to Sittwe Port, and the Trilateral Highway that will extend to Thailand. India's recent agreement with Indonesia to develop port infrastructure in Sabong is yet another step in this direction.

India is also looking towards a more sustainable future for this region, by collaborating with its regional partners on Blue Economy projects, harnessing renewable energy, investing in development of desalination technologies, harvesting the biodiversity of the oceans, and sustainably mining the ocean depths for marine minerals. In all these engagements, India is guided by the development and security priorities of its partners. India's approach is based on interdependence rather than dominance or narrow reciprocal considerations. India supports responsible and transparent debt financing matched by responsible lending practises.

Following universally recognized international norms, transparency, openness, financial responsibility, and promoting a sense of

local ownership are essential for better and more sustainable development outcomes.

Coming to the third element, contributing to regional maritime security, India is working to ensure the safety and security of maritime traffic through the ocean by strengthening skills and logistics of its Indian Ocean neighbours. India is helping its maritime neighbours set up their coastal surveillance networks for developing shared Maritime Domain Awareness.

India has signed White Shipping Agreements with a number of countries. In addition, Indian ships have undertaken coordinated patrolling and EEZ Surveillance on the request of its partners. Another element of ensuring safety of navigation in the IOR has been the hydrographic support provided to its partners to chart the waters of the region. This has been augmented with a large training and capacity building effort.

In addition to the ASEAN and IORA mechanisms, the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), of which India is a founding member, offers a broad-based platform for developing greater synergies with the Navies in the region.

India also has well-established mechanisms like Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and Contact Group on piracy off Somalia (CGPCS), and anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden at the western extremity of this ocean.

Looking beyond practical day to day cooperation, it is important to build an overarching vision for the Indian Ocean region. Prime Minister Modi recently spoke of his vision of a free and inclusive Indo-Pacific. The Indian Ocean is a central component of this free and inclusive Indo-Pacific. The Indian Ocean is a region where some of the largest and smallest nations of the world have coexisted in harmony. The harmony is not only because of economic or cultural commonalities, but also of ideological and civilizational commonalities. Indo-Pacific region cannot be only a growth-engine; it has to be a community of ideas and commitments. We have to commit to the ideas of a rules-based order, equality under international law, peaceful resolution of disputes, and equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization.



The Maritime Advantage Remains Unsurpassed

Vivian Balakrishnan*

Historical Basis

Singapore is pleased to be a founding co-partner of the Indian Ocean Conference, which it believes will help shape a common vision for the Indian Ocean, a subject of increasingly vital importance over the years. It helps to start by taking a longer-term look back in time. Over the last three thousand years, the Indian Ocean has been a platform for the exchange of knowledge, culture, and religion across an enormous diversity of our states. South Asian influences in language and religion, borne across the waves of the Indian Ocean, are clearly evident here in Southeast Asia. Even today, we see the legacy of Sanskrit in our languages, as well as the influences of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam in our belief systems.

While the overland Silk Route has been more famous historically, the Indian Ocean has also been a crucial conduit for maritime trade. It linked the East African coast to the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and across the South China Sea to China. This thriving trade has been chronicled by travellers like Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta in the 13th and 14th century. The Indian Ocean today is even more vital. It enjoys a privileged location at the crossroads of global



trade, connecting major engines of the international economy all the way from the North Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific.

Maritime Advantage

The “maritime advantage” needs to be emphasised. We live in a time where many people think of connectivity in terms of air, digital fibre optics, high-speed rails, and overland routes. However, it is worthwhile remembering that, even today, maritime routes offer greater economies of scale. Take the average container ship with a capacity of 20,000 TEUs. If you were to unload this one ship and put each container onto a train, the train you would need to move this load would be 100km long. For those of you who are interested

** This article is a summary of the speech made by Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, on 27th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation.*

in numbers, that is even longer than the Panama Canal. Even in today's modern day and age, the maritime advantage is still unsurpassed.

Strategic Importance of the Indian Ocean

There is another reason why the maritime dimension is so important. If you take a flight, you have to traverse air traffic controls, take instructions, and seek approvals. But on the high seas, even in territorial waters, exercising the right of innocent passage, a ship can go literally anywhere it wants in the world. It is point-to-point transport, unrestricted, with complete freedom of navigation. This is a key advantage of the maritime dimension that all the other modalities of transport do not offer us.

Therefore, it is not a surprise that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that 80 percent of global trade by volume and 70 percent by value is transported by sea. Most of us here will know that a significant portion of that traffic actually flows through the Indian Ocean. Just another example – 40 percent of the world's oil supply travels through the entryways in and out of the Indian Ocean. As a result, there is no question that the Indian Ocean is of crucial strategic importance to all of us. One of the central questions of our time, is how to address the opportunities and challenges that will present themselves in this vital arena?

Singapore in the Indian Ocean

Singapore is foremost a tiny city state and a

port. If you look at the map of the world, it is actually at the Southern-most tip of the Eurasian continent. As a result, Singapore is one degree fifteen minutes north of the Equator. If you took a ship from India to China, or even to the Pacific Coast of the United States, the shortest route is via the Straits of Malacca, pivot around Singapore, through the South China Sea then the Pacific Ocean. Singapore is also unique because its trade volume is three times of its GDP. No other country has that ratio. Singapore represents a perspective of an open trading port that lies at the pivot point of this vital waterway.

A couple of principles which shape Singapore's views of the Indian Ocean, which are drawn from its experience at the tip of the Straits of Malacca are as follows.

Open and Inclusive Regional Architecture

We need an open and inclusive regional architecture. The key words here are "open" and "inclusive". We want to have substantive relations and remain interconnected with the rest of the world. As India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said, we want an interdependent world with investments flowing in all directions. We do not want to be forced to make false choices. We do not believe that it will be to anyone's benefit for the region to come under the exclusive dominance of any single great power or to be split into rival blocs or become an arena for proxy wars.

Like the countries of the broader Indian Ocean region, ASEAN is an association of 10 very

diverse countries. ASEAN countries will always be affected by what is happening around them. Their short history in the last five decades have brought home this point very pointedly. The challenge is whether ASEAN allows external events and the overall strategic change in global balance of power to overwhelm and divide them. Or, indeed, whether they can raft their destinies together and build a more stable, seaworthy ship which will keep them out of danger and give them sufficient ballast to withstand the waves and the winds that will come their way.

That is why they have always sought to give everyone a greater stake in the region, as well as mutual interdependence and prosperity. This is why ASEAN has always engaged external partners throughout its history. Starting with the Post Ministerial Conferences and Dialogue Partners in 1978, they moved on to the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994, the ASEAN Plus Three in 1997, and the East Asia Summit in 2005. When this writer meets superpowers, his usual line to them goes like this: “It is in your own long-term interest to see ASEAN succeed. Ultimately, in the decades to come, ASEAN will become your biggest trading partner and a greater and more compelling zone for your investments.”

The key concept, therefore, is interdependence. We believe that this is the way to secure peace and maintain prosperity in our region. By promoting interdependence, we can demonstrate to everyone that, in reality and on the ground, we gain more by working and trading together, as well as investing in one another rather than by engaging

in zero-sum games and superpower rivalries. We all hope for win-win outcomes. The opposite scenario of dividing into rival blocs, insisting in narrow independence, engaging in zero-sum competition, and becoming part of proxy wars is not the way for peace and prosperity. Therefore, economic and political interdependence must be our mantra.

Regional Economic Architecture

ASEAN has always sought a regional architecture that articulates a complete, coherent, and consistent economic strategy. In other words, trade is strategy. We must look for every opportunity to facilitate trade and mutual investment, enhance connectivity, and invest in infrastructure. The global consensus for free trade and economic integration is fraying. All leaders in democracies have to stand for elections. One can no longer stand at a political rally and say he stands for free trade and expect everyone to subscribe to it. The truth is, we live in an age of anxiety and the general sense is that the case for free trade has not been adequately made. In an age where people are worried about global competition, job security, and inequality, some parties would say that free trade has lowered levels of protection for the most vulnerable and increased prospects of inequality within society. Therefore, politicians who want to make the argument for free trade will have to demonstrate to their domestic electorates that this is a recipe which creates jobs, as well as maintains economic relevance, competitiveness, and peace between

countries. This is actually a political argument and one that has to be made to and decided by domestic electorates.

In Singapore's case, as said earlier, its trade volume is three times its GDP. It cannot afford to build walls and protectionist barriers because Singapore would clearly not be viable in a world without free trade. Nevertheless, it believes that free trade and economic integration has to go beyond Singapore and include ASEAN. Looking beyond ASEAN, we are focused on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). If we succeed, the RCEP will include all 10 members of ASEAN plus India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. This puts together about 45 percent of the world's population and 30 percent of the world's GDP. It will be the single largest free trade zone. If we get the RCEP right and continue to build economic bridges to Africa, South America, and across the Pacific to the US, Mexico, and Canada, we may hopefully and possibly succeed in the long run with a Free Trade Area of the Indo-Pacific. That is why this effort, these difficult negotiations are so important.

Rules-based World Order

The third point is a rules-based world order.

This again comes from the perspective of a small, tiny, city state. By definition, we cannot believe that "might is right". We have to believe in a rules-based world order with multilateral institutions setting multilateral rules and having access to peaceful resolution of disputes. In the maritime field, you will understand why, therefore, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is such a sacred document for Singapore. It keeps the sea lanes free, open, peaceful, and allows small states like Singapore as well as Sri Lanka to have an equal say even when we are dealing with much bigger political and economic entities.

Conclusion

The Indian Ocean has always been a vital artery for peace and prosperity. It has become even more so now. The maritime dimension has always been important. In this modern day and age, it is perhaps even more so. We need these three ingredients: one, a free and open regional and international architecture; two, a clear economic agenda; three, a rules-based world order. If we can do this, we believe that the Indian Ocean will be another cradle for a new burst of energy and a new golden age for all countries big and small.

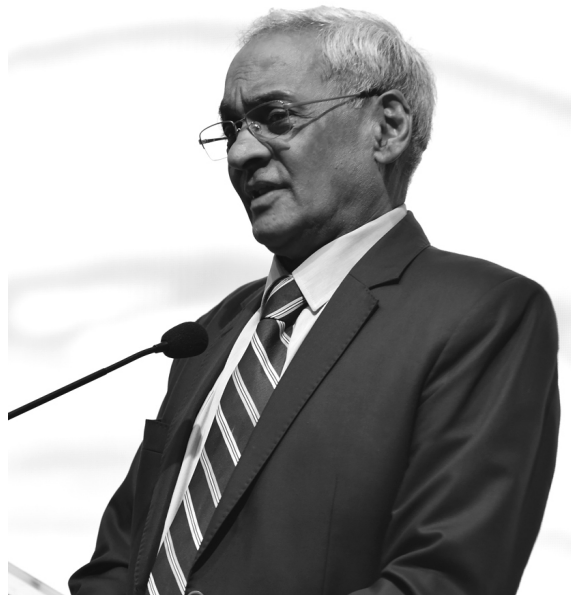


Towards A Regional Approach to Development

Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo*

If the world stopped dreaming, there would be no great future for this planet. When thinkers, political thinkers and governments come with huge ideas that might look impossible to implement, we have to think of one thing that in 1957 the current European Union (EU) was just a common market. The Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957. No one thought that 50 years later this common market will become this huge EU that is today on the verge of political integration. Dreams come true when it achieves a critical mass. The dream of Prime Minister Modi, the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) dream is for the future of the region. The first reaction is to say - how can this be? Because it looks like a Titanic project.

When it comes to regional integration, when it comes to reach the ocean architecture, when it comes to living together and learning to live together, we must remember that the post-colonial period of one market one planet is over. What was termed as globalization is the concept of one market one planet. The concept of a one size fits all approach of the World Trade Organization is over because it is no longer reflecting what the future of this planet is. Geopolitics is moving from one center to multi centers which we cannot ignore. This is probably where we have to



acknowledge that the globalization approach, the global village approach, has not worked. The World Trade Organization today in Geneva is looking for a way of reinventing itself.

What is now becoming a very quick reality is a very strong commitment of countries to unite within one region. Who would have thought that Africa's fifty five nations would meet and would dream of one African continental free trade area? Mauritius has also joined the Africa Free Trade continental area. Mauritius will also be signing very soon the trilateral trade agreement that comprises Saudi and East Africa. This is a clear

**This article is a summary of the speech delivered by Mr. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo, Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Mauritius on 28th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation. Mr. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo is presently chair of the Indian Ocean Commission, a group of five countries in the region namely Madagascar, Seychelles, Comoros, Reunion (an overseas region of France) and Mauritius. He is also chairman of the contact group that was set up by the City Council to fight piracy in Somalia.*

indication that the world is regionalizing itself. So, within this global approach, the initiative of India is something that we have to deal with respect and see how we can work it through. And we cannot ignore also that there are various knitted initiatives.

One is from China. Japan also is on a major initiative. All of them rotate under one beautiful concept. As Smt. Sushma Swaraj said, “We want interdependence and not dominance.” First aspect, we have lived the colonial period of the mighty and the weak speaking of interdependence makes sense. A win-win situation where all players are winners is something which is new which we have to respect and the fact that we are all thriving for peace, for stability, for security, for prosperity, also makes sense.

Mauritius is fully behind these initiatives because as a small island it is compelled to open itself to the world. There are things we cannot ignore. It would not be in the interest of those huge projects that we try to hide under the carpet certain realities. The following are some of those realities.

1) Sovereignty and territorial integrity: We should not forget that most of us come from the colonial period. This proud nation, Vietnam, through an incredible sense of courage of commitment managed to get oppressors out. We all come from colonies and we need to be respected and we need one thing that our territory and our sovereignty is fully recognized and respected. In fact, any regional project that does not go in the sense of respect of national sovereignty and integrity will not go through. We have to concentrate and pay great attention to it and not ignore it.

