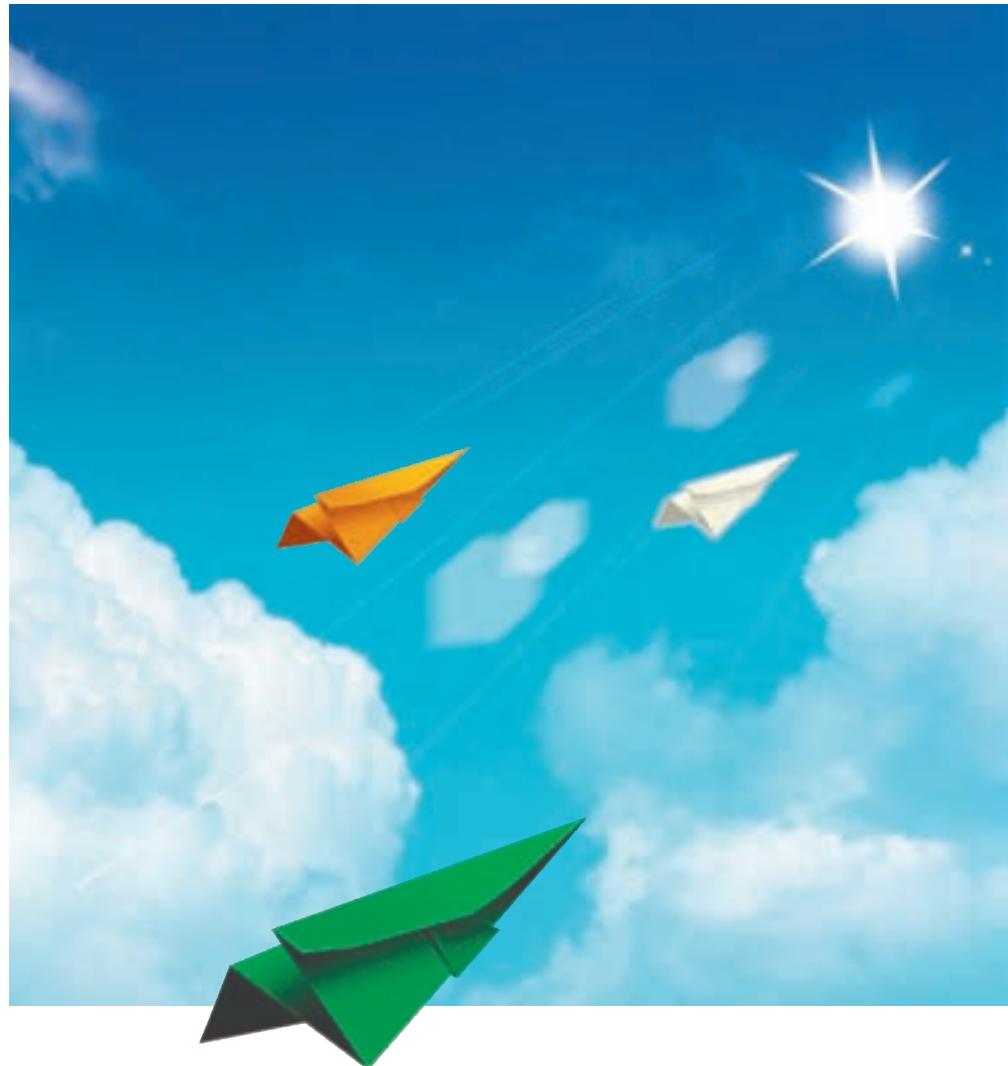


J O U R N E Y   I N T O   L I G H T



T O W A R D S   A   B E T T E R   I N D I A ,   A   B E T T E R   W O R L D

  
ASPEN INSTITUTE INDIA

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A N N U A L   R E P O R T   2 0 1 1 - 1 2



With realization of one's own  
potential and self-confidence in  
one's ability, one can build  
a better world — DALAI LAMA





# ASPEN: A SILVER LINING

The world is of fast changing complexity today. Issues and challenges arise rapidly and mutate quickly at local, national and international levels. India and the world may be at the crossroads, with decisions taken in one nation or region presenting critical implications for countries around the world.

In the past year, the country has been buffeted by multiple issues. The clarion call for the fight against corruption has grown louder. The Indian economy lost some of its past shine with growth dipping and many other indicators also showing a downward trend. The shifting political landscape has in part led to a slowdown of economic reforms.

From across the world too, there has been a lack of good news - Europe is in turmoil, the promise of BRIC countries has reduced, the aftermath of the Arab Spring has brought with it instability in the region and the world may once again move back to a recession as it witnessed in 2008.

It is in the backdrop of these gaining dark clouds at the national and global levels that Aspen emerges as a silver lining. The relevance of Aspen Institute India is stronger than ever and its activities of the last year has validated that it is on the right path.

With our guiding philosophy that issues and challenges need to be aired and discussed often and



*The need for India to have leaders with values could never be higher. Aspen has been working to promote this aspect and its leadership training now begins at the high school level*

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openly, and rapidly brought to consensus and action, Aspen has a structured fora for engagement and discussion at different levels of intensity. And this, without the constraint of party lines. By enabling transparency and public participation, it allows for “agree to disagree” outcomes that lead to greater understanding. Track II discussions allow for freer search for common ground. Over the past year, Aspen prepared more than half a dozen international