2) This one size fits all approach cannot work. The World Trade Organization managed through a few decades to dictate that we all have to follow only one road. We have realized today that the one size fits all approach will not work for two reasons.

- i) In the group that we are speaking of, GDP per capita ranging from USD 400 to USD 40,000, the divide is huge. We have to bear this in mind that when we want to work together, we have to also take into consideration the fact that we are all not at a level playing field in terms of revenue. We are dealing with countries which are different.
- ii) We are from countries less than 2,000 square kilometers and we are speaking of organizations where there will be huge countries like China and India behind it. When we speak of working together, we have to acknowledge the size of the countries, and the weight of the countries are to be considered when we work out schemes to work together.

Those are probably a few points we should not try to hide below the carpet, issues which we will have to deal with if we want the organization to succeed. Therefore, we have moved away from continental FTAs like the EU and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and we are now developing the concept of ocean FTAs. It is beautiful that we are connected not by territories but we are connected through the ocean. What we are proposing today is to say that all those who are connected through the oceans can work together in the interest of all and prosper.

What we are doing in Mauritius might be of interest to others. In Mauritius there is a problem. It is a middle-income group country stuck in the middle-income trap. Mauritius is trying to move out of it with the help of three new pillars which coincides with what we want to do today. The three pillars are for the Mauritian economy for the 50 next year probably will be (i) ocean economy, (ii) the maritime hub development on the same basis as Dubai and Singapore, (iii) the Africa story: Mauritius is part of the fifty five states forming part of Africa.. So, the three components have helped us to look deeper into trade and marine security.

Mauritius cannot survive without trade. It has learned to open totally to the external world. It is doing it through two ways: (i) Through the signing of bilateral FTAs, and (ii) Through working with governments on a G2G level. We are not fighting regional FTAs, they are there. We are committed to the Africa FTA. We are also committed to other initiatives. But still we think that waiting for the whole thing to develop might take time. So, what we are doing now is working out FTAs. So, we have signed the Africa Continental FTA plus the trilateral FTA and we have moved on the left to opening the door with countries that can contribute to the development of Africa. We are presently negotiating with India to set up a huge FTA to work on bilateral India issues. We have finalized an FTA with China which would be the first free trade agreement between China and Africa. And, we are also negotiating other FTAs to ensure that Mauritius starts behaving like a connecting link between those who want to invest and those who want investment.

Mauritius is working with countries in Africa because we do not have the means of working with all other 54. So, we have G2G agreements with Ghana, Ivory Coast, Senegal and recently with Kenya. We are moving ahead on a G to G agreements where both the governments commit themselves to working together on project development. The G to G joint commission with Kenya was held in August 2018. We are speaking of billions of dollars of investment in special economic zones and what we are trying to do in Mauritius is to be the transmission belt between those who want to invest like the investors, investment, finance technology and channel it through the financial sector of Mauritius to the African countries. That is what we are doing in terms of trade. We are not showing the weight. We are just trying to survive and to develop in an environment which is not easy. This is trade.

The second aspect is maritime security because we speak of the ocean, and ocean means SDG. It means not only sustainable use of ocean resources, it also means protection of the marine ecosystem which is our responsibility. What we have been doing is trying to contribute our solution to the whole thing. So, in April of this year the Indian Ocean Commission with the Mauritian government and Brussels and the EU organized in Mauritius a Maritime security conference. That group consists of some 250 major player countries and organizations. We did it and we realized here also that when it comes to Maritime security there also, we cannot play the game of hide and seek.

There are countries who are voluntarily not seeing that their own fishing companies are destroying the ocean by illegal fishing. The Indian

Ocean today is being pounded by fishing companies who are not recognized officially by their countries but tolerated by their countries. Some countries are helping in the destruction of ocean resources and staying put. We have to speak about it and when we speak of sustainable use of the ocean, we also have spread the idea that we are responsible vis-a-vis the ocean in terms of preservation. When it comes to the preservation of the Marine ecosystem, it is easy to see that climate change is present. We are short of financial resources to ensure the survival of our ocean.

Our Ocean is a planetary gift that we have had from the lord so we have to protect it. And there again what we are seeing is that in spite of what we are doing, pollution has reached levels never attained in this part of the world. We have to acknowledge it. Before cleaning, we have to acknowledge that there is dirt to be cleaned and that is why when we speak of the marine ecosystem, disaster management is something which is so crucial. It is our capacity to be prepared when it comes to meeting with disasters. For instance, when there is petrol spill in the ocean, we need immediate action.

The whole idea of disaster management is being looked into a very superficial way. Superficial because disaster management is something where we need action and quick action. For quick action to take place, there needs to be exchange of information. Let us say in the Indian Ocean close to Mozambique there is a problem. We need to be in a position to deal with it quickly and efficiently. And here, the large countries are making wishful proposals and commitments and

exchange of information is being kept secret by most of the big countries. So how can you on one side be speaking of disaster management and when it comes to exchanging information, they tell us we are sorry this is a matter of our national security. We need to know where we are standing when we speak of disaster management and the need for action and the need also for exchange of information.

Drug trafficking in the Indian Ocean has reached level we have never seen before. Mauritius has recently signed two agreements with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Drug trafficking and financial crimes work together. We are very far from reaching a point where we can say that we have achieved control of drug trafficking in our ocean. We are very far from it. Coming also to piracy and terrorism, it is good that we spend billions of dollars to stop the pirates and put them in prison but ultimately, we have to realize that if we want to fight piracy, we have to fight the need to be a pirate. This means we need investment, development and economic creation and getting people not to become pirates. Part of those huge billions of dollars which are being spent on fighting piracy must be used to allow Somalia and the neighboring countries to develop. We have to invest. We believe in what we are doing today. SAGAR and the other initiatives make sense because we are moving from a global approach to development to a more regional approach. The road ahead is challenging, but we can make it. But then we have to recognize that there are challenges which will have to be met in a courageous way.



Need to Strengthen and Empower IORA

Luwellyn Landers*

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is of great strategic importance and value to the world in which we now find ourselves, and it is of utmost importance to safeguard and develop the region for the benefit of all its people. It is also argued that we need a new regional architecture to deal with the myriad security and socio-economic challenges facing the region. It is respectfully suggested that we have the necessary regional architecture to deal with these challenges and our discussions should be on the ways to strengthen this architecture to ensure that it is able to respond and deal with these challenges. In this regard, we would advance the view that any future regional architecture for the IOR must have the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) at its core.

The year 2018 is historic for us as it is the centenary year of the birth of former President Nelson Mandela regarded widely as the founding father of IORA. The formation of the IORA has its roots in Nelson Mandela's remarks in 1995 when he said, "The natural urge of the facts of history and geography should broaden itself to include the concept of an Indian Ocean rim for socio economic cooperation and other peaceful endeavors." His vision became a reality two years later when in March 1997 the Indian Ocean rim for regional cooperation was formed. The IORA was launched in Mauritius with 14 member states. Today the association has 21 member states and seven dialogue partners.



It has become a strong and dynamic international body working to ensure an Indian Ocean rim that is safe, secure and sustainably developed. As you may know, South Africa assumed the chair of IORA in October 2017 with the theme of "uniting the people of Africa, Asia, Australia and the Middle East through enhanced cooperation for peace, stability and sustainable development." This guiding theme for our chair ship until 2019 encompasses South Africa's view that the IOR should be characterised as a region of peace, stability and development and that we view IORA as the pre-eminent regional organisation which would pursue this ambitious goal.

**This article is a summary of the speech delivered by Mr. Luwellyn Landers, Hon'ble Deputy Minister of International Relations, South Africa on 28th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation.*

Maritime safety and security is a critical component and precondition for the economic activity and growth that is necessary for sustainable socio-economic development. As we move forward in this regard it is very important to recognise that we did not assume the chair in a vacuum; we are building on a solid foundation laid by other important strategic partners in the region that have led IORA recently such as Indonesia, Australia, India and Iran. We recall that during India's chair of the association during 2011 to 2013, the work of IORA was streamlined and invigorated to become more focused and targeted towards the sustained growth and balanced development of the IOR and of member states and to create common ground for regional economic cooperation. IORA subsequently adopted the following 6 key priority areas.

- 1) Maritime safety and security,
- 2) Trade and investment facilitation,
- 3) Fisheries management,
- 4) Disaster Risk Management,
- 5) Academic and science and technology cooperation, and
- 6) Tourism promotion and cultural exchange.

During Australia's chair in 2013 to 2015, the Association changed its name to the Indian Ocean Rim Association signifying this renewed vigor in the work of the association. Australia also enhanced the strategic focus of order through the adoption of the blue economy and women's economic empowerment as agreed priority areas that cut across the aforementioned six key priority areas. During Indonesia's chair in 2015 to 2017, the first IORA leaders' summit to commemorate IORA's 20th anniversary was held in Jakarta on 7 March 2017.

The summit's adoption and signing of the Jakarta Concord elevated the association's profile and stature to a significantly higher level and charted the way forward for the association into the next decade beginning with South Africa's chairship. To this end the Jakarta Concord provides the highest levels of commitment with which to make the Indian Ocean a region of peace, stability and development through enhanced cooperation including but not limited to the six priority areas.

The IORA action plan provides a firm set of realistic and measurable commitments for the IORA's current council of ministers to implement the Jakarta Concord and to take IORA forward in a more outcomes oriented manner. To this end the action plan provides short, medium and long term goals to inter alia promote marine safety and security in the region, enhance trade and investment cooperation in the region, promote sustainable and responsible fisheries management and development, strengthen academic science and technology cooperation, foster tourism and cultural exchanges, harness and develop the blue economy in the region and promote gender equality in the economic empowerment of women and girls to give effect to these targets.

IORA under South Africa's chairship is strengthening its institutional mechanisms and bodies including the secretariat and is in the process of establishing new dedicated functional bodies to deal specifically with critical priorities in areas such as maritime safety and security, the blue economy, women's empowerment and tourism. There is also a strong focus on enhancing trade and investment between IORA members, empowering the youth, ensuring the effective utilisation of resources such as water and fisheries

and promoting research and development and innovation including through the Second International Indian Ocean expedition.

The focus on key priorities and the establishment of these new bodies will enable us to have a comprehensive set of work plans to deal with the challenges being faced in the region as well as to take advantage of the many opportunities that these areas bring to the fore. We are on a new and exciting trajectory and we look forward to working with our partners to explore these opportunities in a coherent and organized way. In this regard, we are broadening and deepening our engagement with the IORA dialogue partners to enhance their role in and support for the core objectives of the IORA action plan. The unprecedented interest in IORA amongst countries wishing to be dialogue partners is testament to the progress that we are making in taking our order forward as the pre-eminent international organization in the Indian Ocean.

Furthermore, South Africa is committed to deepening and strengthening IORA's partnership with international and regional bodies such as the United Nations, the African Union, ASEAN, APAC as well as other important maritime bodies and symposia that focus on the Indian Ocean. We are particularly gratified that IORA has observer status at both the United Nations General Assembly and the African Union. And we look forward to strengthening our engagements with these important organs. In the case of the United Nations we are collaborating with agencies and bodies such as the Food and Agricultural Organization, Intergovernmental Oceanographic

Commission of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the exchange and dissemination of ocean data and information. We are in the process of finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Institute for training and research. This cooperation and collaboration in support of the UN's Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 14 which seeks to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Furthermore, as one of the many African countries of IORA, we are committed to working with the African Union in support of agenda 2063 towards a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

In this regard, it is important to recognize that the EU has declared 2015 to 2025 as the decade of African seas and oceans. Likewise at the regional level in southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community or SADC is moving towards a strategy to develop a thriving maritime economy and to harness the full potential of sea based activities in an environmentally sustainable manner. IORA is an organization on the move and one that cannot and should not be ignored. My appeal is to look within the Indian Ocean region to the existing regional architecture such as IORA and find ways to work with it to strengthen and empower us to play a meaningful and strategic role. The IORA charter and the strategic vision encapsulated in the Jakarta Concord is an example that can be used to achieve this.



Oceanic Good Governance: A Perspective

Sagala Ratnayaka*



Sri Lanka hosted the second edition of Indian Ocean Conference in Colombo in 2017. It is excited to be on board with this initiative and the third edition and its theme of “building regional architectures”. The long-term objective of this initiative is to ensure oceanic good governance. The aim is to ensure the management of the world’s oceans and their resources in ways that keep our oceans healthy, productive, safe, secure and resilient, whilst strengthening connectivity and economic activity. In this context, the importance of building regional architectures to ensure oceanic good governance in the Indian Ocean region gains greater salience.

The end of the Cold War witnessed a shift in global attention to the IOR in strategic and political terms. The Indian Ocean region has become the hub of intense global activity over the last few

decades underpinned by the growth of the Asian economies. The sea lanes in the Indian Ocean are considered among the most strategically important in the world with over 80% seaborne trade in oil transiting through Indian Ocean choke points. The most important trade routes of the world pass through this region. In particular we are witnessing the rise of maritime Asia due to the Strategic importance of the Indian Ocean.

Some important issues require collective reflection. Enhanced economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean region including amongst the diverse littoral economies in South Asia, South East Asia and Africa is essential for greater integration of the region. All economic indicators of the region have more than doubled during the past two decades. The region’s economic upturn is being driven by several factors including the revival of historic maritime links fueled by global value chain trade centered on East Asia, the rise of BRICs economies as growth poles in the world economy, increased investment in port infrastructure, consolidation in the shipping sector towards larger and more efficient ships, falling barriers to trade and investment, the growth of the middle class, and the winds of change in the sphere of technology.

With the right policies and with the correct perspective on oceanic ‘good governance’, the economies in the region are well placed to

**This article is a summary of the remarks made by Mr. Sagala Ratnayaka, Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister and Minister of Youth Affairs, Project Management and Southern Development, Sri Lanka, on 28th August, 2018 at the 3rd Indian Ocean Conference, at Hanoi, Vietnam organised by India Foundation.*

capitalise further on these changes and prosper. This should happen at global, regional and national levels which would facilitate economic convergence and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region.

The Indian Ocean brings together peoples of three continents and constitutes a third of the world's ocean space. The diversity and vastness of the Indian Ocean presents opportunities and challenges that the littoral states need to factor in so as to ensure peace and security of the region. These opportunities and challenges are multifaceted and require a regional architecture that addresses multiple issues both at a sub-regional level and at a wider Indian Ocean level. We need to consider a multi-layered approach that promotes and protects the core values of ocean governance and addresses key issues impacting our ocean in an effective manner.

Freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean has to be strengthened because it is vital to world and regional trade and critical to global energy security. We strongly believe that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is the foundation for a stable rules-based regime at sea. Also, we note with concern the extent of sea blindness of coastal states. We, as a coastal state and an island, have limited visibility of our maritime surface picture. We rely extensively on transponder information such as AIS and VMS to map maritime activity around us, but the reality is that most dark vessels operate without activating transponder data. There is a need to develop maritime domain awareness (MDA technology) not only for our own national

security interests but also for better regional cooperation to detect illicit activity at sea.

Many experts here on maritime affairs will acknowledge that jurisdictional limitations on the high seas offer criminal networks a safe haven for illicit trafficking activity. The Indian Ocean has become the largest route for trafficking Afghan heroin from the Makran coast to East Africa and South Asia. Sri Lanka hosted Home Ministers from Indian Ocean states including Shri Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, Ministers of State for Home Affairs in India, where it is resolved to establish the Southern Route Partnership (SRP) in October 2016. The Ministers agreed with the Colombo Declaration and pledged to develop a regional mechanism to counter drug trafficking in the Indian Ocean. The SRP with the support of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime has become the primary mechanism to coordinate counter narcotics operations in the Indian Ocean region.

The SRP by itself would not do. Criminal activities transcend national maritime boundaries and impact on all coastal states. It is imperative that we improve the maritime law enforcement capacity of Indian Ocean states to counter all forms of maritime crime and ensure the long arm of the law can dispense "blue justice" across the Indian Ocean. Similarly, there are shared obligations for maritime search and rescue, and requirements for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief across the Indian Ocean. The case of Malaysian Airlines MH370 allegedly disappearing over the Indian Ocean is a wake-up call to all Indian Ocean states on the urgent need to review search and rescue capabilities over the Indian Ocean. Many small

states have very large search and rescue areas of responsibility. We need to have a more integrated approach for search and rescue cooperation.

All Indian Ocean states need to commit more aggressively to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 - “Life below water”. The marine environment impacted by climate change, pollution, and oceanic resource exploitation needs to be monitored and safeguarded; it is indispensable to global environmental security and regional food security. We need to take a more serious approach to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, towards which Indian Ocean states have taken a lackluster approach driven by political imperatives. We as many other coastal states are facing the impacts of waste dumping in the Indian Ocean.

Regional Cooperation can make possible, stronger transport and trade connectivity not only through coordinated physical investments but also harmonisation of policies, rules, and procedures. Ultimately, an integrated Indian Ocean Region (IOR) market can emerge with economies of the scale necessary to compete in international markets.

The issues around the Indian Ocean are complex and require concerted efforts by littoral states to address the issues and take advantage of the opportunities that the ocean presents. At present there are multiple Indian Ocean organisations and forums, however in terms of achieving effective regional cooperation there is still a long way to go. Therefore, what is the most suitable regional architecture that will focus on key issues and also provide the necessary

perspective of sub-regional dynamics that drives a coherent overall policy on ocean governance?

We may need to consider a multi-layered approach both in terms of division of thematic responsibilities and in terms of sub-regional interests, within an overarching Indian Ocean framework of shared values and principles. There is no perfect fit, on what regional architecture works best for such a vast ocean space. There are issues that can be addressed as a wider Indian Ocean community, and there are issues that can be dealt with more meaningfully at a thematic level or sub-regional level. It is about taking forward all these strands of activity within an architecture based on shared values and principles founded upon the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

It is high time for the littoral states, to be the masters of their own fate and the captains of their own ship. There should be increased coordination, participation and engagement by littoral states in determining how affairs are run in the Indian Ocean. Meaningful regional cooperation can help the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. A single-minded focus on national strategies and actions has diverted attention from critical regional actions needed to promote energy, food, and water security-related SDGs; strengthen environmental sustainability, address climate change; and prevent natural disasters. Perhaps most importantly, regional cooperation can help build enough economic stakes in the region that promote peace and prosperity and substantially diminish the threat of aggression and war.

We must also be alert to competing global interest that can impact on the Indian Ocean.

Recently, as the ice caps melt in the North Pole, a Maersk's container vessel operated for the first time in an Arctic Route this summer from Murmansk in Russia (Near Norway) to Bering Strait near Alaska. If we are to achieve the full potential of the Indian Ocean it is imperative that we as Indian Ocean states maintain the comparative advantage in a shared approach.

Sri Lanka has a clear vision of what the country wants to be in the world today. It is repositioning itself to optimize its relationship with its neighbors and other partners, to leverage its geostrategic position and make it a hub of the Indian Ocean. To fully realise this potential, Sri Lanka is engaging in initiatives with regional players who have major economic stakes in the Indian Ocean. It is also pushing to further integrate with the world by undertaking reforms to facilitate trade and encourage productive foreign

investments. Sri Lanka's strategy is to leverage investments to boost its industries such as tourism, expand its manufacturing base, and safeguard its main exports: such as garments and tea. Accordingly, the Indian Ocean region plays a critical role in driving the global economy, and it will play an even more important role in the future.

The Indian Ocean is central to deciding our common global future. The shared nature of the Indian Ocean needs to be recognised and it is in our common interest to care, protect and develop this shared space for mutual benefit. Maintaining peace and security in the Indian Ocean is a prerequisite for the development and growth of the region. It is the collective responsibility of the countries in this region and beyond to ensure that the Indian Ocean is better managed, safe, productive and resilient – through 'Oceanic good governance'.



Building Regional Architectures in Indian Ocean Region

Alice G. Wells*



In 2017, the Indian Ocean Conference's theme was "Peace, Progress, and Prosperity." In 2018, it is "Building Regional Architectures." This change in themes mirrors the need of the hour - we must transition from identifying the future we want, to actively building that future, together.

In July 2018, Secretary Pompeo, in his address at the Indo-Pacific Business Forum, made clear that the United States is committed to supporting its words with actions and with resources. Some have accused US of talking about a free and open Indo-Pacific as it is withdrawing from Asia. Secretary Pompeo was clear. US is not withdrawing from Asia. US has never contemplated withdrawing from Asia. America's

own security and prosperity is intricately tied to this region. The Secretary outlined the U.S. commitment to ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific that must, and will, include a thriving Indian Ocean region of economic growth, with a strong commitment to collective security and global norms that allow for an equal and equitable playing field and encourage prosperity for all.

The United States' vision for the Indian Ocean region, and US roadmap for how it, together with its partners, can achieve that vision may be summarised in three broad points. First, US will expand economic engagement, with particular attention to addressing the region's infrastructure needs and encouraging regional interconnectivity. Second, US will continue to broaden and deepen its security cooperation to address the geopolitical, transnational, and environmental threats that could derail progress in the Indian Ocean region. Third, US reaffirms its commitment to free and open air and sea-lanes, a rules-based global order, and a region where a level playing field gives every nation and every citizen the opportunity to prosper.

Economic Engagement

The Indian Ocean region is one of the most dynamic in the world. Nearly half the world's 90,000 commercial vessels and two-thirds of the

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global oil shipments travel through its sea lanes, and protecting open and unhindered commerce is vital not only for the United States, but for each and every country in this region. The Indo-Pacific boasts some of the fastest growing economies on earth and is home to half of the globe's population. The United States government and private sector have all along played critical roles in supporting this remarkable growth story. And US will continue to do so.

The United States is committed to the economic well-being of the region, which for us means focusing on private sector-led investments in sectors essential to the economic future of the Indo-Pacific. As Secretary Pompeo made clear, government spending alone can never address the Indo-Pacific's needs, and is not the path forward for the Indian Ocean region. Only the private sector can provide the estimated \$26 trillion needed by 2030 for infrastructure investment in Asia. We are proud of the important contributions of the U.S. private sector to growth and prosperity in the region. Annually, the United States conducts \$1.4 trillion in two-way trade with the Indo-Pacific region, and over the past decade, Indo-Pacific foreign direct investment by American companies has doubled to about \$940 billion last year from \$444 billion in 2007.

Today, U.S. companies rank as the largest source of foreign investment in Bangladesh, with more than \$3.3 billion invested to date. Chevron Bangladesh is the country's largest producer of natural gas (over 55 percent) and GE, with 30 gas

turbines and 1,500 gas engines installed, is helping generate a third of Bangladesh's power capacity. SpaceX, one of the United States' most innovative firms, recently helped launch Bangladesh's first indigenous communications satellite. In India, GE is proceeding with its \$2.5 billion investment in a factory that will produce 960 diesel-electric engines to help modernise the country's rail system.

Yet, as we look to continue to unleash the potential of our private sectors to contribute to growth and development, the United States government is itself also committed to investing in the region through transparent and sustainable initiatives. Examples of these investments range from the \$18 million in current loan support for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in Sri Lanka provided by the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation; to training in innovative best practices provided to representatives from South Asia's major ports including Colombo, Chittagong, Mumbai, and Pondicherry. It also includes the largest single grant to Nepal – a \$500 million Compact from the Millennium Challenge Corporation signed in September 2017. This Compact, which will help to expand Nepal's road network and electricity transmission infrastructure, includes a \$130 million of investment from the government of Nepal, bringing the total value of the investment to \$630 million. In India, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency has supported the phenomenal growth of the civil aviation sector through a public-private partnership among U.S. and Indian civil aviation

agencies and over 30 aviation companies, to promote aviation safety, security, standards harmonisation, and airspace liberalisation.

Yet, too many companies remain wary of investing in this dynamic region. An essential part of Indo-Pacific diplomacy of US will involve working with its partners in the region to prioritise transparency, accountability, and responsible financing that will unlock trillions in private capital into their economies, and into productive enterprises that bring jobs and prosperity to their peoples.

Security

As we pursue our economic growth goals, we cannot take our eyes off the threats we all face together. Natural disasters, piracy and crime, and other threats to the region are ever present. We must act together, meet these threats to our collective prosperity. For this reason, the United States is expanding its security engagement and cooperation across the Indo-Pacific, and particularly the Indian Ocean region. Its U.S. INDOPACOM, with more than 380,000 military and civilian personnel, 200 ships, and nearly 2,500 aircraft are engaged in strengthening relationships across a geography that comprises seven of the world's ten largest militaries, nine of the world's ten largest ports, and some of the world's busiest and most critical sea lanes. But we do not seek to control, dominate, or coerce. Rather, to quote Secretary Pompeo, "where America goes, we seek partnership, not dominion."

US security relationship with India, a Major Defense Partner, is a key example of this cooperation, and the 2+2 dialogue in New Delhi showcases this vital partnership. India holds more military exercises with the United States than with any other partner. In June 2018, we held our 22nd US-India-Japan Malabar naval exercise that continues to enhance our ability to protect the maritime commons together. On 2nd August 2018, we concluded our biennial RIMPAC exercises, the world's largest international maritime exercise, with India and, for the first time, Sri Lanka and Vietnam participating. We hope that one day in the not too distant future other navies of the region can also participate in exercises and coordinate maritime activities to build a collective regional capacity.

This year also saw the USS NIMITZ carrier strike group visit Sri Lanka in the largest port call by any foreign military since World War II, the transfer of a U.S. Coast Guard cutter to the Sri Lankan Navy, as well as the announcement of a \$39 million plus-up of Foreign Military Financing to help develop maritime security, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacity. Along with commitments of \$40 million for Bangladesh and \$17 million for Nepal, the Bay of Bengal Initiative will improve our ability to cooperate with regional partners to share shipping information and build maritime domain awareness capacity to enhance regional maritime security and support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. And these are just a few of the many ways

in which the United States is joining with its partners to meet those threats to our collective prosperity.

Governance and Architecture

The lack of architecture and underpinning structures that can help the Indian Ocean region chart a prosperous future was discussed at the previous Indian Ocean Conferences. Challenges to free navigation and consensus-based dispute resolution threaten to undermine the international rules and norms that have allowed for unprecedented global prosperity. In Southeast Asia, ASEAN is central to addressing these issues, and we hope that similar structures will take on a similar role in the Indian Ocean region. Through flexible regional groupings of like-minded partners, we seek to develop best practices and standards that will encourage sustainable and transparent development that can help countries avoid cycles of debt and weakened sovereignty. We are particularly hopeful that our trilateral mechanism with India and Japan can begin to assume some of these foundational roles in the Indian-Ocean region. This year we were glad to

host an infrastructure-working group in Washington for our Indian and Japanese development experts that began to address the issues of development finance and transparency practices for the Indian Ocean region. We also look forward to continued momentum in our quadrilateral cooperation with India, Japan and Australia that will contribute to maritime security and domain awareness across the Indian Ocean region.

We are urging our partners across the Indian Ocean region to reaffirm their commitment to a world of global rules and norms. Together, we must make clear our determination to create an Indian Ocean region that respects international law as reflected in the law of the sea convention, that ensures a framework for transparency and the peaceful resolution of disputes, and that supports economic, political, and social linkages with South and East Asia. The United States has never been more committed to ensuring a free and open Indian Ocean region as part of a larger Indo-Pacific, and it welcomes the opportunity to work with all of its partners to create an Indo-Pacific region in which each nation is, to echo President Trump, “strong, prosperous, and self-reliant.”



South Korea's New Southern Policy Aimed at Inclusive Indo-Pacific

Cho Byung Jae*



The importance of Indian Ocean Conference has only been growing. Asia-Pacific region is now being combined with the Indian Ocean region for free trading nation like Korea in the Indo-Pacific as it is emblematic of economic prosperity. Our vital interests lie in the in the Indo-Pacific because it is an indispensable conduit for Korea's exports and energy imports: 85 percent of its energy supply comes from the Middle East across the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean is Korea's key trade route and therefore safeguarding the peace and the stability of the region, especially the freedom of navigation and flight is critically important for Korea.

Recently the international policy community has been paying greater attention to how to build the regional architectures that ensure people to people exchange, mutual prosperity and peace in the Pacific region. A number of new ideas and creative initiatives have been proposed and some of them have already been put into practices. There have been Japan's free and open Indo-Pacific strategies, India's act east policy and Indonesia's fusion of the Indo Pacific.

The term Indo Pacific has become the universal currency when U.S. president Donald Trump unveiled his vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific in November 2017 in Vietnam. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo added the details to this strategy by announcing America's Indo-Pacific economic vision in July 2018. China has also put forward its belt and the road initiative as a means to enhance the regional connectivity. An essential tenet to these common initiatives was based on how to bolster regional connectivity. Korea welcomes and is open to these various initiatives and ready to join forces to enhance the digital and physical connectivity in the region. In the process of building regional architectures, we need to consider a list of the following three principles.

1) Any kind of initiative for building regional architectures in the Indo-Pacific should be based

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on open regionalism. Korea supports an open, transparent and inclusive regional architecture. We are all players, living in harmony for peace and prosperity while respecting each other and abiding by international laws.

2) Any emerging regional architecture should promote multilateral norms and institutions. It is imperative that trade be open, disputes be resolved peacefully and the potential of a mutually beneficial cooperation be fully realized under the auspices of multilateral norms and institutions.

3) Future regional architecture should be built upon the existing institutional resources. The multilateral mix in the institutions such as ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and the East Asia Summit should be fully utilized. In particular East Asia Summit whose membership includes 18 nations in the Indo-Pacific can be a solid platform on which we can further build upon.

Korea fully supports the critical role that ASEAN has been playing in promoting regional cooperation. ASEAN centrality is an important institutional asset in the future regional architecture building process.

The Korean government's 'New Southern Policy' also aims to create an open, transparent and inclusive Indo-Pacific by strengthening its partnership with the countries in the region. As a matter of fact, Korea's diplomatic vision so far has been mostly confined to Northeast Asia due to geopolitical, economic as well as historical reasons. The new southern policy will provide Korea a new framework through which it can reach out to its partners and the friends in ASEAN and the Indian Ocean region.

During his visit to India and the ASEAN countries, South Korean President Moon Jae-in announced the vision to significantly bolster partnerships on three Ps, namely - People, Peace and Prosperity, and to work towards fostering a future oriented relationship. In particular, Korea aspires to be a reliable partner in working together to bring about the practical and mutually beneficial cooperation. For instance, President Moon during his visit to India in July 2018, with Prime Minister Modi announced to establish the India-Korea Center for Research and Innovation cooperation and the India Korea future strategic group to jointly develop the information and communication technology and advanced manufacturing technology.

Singapore-Korea launched a new cooperative partnership in the area of a digital technology that would contribute to advancing the ASEAN smarter citizen network. Korea also pledged to triple its cooperation fund by 2020 and expand on technology transfer and the job training programs for small and medium enterprises in ASEAN countries. In Northeast Asia, the task of building a lasting and a stable regional security architecture still remains an unaccomplished task. In September 2005, in the context of the six party talks we once spelled out a shared vision for establishing a multilateral security arrangement in Northeast Asia. However, with the nuclear talks impacts afterwards, the idea has never come to fruition. Only recently, we found a silver lining on the horizon as the prospects for the completed denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula looks brighter than ever before. What makes it unique

this time is the fact that the top leaders are prompting the denuclearization process. Decisions are made at the top and then delegated to the working level for implementation. This is an unprecedented procedure and I believe it makes it success more probable than ever.

In its party central committee meeting in April 2018, North Korea officially terminated its policy of parallel development of a nuclear buildup and economic growth and announced a new strategic line that focuses on economic development. In order for North Korea to develop its economy, international sanctions must be lifted, which in turn can only be achieved when it takes substantial denuclearization measures. At issue now is a declaration to end the Korean War that settled into an uneasy truce in 1953. End of a war declaration can simply be a political and symbolic measure pending the ultimate establishment of a permanent peace regime on the peninsula. Nevertheless, it can have its own merits. It would help ease the tensions on the peninsula and provide North Korea with a room to envision a new political

imagination that would charter a totally different future path for North Korea.

It is entirely possible that this new political imagination would lead North Korea to the imperatives of economic development, the mitigation of sanctions and the denuclearization, thereby creating a positive cycle that interlocks path towards economic prosperity and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. It is absolutely necessary that the end of a war declaration should be adopted in tandem with Pyongyang to take concrete measures to halt its nuclear weapons program.

A Korean peninsula without a nuclear threat is a sure way to normalise North Korea's relations with South Korea, the United States and Japan. In this respect, denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula is the key to building a lasting regional security architecture in Northeast Asia. The Indian Ocean Conference is providing a valuable opportunity for all of us to share insights into creating open, transparent and inclusive regional architectures in the Indo-Pacific.



Addressing Land-based Difficulties to Ensure Maritime Security

M. Ashraf Haidari*

The theme of the Indian Ocean Conference - 2018, “Building Regional Architectures”, builds on the SAGAR discourse, which is underpinned by the common objective of “Security And Growth for All in the Region,” as the Honorable Minister of External Affairs of India, Sushma Swaraj noted. Many of the difficulties facing maritime security are apparently land-based. And their resolution requires an inclusive approach, which promotes cooperation and partnership between littoral and landlocked countries to address their shared problems. It goes without saying that maritime security, on which much global economic growth depends, is interconnected with events in landlocked countries. Afghanistan is a prime example: over the past forty years, geopolitical tensions have imposed destructive conflicts on what is one of the most naturally endowed countries at the heart of rising Asia. In the absence of peace in Afghanistan, instead of sustainable development that secures the future of its youthful population, poverty permeates its society. And this provides an enabling environment for such maritime security challenges as terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling and human trafficking among others.

Over the past 17 years, Afghanistan has been a victim of external aggression in the form of



terrorism. As a proxy of a coastal state, the Taliban has daily killed and maimed innocent Afghans, while destroying the infrastructure that should help connect and integrate Afghanistan with our surrounding resourceful regions in the North and South for increased trade, business and investment. The Taliban insurgency has enabled several terrorist networks with global and regional reach to operate out of Afghanistan. At the same time, this imposed insecurity has enabled a

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permissive environment for mass drug cultivation and production in Afghanistan, which now provides more than 90 percent of regional and global demand for drugs. In turn, revenues from the drug trade finance terrorism and fuel dysfunctional corruption that undermines governance and rule of law, which together destabilize drug producing and transit countries alike. Because of the interconnectedness of these imposed security challenges, Afghanistan is facing a complex humanitarian crisis with diminishing human security. Hence, this makes our country a major source of refugees and asylum seekers, who are often ferried by human smugglers to Europe, Australia and elsewhere. As we see, what is imposed on and happens in countries like Afghanistan directly affects maritime security.

This dangerous situation necessitates that littoral and landlocked states no longer pause but join hands, pool their resources, and share intelligence to pursue and implement a common counterterrorism strategy — one that doesn't make any distinction between terrorist networks. Alongside this effort, they must work together to free their nations of abject poverty, knowing that a lack of human security allows terrorists, extremists, and state-sponsors of terrorism to recruit among the jobless, destitute youth to radicalize, brainwash and exploit them in conflicts of their choice. Indeed, the best way to fight poverty that feeds terrorism is to foster political and security confidence-building through regional economic cooperation. The latter can serve as an important enabler in deepening connectivity, enhancing competitiveness and productivity,

lowering transaction costs, and expanding markets in any region.

How can this be done? In fact, Afghanistan has already put forth a number of strategic solutions for adoption and implementation by our coastal and landlocked neighbors; these include:

- The Heart of Asia–Istanbul Process (HOA-IP);
- The Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA);
- The Kabul Process for Peace and Security Cooperation;
- The Joint Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Narcotics Strategy;
- The Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS).

We have worked hard to establish these Afghan-led processes to help secure regional cooperation for Afghanistan's stabilisation and sustainable development. It goes without saying that a stable Afghanistan at the heart of rising Asia will help ensure stability and prosperity throughout our surrounding regions. That is why it is in the best short- and long-term interests of coastal and non-coastal countries to participate in and to double and triple their efforts to achieve the shared goals of these regional security and development cooperation mechanisms. Of course, every tangible step these countries take toward using these processes will help minimize their (and other countries') vulnerability to terrorism and its state sponsors. That is why time is of the essence and they must reaffirm their often-pledged commitments to the implementation of the projects, programs, and policies, proposed under

these mechanisms of regional cooperation.

In November 2017, the 7th Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) took place in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The conference focused on “Deepening Connectivity and Expanding Trade through Investment Infrastructure and Improving Synergy.” RECCA remains a major opportunity for Afghanistan’s littoral and landlocked neighbors to take stock of the progress made so far, and, besides working together to address the challenges and bottlenecks, they should move on to commit the financing and investment needed with respect to priority projects in the key areas of energy, transport networks, trade and transit facilitation, communications, and business-to-business and labor support.

To name a few, the full, unimpeded implementation of the Chabahar Port, which involves Afghanistan, India, and Iran, deserves mention, as it will further enhance connectivity through Afghanistan and facilitate our integration with the regional and global markets. As work continues in this and other connectivity land and sea projects, we have launched air-corridors for trade, exporting Afghan products to markets near and far in the region.

Moreover, in December 2017, the 7th Ministerial Conference of HOA-IP, with its political, security, and economic confidence-building measures implementation mechanism, took place in Baku, Azerbaijan. Afghanistan aims at deepening synergies and complementarities among the interconnected projects of RECCA and HOA-IP, maximizing their impact on sustainable

development not only in Afghanistan but also throughout its surrounding regions. This should encourage the country-participants to assess their shared security and development needs and to bolster their engagement with Afghanistan accordingly, in order to initiate the implementation of the proposed projects with win-win benefits.

Because sustainable development is impossible without durable stability, in 2017, Afghanistan re-launched the Kabul Process for Peace and Security in Afghanistan. Through this Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process, a results-oriented peace strategy has been laid out, the key purpose of which is to engage in unconditional, direct talks with the Taliban. Afghanistan’s peace strategy aims to separate reconcilable Taliban insurgents from transnational terrorist networks. But to succeed in this endeavor, Afghanistan relies on honest and tangible regional cooperation, foremost on the closure of the sanctuaries and other forms of support, which the Taliban enjoys in the region.

In parallel to peace strategy, Afghanistan is pursuing a joint counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics strategy. The two strategies mutually reinforce one another, as Afghanistan’s counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics efforts not only contribute to similar efforts at the regional and global levels but also advance Afghan peace efforts by increasing the number of reconcilable Taliban, who otherwise would refuse to discontinue violence. In addition, Afghanistan has striven to engage with Pakistan on a state-to-state basis to secure the country’s cooperation both in fighting terrorism with no distinction and in

persuading the Taliban leadership to participate in the intra-Afghan peace process for a political negotiated settlement. In this regard, the inaugural meeting of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) took place in Kabul in late July 2018, as the APAPPS five working groups discussed issues of counter-terrorism, intelligence-sharing, peace efforts, trade and investment, and refugees. For our part, the Afghan side firmly committed to working with relevant Pakistani institutional stakeholders to implement the key goals of the five working groups, in line with the core principles of the APAPPS agreed between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Considering these major opportunities for regional security and development cooperation,

Afghanistan welcomed and strongly supports the South Asia strategy of the United States. The Strategy has followed a conditions-based approach to helping stabilize Afghanistan, and its key objective is to help close terrorist safe sanctuaries in Pakistan. Success in this necessary endeavor should help reduce violence across Afghanistan, compelling the Taliban to opt for peace, an outcome desired by every Afghan. That is why we strongly believe that the full execution of the U.S. strategy, in partnership with coastal and littoral states that share Afghanistan's security and development interests, will not only help stabilize our country but also ensure security as a precondition for sustainable development across our surrounding regions in the Asian continent.



Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture: Challenges before Constitutional Governance

Ram Madhav*

Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a multi-faceted genius – a committed politician, an outstanding parliamentarian, a successful Prime Minister, a journalist, a poet, an orator par excellence, a true party *karyakarta*, a disciplined *Swayamsevak*, and above all a gentle and lovable human being. He was an institution in himself. Whoever came in contact with him would come back an enriched person. Atalji – as he was lovingly called by many, had left an indelible imprint on the lives of thousands, if not millions through his personality and politics.

In his passing, a political era marked by conciliatory, not competitive; value-based, not power-centric politics has come to an end. In Bhagwad Gita, Bhagwan Krishna said: '*Jaatasya hi Dhruvo Mrityuhu*' – those who are born shall die. Yet the mother earth and humanity get poorer by the demise of statesmen like Vajpayee.

'A father figure', 'a statesman', 'a true democrat', 'man of peace', '*baapji*', '*dadda*' – those who condoled his death had many narratives to share about him. The Americans remembered him describing US and India as 'natural allies', while the Chinese remembered his meetings with leaders of three generations – Mao Tse Sung, Deng Xiao Ping and Hu Jintao. While Pakistanis remembered 'Dosti Bus' that Vajpayee rode to Lahore, Bangladeshis remembered his contributions during the Liberation War and the

subsequent presentation of the highest Bangladesh Liberation War Honour to him. Even the separatist Hurriyat leadership in Kashmir described him as a 'rare leader with humanness', with a sincerity to resolve the Kashmir problem.

Rare Politics

Atalji's demise is an irreparable loss to contemporary India. Atalji practised a version of politics that is rare to find — a politics in which love of the nation took precedence over love of power; in which feelings, sentiments and emotions found a place in the world of cut-throat competitive politicking; in which dignity and respect for everyone big and small, friend and adversary alike were the way, not disrespect and rejection, abuse and name-calling.

Atalji lived a transparent life. He was not a split personality, something from outside and something else from within. Like Gandhi, his life too, both personal and political, had been an open book. Whether it was about the fondness for his family or food, or whether it was about strong political convictions as a quintessential democrat, nothing was hidden from the public eye and scrutiny. At the end, everyone loved him, cared for him and admired him for this very quality of the courage of conviction.

But he never held himself above the party organisation. A true *Swayamsevak*, he religiously

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obeyed the decisions of the party as a disciplined Karyakarta even when he was not fully in agreement with those. “Politics and discipline don’t go together. The rare exception is Atal Bihari Vajpayee,” commented Walter Andersen, author and researcher.

Atalji practised his brand of politics without any hesitation or rethink. We have successfully done away with untouchability in social life. Yet, we acquired a new type of scourge called political untouchability. An atmosphere of intense hatred pervades the political arena today. Atalji never accepted such politics.

The Bharatiya Jana Sangh, of which he was one of the tallest leaders, was the arch rival of the Congress and Nehru throughout. But neither Atalji nor Nehru ever allowed this ideological adversity to come in the way of mutual respect and goodwill. Nehru would observe that one day the young parliamentarian will rise to occupy his seat. On his part, Atalji, who made ferocious attacks on Nehru’s policies in Parliament, would speak out from his heart in the same Parliament after Nehru’s funeral, saying: “In spite of a difference of opinion, we have nothing but respect for his great ideals, his integrity, his love for the country and his indomitable courage. I pay my humble homage to that great soul.”

This quality Atalji retained till the end. In his biographical sketch on Atalji, Ullekh NP narrates an incident wherein Atalji called Rajiv Gandhi as his saviour. Ullekh mentions Atal Bihari Vajpayee as saying: “When Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, he somehow found out I had a kidney problem and need treatment abroad. One day he called me to his office and said he was going to include me in India’s delegation to the UN and

hoped I would use the opportunity to get the treatment I needed. I went to New York and that is one reason I am alive today”. According to Ullekh, Rajiv Gandhi, who was Prime Minister of India from 1984 to 1989, reportedly said he had told his officials that Vajpayeeji should return only when his treatment was complete. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was then leader of opposition.

Atalji was compassionate with *Karyakartas*. Even at the height of his popularity, he never displayed any arrogance. As a 27-year old journalist of a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh magazine, I went to Delhi in 1993 to interview him for a special cover story. Parliament was in session and he was the leader of opposition. Babri structure had fallen just a few months before. I had some awkward questions for him, betraying my inexperience. He did not get angry. Instead, he gently guided me through the interview for 15 minutes, giving the right answers to my wrong questions. Kishen Lal Sharma, an elderly MP, peeped in to remind that it was time to go inside the Parliament. ‘Apne Andhra ke Pracharak ko patrakarita sikha raha hun’ (“I am teaching journalism to our Pracharak from Andhra), Atalji said.

Review of the Functioning of the Constitution

Atalji was a committed democrat. He had held the democratic polity in high esteem. “The power of democracy is a matter of pride for our country, something we must always cherish, preserve and further strengthen. Differences are bound to remain in the country, but the Indian nation cannot afford to be divided in its basic commitment to nationalism and democracy”, he once said.

One of the significant initiatives of Vajpayee as Prime Minister was to appoint a committee to study the functioning of the Indian Constitution. Instituted in February 2000 as National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, the body got mired in unnecessary controversy due to the wrong portrayal of the media, calling it Constitution Review Commission and casting motives on the Prime Minister and his government as though they were destroying the Constitution made by Dr Ambedkar. The terms of reference given to the Commission categorically stated that the Commission shall examine, in the light of the experience of the past fifty years, as to how best the Constitution can respond to the changing needs of efficient, smooth and effective system of governance and socio-economic development of modern India within the framework of parliamentary democracy, and to recommend changes, if any, that are required in the provisions of the Constitution without interfering with its 'basic structure' or 'basic features'.

Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was the prime architect of the Indian Constitution. He put his heart and soul into it and gave to a complex and diverse country like India a comprehensive document in the form of the Constitution on 26 November 1949.

The Constitution that he had strived so hard to put in place was not just about any single issue or community. It is about the entire spectrum of the private and public life of over 450 million citizens at that time, and by extension 1.25 billion citizens now. Dr Ambedkar was concerned about the plight of the downtrodden; but he was also concerned about the larger well-being of the entire

nation. He saw in the Constitution a hope for the downtrodden as well as an order in the larger Indian society. He laid all his hopes of success of the Constitution on its true masters, the people of India.

Joseph Story, an eminent jurist and commentator of the Constitution and politics was to America what Nani Palkhivala was to India. Talking about the US Constitution, Joseph Story observed: "The Constitution has been reared for immortality if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title. It may, nevertheless, perish in an hour, by the folly, or corruption, or negligence of its only keepers, the people".

Dr Ambedkar too expressed the same apprehension about the Indian Constitution and politics. "However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad if those who are called to work it, happen to be a bad lot", he once said. Despite the hard work and dedication that has gone into making of the Constitution, Dr Ambedkar knew fully well that it will fail to deliver if its keepers, the good people, turn lethargic and indifferent, and, thinking that politics as a vocation is all scum, stay away from it; and the bad and ugly in the society come to occupy the positions of power.

As the former British diplomat Carne Ross puts it in his book, *The Leaderless Revolution*, democracies facilitate an honourable agreement between the people – the electors, and the government – the elected. The Constitution is in reality the document of that solemn agreement between the elector and the elected.

Unfortunately, at least in India, people hardly know their Constitution well. Sections of the society, whose interests the Constitution intends

to protect, know a little or a lot only about those sections of the Constitution that are intended to safeguard their interests. But the larger intent and import of the Constitution is hardly known to the people.

On 26th November 2018, speaking on the occasion of the Constitution Day, the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, highlighted precisely the same thing. “It is a paradox that our citizens, in whose name the Constitution was adopted, are sometimes not sufficiently informed about what the Constitution means for us. Let the 70th year of its adoption be dedicated to enhancing awareness about the Constitution”, he said in his address to the nation.

The final draft of the Constitution was passed by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November, 1949, and subsequently the same was adopted as the Constitution of India on 26th January, 1950. But no effort was ever made in all these years to inform and educate the people about it. It is a tragedy that we have not even attempted to translate the Constitution into Indian languages. It was only in 2015, 65 years after its adoption, that Prime Minister Modi thought of celebrating the Constitution Day annually with the objective of letting its keepers, the people, know about it well.

Lack of awareness about the Constitution among the larger masses allowed for the intermediate forces, some of whom are the products of that very Constitution itself, to subvert its spirit and thus leading to the violation of that solemn agreement between the voter and the voted. Dr Ambedkar had warned about this possibility in his last address to the Constituent Assembly one day before its ratification, on 25th November, 1949.

In that speech, famously known as ‘Three

Warnings’, Dr Ambedkar raised the spectre of India losing its independence once again if the Constitution was not adhered to in letter and spirit. “On 26th January, 1950, India will be an independent country. What would happen to her independence? Will she maintain her independence or will she lose it again? This is the first thought that comes to my mind. It is not that India was never an independent country. The point is that she once lost the independence she had. Will she lose it a second time? It is this thought which makes me most anxious for the future. What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence, but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people”, he said in that address.

Challenges before Constitutional Governance

The constitutional governance faces challenges from its own limbs like the judiciary, bureaucracy and the political establishment internally. Externally too, it today faces a serious challenge from certain group interests championed by forces that are neither accountable, nor representative of the masses.

Judiciary:

Judiciary is an important branch of our Constitution. In a way, it is the only branch that still keeps the hopes of justice for large sections of the masses alive. But of late, the surviving institution of people’s trust too seems to be passing through a tumultuous phase.

One important case in the recent times attracts our attention to this. Justice delayed or justice hurried, both lead to justice denied. The case in

question is the Ram Janam Bhumi case, a matter pending before the Supreme Court for last six years. The simple question referred to the Court was, whether the order of the Allahabad High Court trifurcating the main temple compound where once a temple, followed by a mosque had stood and currently a make-shift temple of Ram Lalla stands, is valid or not.

It took five years for the Supreme Court to initiate the proceedings in the matter in the middle of 2017, only to discuss the issue of translating all the relevant documents – some 14,000 pages, which were in Hindi, Urdu and other languages, into English. Who will take responsibility for translation? Finally, the UP Government came forward to do that.

Then the Court suddenly found the issue of relevance and importance of a mosque in Islam as a major question for adjudication. That the said question, may be important in some other context, was completely extraneous to the present case, did not find favour with the learned judges. That issue too was finally settled and the previous Chief Justice had announced that the expeditious hearing of the main case would begin on October 29th, 2018. In the first week of October, the Supreme Court got a new Chief Justice. When the matter came up before the bench headed by the new Chief Justice, it took just 3 minutes for him to declare that the Ram Janam Bhumi matter was not a ‘priority’ to the Court. He pushed the matter to later in January 2019.

It should go to their credit that the parties involved, both the protagonists of the temple and their adversaries, have thus far laid their hopes on the Supreme Court. But now, the unintended consequence of the Supreme Court’s declaration was

that they had to turn it into a ‘priority’. That is why we see enhanced activity in the country, including massive mobilisations in favour of the temple.

Bureaucracy:

The other challenge comes from the second organ of our constitutional government, the bureaucracy. Speaking at an event recently, former President Dr Pranab Mukherjee called the bureaucracy as the biggest impediment to development. “Bureaucracy is the biggest hurdle of our development and we must rectify it”, he said.

Not that individual bureaucrats are bad. But bureaucracy as a system and an institution has the potential of derailing the efforts of the political establishment and denying justice to the people. We have inherited Westminster system of administration from the British as a legacy of which the civil bureaucracy is an important part. The trouble with this system is that it has been designed to serve not the people, but the British masters. It is powerful in all respects but accountable to none.

Political Parties:

Then comes the role of the political parties. Dr Ambedkar, in his last address to the Constituent Assembly, had warned that “If the parties place creed above country, our independence will be put in a jeopardy a second time and probably be lost forever”.

For Vajpayee, ‘country is a temple and we are all its priests. We must sacrifice our lives in the service of the national god’. His famous words in the Parliament after his government lost the vote of confidence in 1996 reverberate in the minds of every nationalist today. “These power games will

go on. Governments come and governments go. Parties appear and disappear. But this country should remain and its democracy should remain eternally”, he thundered. Today, we see a situation where the national parties are increasingly becoming marginalised and a large number of regional and other group-based parties emerging with strong constituencies of their own. Identity politics is at its zenith today in India.

It will be unwise to dismiss the rise of these identity-based groups and parties. It is a global phenomenon today. In a scintillating work titled *Political Tribes*, well-known author Amy Chua writes: “We tend to view the world in terms of territorial nation-states engaged in great ideological battles – Capitalism versus Communism, Democracy versus Authoritarianism, the ‘Free World’ versus the ‘Axis of Evil’. Blinded by our own ideological prisms, we have repeatedly ignored more primal group identities, which for billions are the most powerful and meaningful, and which drive political upheaval all over the world”.

NGO Groups:

The fourth challenge comes from causes that largely the Teflon-coated Liberals champion. They pick up certain myopic concepts, and, using the systemic loopholes, attempt to subvert the very spirit of the Constitution itself. In that, they get help from their fellow ideological travellers in various important institutions. Their agendas are narrow and, in most cases, lofty, but largely unconnected with the reality of the masses. They co-opt political actors or sometimes themselves become one, but not really accountable to any. These groups include certain intellectuals and

NGO activists. Their influence is enormous these days because it is fashionable to associate with the causes they champion, despite the fact that they hardly represent any significant section of the population, and in many cases the contemporary reality.

“A growing number of political actors, who are neither politicians nor conventional political parties, nor accountable to anyone but themselves, are wielding enormous influence over policy-making these days”, rues Carne Ross.

One latest example of the influence these groups enjoy is the Sabarimala temple episode. A harmless tradition at a temple of Lord Ayyappa in Kerala was challenged as spurious, on the ground that it is against gender equality. Those who challenged it using certain Constitutional provisions pertaining to Fundamental Rights did not include a single devotee. On the contrary, the petitioners claimed that they were non-believers and had nothing to do with the given temple or its traditions. That teaching gender equality to a matriarchal society like Kerala, where women lead the social life in all spheres, including religion, is like carrying coal to Newcastle, or that not a single woman devotee came forward to demand entry into the temple could not stop the Supreme Court from deciding to throw open the doors of the temple to women in the age group of 10 and 50.

It has resulted in a situation where the State Government led by god-less Marxists in Kerala forcing a break in the tradition and compelling women to enter the temple. Tens of thousands of religious women came out on to the streets in all Kerala towns and villages, not to enter the temple, but to demand that the order be withdrawn. Another classic example of what the people want

their rulers to do and what the middlemen want to impose on them.

While zealously safeguarding the individual rights, we tend to forget that people also enjoy certain ‘group rights’ and they too need safeguarding. In fact, the Indian Constitution recognises this through several of its articles, including articles 25 to 30 that cover a gamut of rights of the religious groups. Articles 25 and 26 grant Hindu religious institutions, that include Sikh, Jain and Buddhist institutions, freedom to manage their customs, traditions and institutions. Similarly, articles 29 and 30 extend same privileges to the minority institutions. Together with Fundamental Rights, these group rights too need protection.

The other example is the recent fiasco over the Rafael deal. A group of eminences found it prudent to knock at the doors of the Supreme Court on this matter to not only defame the government with allegations of corruption and misdemeanour, but also to stall the process of equipping the Indian armed forces with superior technologies. The Supreme Court has summarily dismissed all the charges as baseless, but the fact remains that the group of eminences are neither accountable for the failed attempts at defamation nor guilty of trying to hit at the armed forces’ modernisation program.

It is such forces that pose a challenge to the society and the Constitution. Democracy is described as a government “of the people, by the people and for the people”. It no doubt continues to be a government ‘of’ and ‘by’ the people. But it increasingly ceases to be ‘for’ the people. Instead, it is becoming a prisoner in the hands of group and narrow political interests. Dr Ambedkar and Joseph Story were both referring to this danger.

Humility in Public Life

Atalji was a poet and a man of not just head, but heart too. He used to turn to poetry in the face of the rough and tumble of politics. “My poet’s heart gives me strength to face political problems, particularly those that have a bearing on my conscience”, he once said. A man of emotions, he practised humility as his quintessential personal self. In one poem, he prays to God: “*Hey Prabhu! Mujhe itna unchai bhi mat dena, ki auron ko chuna sakun*” – meaning, ‘Oh God! Please do not let me climb to such heights that the others would not be able to reach me’.

Atalji respected institutions. As Prime Minister, he trusted and reposed faith in his colleagues in the cabinet. His colleagues in the cabinet recall that in several meetings he would not utter a single word and patiently listen to the views of all colleagues and take decisions after due diligence. Where he needed to give credit to his cabinet colleague, he would not hesitate.

Such humility is a rare virtue in public life. A humble leader accepts failures without any attitude. “Victory and defeat are a part of life, which are to be viewed with equanimity”, Atalji used to say.

Bill Gates had once said – ‘you can evaluate an organisation by how quickly people in it find out about the bad news and respond to it’. “Bad news must travel fast”, insists Bill Gates, adding that a good manager would appreciate the challenge and prepare to respond to it; and a bad leader wants to hear only flattery and, in the process, loses the opportunity to respond.

But then, it is not easy to be candid in politics. In politics, you cannot tell the truth to people always, for, truth can be bitter, truth can be harsh, and more

importantly truth calls for change. Human tendency is to resist change as that challenges the status quo. Change requires that the society admits it lacks in something. Men, especially the wise ones, determinedly refuse to change.

In The Trial of Socrates, Socrates narrates what happened when he confronted many an Athenian who enjoyed the reputation for wisdom. “I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. . . . This inquisition has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind.”

In the era when Socrates lived, it was quite risky to tell the wise men to change. Socrates believe that he would survive because he had never aspired for any public office or power. “If I had engaged in politics,” said Socrates, “I should have perished long ago. . . . I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live.” In other words, Socrates felt that politics and honesty cannot go together. But here again, Atalji was an exception. It is another matter that in spite of staying away from public life, Socrates did not survive and called by the City Council for trial before a jury for his political views and finally executed.

Political accommodation is a virtue that Atalji’s life sets out as an example for politicians. Many, like Vice President of India Shri Venkaiah Naidu called him ‘*Ajatshatru*’ – ‘one with no enemies’. He enjoyed a great self-image, but never tried to cultivate one. A towering leader, he never believed that ‘I am always right’. He lived a

transparent life and was always open to criticism. The belief that ‘my views are always right’ is the starting point for organisations and individuals alike to hate others. Those disagreeing will automatically become not just adversaries, but the enemies. That was how a Mahatma Gandhi or a Martin Luther king was killed.

Conclusion

The founding father of the United States of America, Benjamin Franklin, in his final address at the Constitutional Convention before the US constitution was adopted, said (He was too old and sick and hence his speech was read),

“[T]he older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment, and to pay more respect to the judgment of others. Most men . . . think themselves in possession of all truth, and that wherever others differ from them it is so far error. . . .” “I cannot help expressing a wish that every member of the Convention who may still have objections to [the Constitution], would with me, on this occasion doubt a little of his own infallibility and . . . put his name to this instrument.”

“Obituary should be an exercise in contemporary history; not a funeral oration,” said British journalist Peter Utley. Let us look at it through that prism. True, with the passing of Atalji, an era has come to an end. It is difficult to find another Atalji amidst us. But this ‘end of an era’ statement has become too much of a cliché. Atalji as a person is no more. But it is time we brought back the era of his politics — politics of positivity, compassion, dignity and humility.



India Ideas Conclave 2018 – Citizens’ Manifesto: Churn of Ideas

Srishti Singh



As narrated in the *Bhagwata Purana* the Cosmic Ocean was churned in order to obtain *amrita* – the nectar of immortal life, similarly the fifth India Ideas Conclave hosted by India Foundation on 26 – 28 October, 2018, led to a churning of ideas and ideals of the Indian intelligentsia from varied walks of life to obtain a *Citizen’s Manifesto*, a manifesto of the people, put forth by the people, and created for the people.

The theme for India Ideas Conclave 2018, *Citizen’s Manifesto* aspired to represent the shared vision of people and produce a blueprint of policies and aims that the citizens’ of the nation envision for themselves in our democratic framework. The quintessence of the summit was highlighted in the 1st Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture on ‘Indian Democracy - Maturity and Challenges’ by Shri Arun Jaitley, Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Government of India.

In its 5th year, India Ideas Conclave, a flagship event of India Foundation moved away from its traditional home base of Goa to the politically charged arena of New Delhi. This three-day mega event witnessed a profusion of intellectuals, thinkers and executors, pervading a wide range of Indian society who gathered to discuss and deliberate on the chosen themes of national unity, inclusive economic prosperity, social equilibrium, accountable governance, and global aspirations of Indian citizens.

Day 1 - October 26, 2018

INAUGURAL SESSION

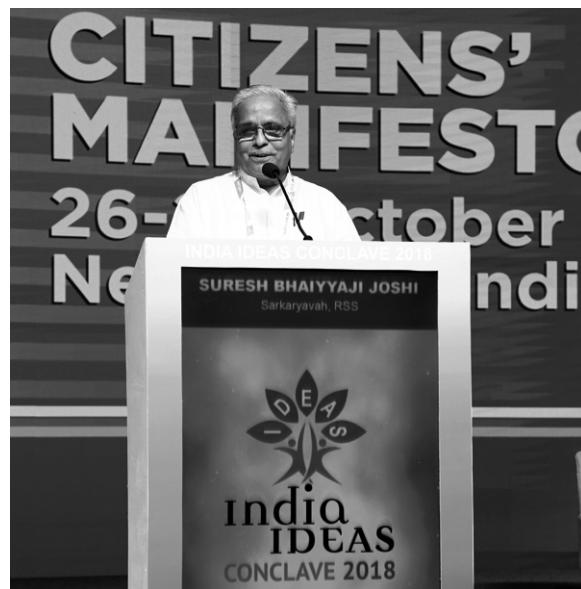
The inaugural session of the conclave was addressed by Shri Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India; Shri Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’, former Prime Minister, Nepal; and Shri Harivansh Narayan Singh, Deputy Chairman

of Rajya Sabha. Shri Shaurya Doval, Member of Board of Governors, India Foundation, delivered the vote of thanks.

Shri Suresh Prabhu, in his welcome address, hoped that the three-day mega event would generate an ocean of ideas on how our democracy should function and how ideas on our polity should be generated and implemented. Shri Harivansh Narayan Singh, spoke on Gandhi's belief of the ideal lives in Indian villages and compared it to Carlin Ross's book 'The Leaderless Revolution' where the British writer said that technology and education will create an enlightened society which will empower ordinary people to assume power and change politics of the 21st century. He observed that India Foundation's India Ideas Conclave is a step forward in the same direction of discourse and consensus building. Shri Pushpa Kamal Dahal, former Prime Minister of Nepal, noted that when it comes to generation and dissemination of ideas, the region of South Asia undoubtedly commands a unique place in the world map. He said that a forum like the India Ideas Conclave is in keeping with the same tradition of idea generation.

SPECIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Special Keynote Address was delivered by Shri Suresh 'Bhaiyyaji' Joshi, Sarkaryavah, RSS. In his fluid speech delivered in Hindi, he explored the roots of tolerant India. At the very core of the Indian way of life, he said, is the *parivar bhavna*, and it is this culture of familial existence that inculcates the value of compromise in individuals. This values of compassion and compromise deeply ingrained in us makes us a tolerant society and India a secular nation. He emphasized that the idea of *dharma* in individuals



is the basis of a society and *karma* is the *kendra kindu* or the central point of *Dharma*. Both must be wed to each other to create a fulfilling life.

INDIA FOUNDATION - SWARAJYA AWARDS

For the year 2018, the four categories of Swarajya Awards were given to four extraordinary Indians who went beyond their call of duty to serve the Indian society in their own distinct ways. Shri Manohar Parrikar, Chief Minister of Goa was awarded the Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Award for employing his excellent management skills to India's defense forces and ushering a new age for the Indian armed forces in his term as the country's defense minister (received by his representatives). Dr V. Anantha Nageswaran, Dean of IFMR Business School, KREA University was awarded the Dr. B R Shenoy Award for his significant contributions towards ideas to find the right balance for a sustainable economy. Bestselling author Amish Tripathi was awarded the Ustad Bismillah Khan Award. His books have given a

bold subtext to ancient Indian texts, revered through the ages. He remains a unique link between India's cultural past and a fast-evolving present. Shri Lobsang Phuntsok, founder of Jhamse Gatsal Children's Community was conferred the Sree Narayan Guru Award for his relentless efforts in changing lives of India's future generations in one of the most far flung regions of India.

PERFORMANCE BY KUMAR VISHWAS

The celebrated Indian poet Shri Kumar Vishwas delivered the evening performance. His satirical performance on contemporary Indian life displayed his genius in poetry and humor, and also his command over the languages of Hindi, Urdu, and Sanskrit.

Day 2 - October 27, 2018

BREAKFAST SESSION - I: CITIZENS' AGENDA AND MEDIA

The moderator of the session, Shri Prafulla Ketkar, Editor, Organiser, said that people's aspirations have evolved from electricity, roads and water to health, education, caste and regional aspirations and the Delhi-based media must give up their agendas to keep up with the citizens' aspirations. Panelist Shri Sehzaad Poonawala, political activist, Indian National Congress, noted how social media has democratized the media ecosystem in India today and Ms. Malavika Avinash, joint spokesperson, BJP Karnataka, commented on the disconnect of English media channels with regional issues of India. In-charge of the BJP IT Cell, Shri Amit Malviya, spoke on how the media becomes a stakeholder in governance because it is responsible for carrying the feedback from grassroots to the legislature.

Ms. Marya Shakil, political editor of the CNN News 18, spoke on how media's responsibility is not consensus building, but bringing in diverse views and the executive editor of programming, AAJ TAK, Ms. Shweta Singh, explained how journalism can never be bad - it is either good journalists or bad journalists.

PANEL DISCUSSION I - AGENDA FOR NATIONAL UNITY

Shri Ashok Malik, press secretary to the President of India, moderated the session. Shri Pavan K Varma, National General Secretary, JDU said that the unity in India is based on the common civilizational legacy. He observed that there remains conflict between tradition and law, and only in the course of resolving the conflicts will the nation evolve. Shri Sajjad Lone, MLA, Jammu and Kashmir, spoke on how the idea of Indianness and nationalism is an evolving concept. Shri Baijayant Jay Panda, former MP, said, if we are unable to provide jobs to the tens of millions of our people and we are unable to gainfully engage large section of Indians then national unity will be at serious threat. On the agenda for national unity, Shri Naresh Gujaral, MP said that it is imperative that the forces or individuals who question the diversity of India or whose actions create a sense of fear in the minds of our minorities must be dealt with firmly, irrespective of the office they occupy, the position that they hold or the party that they belong to.

FIRST ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE MEMORIAL LECTURE

Delivering the First Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture, on the theme 'Indian Democracy - Maturity and Challenges', Shri Arun Jaitley, Union Minister of Finance and Corporate

1st Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture



Affairs, Government of India paid rich tributes to Shri Vajpayee saying that he is one of the tallest leaders in post-independence India. He said, “Probably one of the greatest orators that India has seen. A product of parliamentary democracy, a man who always measured his words, a man who had the capacity to place national interest higher than his own party interest. And of course, an excellent poet who used the facility of language that he possessed to pierce and penetrate every point that he wanted to make. His era spread through generations. And decade after decade, millions of Indians would throng at various places only to hear him.” He said that but for contribution of Vajpayee in creation of an alternative ideological pole in Indian politics, India's parliamentary democracy would have been incomplete. Shri Jaitley also spoke on the challenges of Indian polity including achieving faster growth, eliminating terrorism and corruption. He also spoke on secularism and separation of powers under the Indian constitution.

PANEL DISCUSSION II - AGENDA FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Railways and Coal, Government of India, in his key-note address, spoke of government's initiatives to make India's economic growth a more inclusive phenomenon. From the *Jan Dhan Yojna*, which successfully managed to make financial services accessible to the Indian masses to the AADHAR scheme of providing unique identification to the last man in line, the last few years have witnessed a plethora of government led reforms aiming at equitable development in India. The moderator of the discussion on inclusive economic prosperity was Shri Shaurya Doval. One of the panelists Dr. Ila Patnaik, Professor at National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, addressed the needs of the demographic dividend to get access to capital, to finance and execute their ideas. Shri V. Anantha Nageswaran, Dean, IFMR Business School, KREA University,



emphasized on the access to credit and working capital for medium and small businesses and the farm sector. Shri Satish Marathe, part-time Director, Reserve Bank of India and patron of Sahkari Bank, spoke of the need for financial literacy in the country; and Ms. Shamika Ravi, Member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and Director of Research at Brookings India, suggested that the human capital should be at the center of any policy to make it a success.

PANEL DISCUSSION III - AGENDA FOR SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM

Shri Sanjay Paswan, Member of Legislative Council, Bihar, in his key-note address, spoke on the caste conundrum and identity doctrine playing pivotal role in social engineering and political maneuvering. He said that sectional identity has totally tarnished the image of larger identity in India and so it becomes essential to mitigate such

dogmatic deficit for maintaining balance and ensuring social equilibrium in Indian society. The moderator of the session Raghavan Jagannathan, Editorial Director of Swarajya Magazine, intermediated an interactive session between the participants and the speaker wherein the significance of women empowerment and representation in society was discussed in the context to achieving the said equilibrium.

Shri Makarand Paranjape, Director of Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, said that as a political society we should move from reservation to respect and recognition because non-recognition and disrespect creates a lot of social disharmony; and Shri Raja Shekhar Vundru, Principal Secretary of Women & Child Development Department, Government of Haryana, discussed how reform movements have long been a part of Indian history with the bhakti movement and anti-sati campaign as prominent examples.



SHRI YOGI ADITYANATH ON AGENDA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

In this session, Shri Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of UP was in conversation with Shri Swapan Dasgupta, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha on agenda for good governance.

Shri Yogi Adityanath said that dialogue is the biggest strength of democracy and the India Ideas Conclave reinforces this into reality. He observed that the biggest rule of governance is adherence to the principles of democracy, in which government without any discrimination manifests its policies to all classes in society. The Chief Minister said that the first step to good governance and development should be social security in the state which works on the model of protection for all and appeasement for none without any discrimination on the lines of caste and religion. Further, he underscored the importance of technology in making the government system transparent and accountable and therefore checking corruption in the state. Providing example of good governance, he mentioned the

‘One District One Product’ initiative undertaken by the Uttar Pradesh government that advances the Gandhian thought of self-reliance and skill development. In his concluding remarks, he invited everyone to Uttar Pradesh for the spiritual celebration of our national heritage in the *Kumbh Mela 2019*.

PANEL DISCUSSION IV - CITIZENS’ AGENDA & JUDICIARY

Shri S. Prasannarajan, Editor of Open Magazine moderated the session on citizens’ agenda and judiciary with eminent panelists Justice Permod Kohli, former Judge of Supreme Court and P.S. Narasimha, Additional Solicitor General. Justice Permod Kohli addressed the question of judiciary encroaching onto the powers enjoyed by the other two pillars of governance. He explained how the Indian Constitution clearly defines the powers of the three structures of governance in India and said that the purpose of separation of powers is to keep checks and balances on each other. Shri P.S. Narasimha focused on the three key words of the Indian Constitution - Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

‘FIRE’ FIGHT

Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Advisor to Government of India, chaired the session that featured panelists Shri Priyang Pandey, Political Advisor to Chief Minister of Nagaland and Fellow, India Foundation; Shri Guru Prakash, Assistant Professor at Patna University and Fellow, India Foundation; Shri Devi Dayal Gautam, Assistant Private Secretary to Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India; Ms. Advaita Kala, Author and Screenwriter; Shri Abhinav Prakash Singh,



Assistant Professor at University of Delhi; Shri Vikram Sampath, author and Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; and Ms. Shefali Mishra, senior strategy and public policy professional. The ingenious forum discoursed upon the contemporary role of judiciary, significance of history and campus politics in India.

Day 3 - October 28, 2018

BREAKFAST SESSION II - PROFESSIONALS & GOVERNANCE

The moderator of the session, Shri Rahul Pandita, author and journalist, commenced the discussion with the critical assessment of the relevance of the fancy terms of inclusive growth and trickle down economy, in contextual reality of deaths due to hunger in the country. On the meta theme of professionals in governance, the panelists presented their views and experiences. Shri Gaurav Goel, Founder and CEO of Samagra, spoke on the working domains for professionals. Ms. Rwitwika Bhattacharya, Founder CEO of Swaniti Initiative, outlined the fundamental difference in the Indian and western democracies wherein the focus of the former is on public service

delivery while the latter is on policymaking. Shri Rajat Sethi, Advisor to Chief Minister of Manipur and Fellow, India Foundation, attributed the failure of the state to address deep-seated social issues to the sense of adhocism in policymaking mired by the bureaucratic interests. Shri Tarun Cherukuri, co-founder of Indus Action discussed the role of professionals in governance to bridge the gap between the citizen who is actually entitled to the right and the government who wants to realize the spirit of this right.

PANEL DISCUSSION V - AGENDA FOR POLITICS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

The keynote speaker, Shri Jayant Sinha, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Government of India, said that in a constitutional democracy the politics of accountability should be viewed from the lens of the citizens. He elaborated this vision by basing the sustenance of democratic principles on the delivery of goods and services to all the citizens of the country irrespective of caste, class, religion or gender. The minister further remarked that the maxim of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas* is inspired from the very agenda for



politics of accountability.

Shri A. Surya Prakash, Chairman of Prasar Bharti, moderated the interactive session with the panelists. Ms. Geetha Kothapalli, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, observed that a combined effort of legislature, executive and judiciary is the only way to endure accountability. Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, founder & General Secretary, Foundation for Democratic Reforms, questioned the accountability of bureaucracy in the backdrop of the feudal sense of power and plunder of resources prevalent today. Ms. Manisha Priyam, political analyst, presented an optimistic view by referring to India as the world's greatest democracy not just because of the largest number of voters present but because here democracy has a local effect of accountability to it.

PRESENTATIONS I - AGENDA FOR GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS OF INDIA

Shri G Parthasarathy, former ambassador and Chancellor, Central University of Jammu, spoke

on his understanding of India as a civilizational state and not a nation state because the global aspirations of India transcend beyond economic and military power to developing an understanding in the world so as to embrace its diversity. Shri Sanjaya Baru, author and journalist, proposed that today the investment in education is becoming the foundation stone for development and so India needs to pursue human development in order to fulfill its global aspirations. Shri Amish Tripathi said that people rally around a dream, a narrative, a story that inspires greatness and hence India should play to its strengths; for example, reviving the power of the pagan culture that can be traditional and liberal simultaneously. Shri S Jaishankar, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, observed that in an increasingly nationalistic world it is critical that we lead the world right, hence stepping up and taking responsibilities becomes an important part of aspirations.

PRESENTATIONS II - AGENDA FOR PEACE

The keynote speaker, Shri Satyapal Singh, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Government of India, said, peace is natural and conflict is a disturbance, a removal from the natural. He mentioned that in our rituals, we chant *Shanti Shanti Shanti* - thrice because the foremost objective of man is to have peace - individual, societal and global. The minister further said that security, prosperity, inclusivity, charity, dignity, and divinity in society will lead to the restoration of peace. Following this address, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of The Print, Shri Shekhar Gupta, introduced four strategic points that are non-negotiable for India - India's current borders should not shrink; India's pre-eminence in the immediate region should be maintained and this region should keep on increasing; globally India's position should keep rising; India's control of its strategic assets which is the nuclear weapon, modes of delivery should be under no threat and also advance with time. Shri Vikram Sood, former Secretary in Cabinet Secretariat spoke of the paradox of the world order where peace will be possible only with the capacity to make war with military self-sufficiency. He further elaborated on how the global arms and security industry cashes on the vulnerabilities of nations. Shri Arvind Gupta, Director of Vivekananda International Foundation spoke of the primary drivers of instability - climate change, geopolitical power equations, and inequality in globalization. He indicated that the analysis of disharmony is limited and hence the discipline of peace and conflict studies should be encouraged.



VALEDICTORY SESSION

In the valedictory address, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (IC) for Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India said, “Great ideas give rise to beneficial social, economic, political movements.” He further stated how powerful ideas result in great institutions and developments. He reminded, that in 2020, India will be celebrating 70 years of the adoption of the Constitution of India; in 2022, India will be celebrating 75 years of independence; India is today the world's largest democracy and the fastest growing economy.

The minister observed that those who contributed to the evolution of the idea of India - Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, and Deen Dayal Upadhyay saw this development coming. He remarked, “In fact, when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, they echoed the work of these great men who had sought *sarvodaya* through *antodaya*, or leaving no one behind in the race to progress. That to me is the new idea of India.”



Marco Polo Young Leaders Initiative of Eurasian Economic Forum

Praket Arya



Eleventh Eurasian Economic Forum was held at the Palazzo della Gran Guardia in Verona, Italy on 25th - 26th October, 2018. The Eurasian Economic Forum is a prestigious, high-level forum with participation by senior policymakers, politicians, academics and business leaders of the world that share an interest in the growing Eurasian Space. From India, Praket Arya, Senior Research Fellow, India Foundation, participated on the panel on “Connecting Europe and Asia – Challenges and Opportunities for Europe” as part of the newly launched Marco Polo Young Leaders Initiative which aims to promote dialogue and cooperation between Europe and Eurasia by gathering young leaders, researchers and undertakers from across the wider Eurasian space to discuss the main challenges and opportunities of such a cooperation.

The panel was hosted by the European Society for Eurasian Cooperation (ESEC), an Austrian grassroots NGO and was supported by the organisers of the Forum, the Conoscere Eurasia Association and the Rosscongress Foundation. ESEC’s vice-president Elia Bescotti, a visiting scholar with the Leibniz Institute for East and South East European Studies of Regensburg,

Germany moderated the session. The other speakers of the panel were: Gregory Jullien, Advisor, European Parliament; Victor Shakhmatov, Head, Consolidated Analytical Section, Eurasian Economic Commission; Matvey Navdaev, Advisor to the Head, Federal Agency for Youth Affairs of Russia; Yuri Kofner, Research Assistant, Advanced Systems Analysis, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA).

Gregory Jullien from the European Parliament welcomed the fact that the EU finally presented its own strategy proposal on connectivity and cooperation in Eurasia and having participated in the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit held in Brussels in October 2018, he said that “the focus was now on more connectivity between Europe and Asia.” However, as Gregory underlined, the EU is sceptical about the impact that the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) could have on some European countries, especially in strategic investments sectors. Although some progress should be underlined, this new connectivity strategy concept is far from being a cooperative framework for the BRI, mostly since the EU still does not have a common policy on the Chinese initiative. Rather, certain Central

Eastern and South Eastern European countries, as well as Italy, support the initiative, while France, Germany and Poland keep an ambiguous stance. In this saturation, Gregory argued, technical cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) would be desirable because of the economic benefits that this cooperation would entail and due to the importance of the economic ties between the EU and the EAEU member states. Concluding his remarks, Gregory quoted EU President Donald Tusk who at the 12th ASEM summit argued that a modern-day Marco Polo could well repeat the words of the great explorer, “I did not write a half of what I saw, for I knew I would be not believed”. Indeed, for Europe there is much to see in Eurasia, but above all there is still much to do.

Agreeing with his colleague, Viktor Shakhmatov from the Eurasian Economic Commission expressed his hope for developing and enhancing this cooperation. He underlined that politics should be left outside of the dialogue between the two integration projects, at least for the moment. Discussions should be technical and be focused on economic issues. Victor stressed that the two integration projects should not be considered mutually exclusive and in competition to each other. Since membership in the EAEU does not exclude any member state from cooperation with the EU, partnership between the two supranational organisations would be not only possible, but favourable. This is true, not only from the Eurasian side, as the partnership agreements between the EU and Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan demonstrate, but also the other way around, as shown by the memorandums signed by Greece and Hungary with the EAEU. The question is whether Brussels is indeed interested in real cooperation with the

Eurasian Union. However, the EAEU is interested not only in cooperating with the EU, but also with its Asian-Pacific partners. Here the European Economic Community (EEC) has already achieved serious progress. Since 2015 the EAEU has signed a number of economic partnership agreements: with Vietnam (an FTA), Iran (a preliminary FTA) and China (a non-peferential trade and economic cooperation agreement). Among others, a free trade agreement with India is currently being negotiated.

Yuri Kofner from IIASA focused on the challenges and opportunities of the above mentioned potential EU – EAEU cooperation. He also commented on the “Connecting Europe and Asia” strategy proposal, recently adopted by Brussels. On the one hand, Yuri welcomed the fact that there was now a common position taken by the EU towards connectivity in Greater Eurasia, at least on paper. He supported the principles, outlined in the document, on developing more connectivity: EU’s comprehensive approach on “connectivity”, which includes not only transport, but also the energy, digital and human dimensions; the idea of economic and ecological sustainability of investments; and the call for common standards and rules. On the other hand, the adopted strategy is rather vague, mentions neither the EAEU nor the Belt and Road by name (on purpose?) and leaves some doubts concerning whether this strategy actually seeks more competition rather than cooperation. This is especially true regarding the EU Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) and Central Asia, as they are areas of heightened interest for both regional economic blocs – the EU and the EAEU. Furthermore, there are somewhat divergent interested between the EU and the EAEU in respect to economic cooperation.

On the one hand, the EU is interested in trade liberalisation to boost EU exports, deregulation and enhancing competition in the EAEU member states, to get a better accession to their markets, and guarantees on energy security from the supply side. On the other hand, the EAEU is interested in protecting its sensitive and less competitive industrial sectors, in receiving more European investments, in technology transfer and in guarantees on energy security from the demand side. To sum up, Europe's interest entails traditional trade liberalisation, while the EAEU is more interested in non-preferential trade and economic cooperation. A possible compromise, Yuri argued, could be creation of an asymmetric FTA with bilateral agreements on sensible sectors.

Praket Arya from the India Foundation discussed India's interests and potentials in joining cooperation in Greater Eurasia. As an emerging great power, India is the fastest developing economy worldwide, rooted also upon ancient culture and history, and one of the most inclusive, diverse and democratic states in the area. "Powerful on all five pillars of security, prosperity, identity, charity and divinity, India is a cultural civilisation that has transformed into a modern democratic nationhood". This brings it close to the European Union in terms of values and Weltanschauung. India, as underlined by Praket, is interested in connecting itself to Europe and the Eurasian heartland and its resources through the planned North-South transport corridor. However, there are some major difficulties to this project.

Firstly, India could connect itself to Central Asia through China, but this is prevented by some major geographical problems given by the Himalaya and the enormous costs that infrastructure projects in this area would involve.

A geographically and economically practicable way, secondly, would be connecting India to Central Asia via Pakistan, which is unfeasible from a political standpoint. This clearly represents a parallel with the effects of the Ukrainian crisis. Thus, India, in these terms, is isolated. Thirdly, in order to connect to Europe and to the wider Eurasian landmass, the North-South transport corridor is planned to be multimodal by going through the Arabian Sea, Iran, the Caucasus and Caspian region, and Russia. Iran, despite Western sanctions, represents a relevant partner for India, also due to its energy resources.

Concluding the session, Matvey Navdaev from the Russian Federal Youth Agency (Rosmolodezh) stressed the need to overcome political tensions in Greater Eurasia by tackling mutual stereotypes and misconceptions. Through initiatives supported by Rosmolodezh, such as the Eurasia Youth Forum in Orenburg or the Arctic Youth Forum in Archangelsk, Russia is trying to build vital people to people contacts in the wider Eurasian space. These meeting platforms seek to support not only cultural exchange, but also young entrepreneurship and networks of youth ventures and research initiatives. Matvey underlined the importance of the young generation in building better politics of tomorrow. "When young people gather, stereotypes are overcome".

This is also one of the ideas behind the Marco Polo Young Leaders Initiative promoted by ESEC to develop a pro-European network of young leaders, government officials, entrepreneurs, researchers and journalists across the continent. The first event of the initiative in Verona was a success and it is planned to continue this tradition at next year's Forum. Further events of the network are also planned in Vienna and Brussels for 2019.



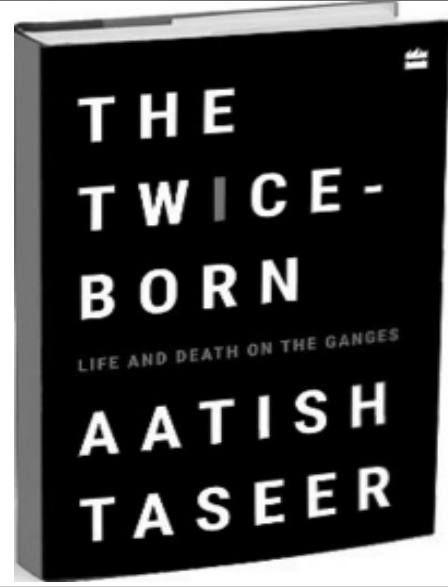
The Twice-born: Life and Death on the Ganges

Author: Aatish Taseer

Publisher: Fourth Estate India, 2018, pp 256

Price: Rs.599/-

*Book Review by: Aaditya Tiwari**



T*o know where you are is also to know who you are* is a continuous theme of the book 'The Twice Born' by Aatish Taseer. I was attracted to the book 'The Twice Born' to seek personal answers. Being born with a Brahmin surname all I had was certain traditions which were devoid of any meaning. The education I pursued had no reference to who we were and what our history was. The history books prescribed in the school curriculum were my first source to know about Brahmins and their portrayal as 'evil' was incongruent with my lived experience. It was with desire to know more about myself that I approached the book and as I finished reading it, I had more questions than answers.

'The Twice Born' is an account of Aatish's personal journey to discover his cultural roots. He who is born and brought up in India feels more at ease with the Western world than in India. Aatish attempts to understand his culture by learning Sanskrit. He visits Varanasi, leaves and then returns to stay there. He is attracted to the vast

literature and history that Sanskrit has to offer. He maps the evolution and preservation of India's culture by tracing the lives of a few Brahmins who have studied and pursued Sanskrit all their lives.

The book carves out the lives of these Brahmins beautifully. Certain discussions that Aatish has on modernity, culture, traditions and history are simply profound. They open up many avenues to think, to counter and sometimes just to re-read to absorb. One which really stuck with me was the interaction between Aatish and one of the Brahmins - Shivam. Shivam in his own way shows the difference between modernity and spirituality. He says, *'either we throw ourselves into this modernity or we go back to what we were. What is intolerable is this limbo, this middle condition, for in the end the truth is only that. (pointing to the cremation ghats).'*

At one point, Aatish writes that *'no country is more dependent on visitors for historical information about itself than India...What India knew about herself was too speculative and*

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abstract, too mystical, for outsiders to apprehend, and what visitors said about India could make Indians feel the visitors were talking about a country Indians did not recognize.’ He talks of the Dharma of the place, ‘The past in India is inseparable from the world of belief. Once faith was removed, Indians did not know what to make of their past. As with the dharma of the place, what mattered was not antiquity or beauty, but sanctity’.

Aatish Taseer spoke at India Foundation’s India Ideas Conclave in 2016 on the idea of dissent. He said his is a cultural dissent. Aatish remarked that the colonisation British did in India was nothing as compared to the colonization India made of herself. Post-independence, India pursued the aims of colonizers with a dedication that probably would have surprised even Macaulay and the Indian elite continued to be culturally and linguistically deluded.

Aatish witnessed a sort of cultural resurgence

in the 2014 Lok Sabha campaign. He was in Varanasi at the time working on his book and delved into the political expression and significance of the 2014 mandate. He sees this mandate from the same prism that he saw India’s culture and gets judgemental about what was being done and what has been achieved. He witnessed that people were filled with a sense of pride but they had not found a way to use the immense cultural wealth in a modern way. Aatish says that ‘*the second birth*’ that had to occur had not occurred.

Aatish Taseer has written a wonderful book that pushes us to think deeper. He chronicles Varanasi in a very innovative manner and gives a new perspective. Twice he writes in the book, ‘*those in whom tradition was most intact were often the least able to speak of it.*’ Through this book Aatish helps us understand the concept of ‘*Beeja Rakshan*’ and tells why it is important to understand and preserve our roots.



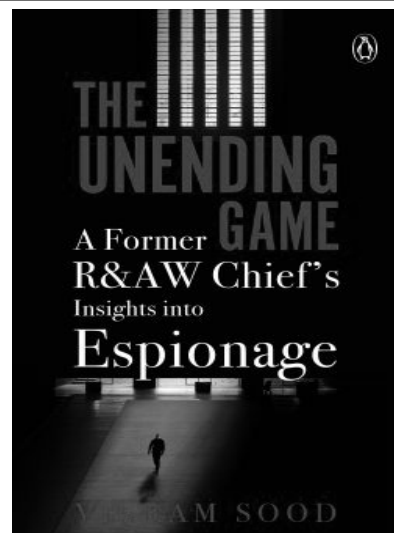
The Unending Game: A Former R&AW Chief's Insights into Espionage

Author: **Vikram Sood**

Publisher: Penguin Viking, 2018, pp 304

Price: Rs.599/-

Book Review by: **Abhishek Pratap Singh***



The Unending Game: A Former R&AW Chief's Insights into Espionage' is an enduring account of India's intelligence framework citing global spy operations and a meticulous contribution to scholarship. As the author himself notes, there is a certain 'prevalent perception' about the world of intelligence, given the world of fiction built around the subject, and to uncomplicate the same, the present book by former Research and Analysis Wing Chief, Vikram Sood, forms an intelligent, detailed and insightful account about the functioning and operation of intelligence system in India. As the title suggests, it basically builds on the functioning of the intelligence system in the past and its key significance in contemporary times, also identifying the challenges involved with it as we look towards its role for future. Interestingly, it also notes the role of 'sharpened intelligence' as a major component with India stressing out for its new role in international affairs and changing geopolitics around.

The book also covers the memoirs of India's intelligence operations by the author and goes in detail about the collection of information systems, related facts and its further interpretation with a bit of sensation. The book includes eleven chapters that go through three different but interrelated themes such as statecraft, inside intelligence network and the future ahead.

In the very first part of the book, Sood has eloquently discussed and explained the importance of intelligence by identifying it as 'foremost duties of any government.' The author also goes on to discuss in detail the functioning and work of a spy in a more realistic manner, identifying major qualities of the job and challenges involved with intelligence in the age of communication revolution that requires expertise in language and with the issue, also noting the new and widening ambit of security and its meaning.

While noting the vulnerabilities of cyber technology, the author identifies the significance

**Mr. Abhishek Pratap Singh holds PhD in East Asian Studies (Chinese) from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi and teaches at University of Delhi.*

of covert operations given India's relations with China and Pakistan, reflecting his simmering concerns with India's two uneasy neighbours. By taking inferences from the memoirs of George Tenet, the CIA Director at the time of 9/11, the author reiterates the cost attached with the ignorance of intelligence and limitations of 'could have been' school of thought in part one, also later pointing to the thinness of US intelligence in covering the threat of Islamic terror.

The author puts the grey shade of intelligence by quoting General Dwight Eisenhower who referred to it as 'a distasteful but vital necessity'. While discussing about the intelligence system in Pakistan, primarily led by ISI, in the chapter on "The Asian Paying Fields", he notes its key role in 'managing two frontiers' and being the significant 'parallel powerful army' within their political system. He underlines the ideological and structural difference between both the countries, given their differential intelligence configuration and operations.

While discussing about the CIA-KGB battles, Sood outlines how the KGB was able to outsmart western intelligence services, but has to face setbacks when Soviet leaders ignored the importance of intelligence. Much to the dismay of many, the chapter titled "State of Surveillance", points to the short moment of glory by making intelligence public and the cost attached with it.

The chapter titled 'Intelligence Smoke and Mirrors' takes us to the darkness of espionage world, giving insights into the formation of 'secret societies' given 'paramount fear' amongst rich elite and the birth of intelligence privatisation, at

the full display in Cold War years. The reading here well captures the grey shade of intelligence in order to protect business interest of few.

If Kargil was a case of intelligence failure for India, the author details the reports by IB and RAW between May 1998 to April 1999 warning the same but to the lesser notice by the then army. The preference for strategic alliances over cultural links goes well with the realist framework, and remains a dominant practice in post cold war era politics, which is well argued in the book.

On the subject of 'intelligence reforms,' the book attaches greater significance to the role and command over advanced technology and innovative functioning with the application of same, keeping in mind our objectives, ability of adversaries and friends. Intelligence reforms must well be formulated "having determined our goals and obstacles", keeping in mind non-conventional challenges to the state. One has to design newer methods of defence and offence both in the age of technology war, given overflow of information and sharing, given effective networking amongst terrorist organisations. Noting the shift in the age of information, the author attaches greater significance to the role of human intelligence (HUMINT) and expert training in terms of analysts, operators, handlers and master spies, also emplacing the importance of intuition born out of sustained experience.

The book culminates with the future challenges involved in the domain of national security and intelligence, and lists out some key intelligence reforms that India must look upon to make the job efficient, competent, professional

and above all relevant in the present global order that is marred by turbulence and uncertainty. The book emphasises the importance of avoiding a 'revolving door' culture in the Indian intelligence network at the cost of service professionalism and integrity.

From the beginning to the end, the book takes it readers through a range of issues involving intelligence system starting from training to espionage, private intelligence to cold war fears,

geopolitics to post war fault lines, secret societies to overt measures, conventional intelligence to cyber espionage, oil crisis to water threats, and from reform to challenges involved with intelligence in the age of technology and innovation.

The book forms a useful addition to the books on the subject and would be greatly useful to all those who would like to have insights into the functioning of intelligence agencies.



Upcoming Event

Kautilya Fellows Program

18-28 February 2019, New Delhi

India Foundation in association with the Ministry of External Affairs hosted the 1st edition of the Foreign Policy Workshop in January 2018. Building on its success, the Foundation is hosting the 2nd edition of the workshop called the Kautilya Fellows Program.

The Program is scheduled to be held in Delhi on 18-28 February, 2019. It aims to provide scholars from around the world an opportunity to study India's age old tradition of building cooperative relationships with other countries and understand India's growing leadership role in the world. In this edition, the program will also include a component on India's Public Policy wherein participants will be introduced to our public institutions and their role in enabling democratic governance.

For details, write to us on events@indiafoundation.in



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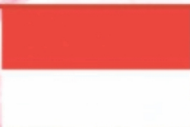
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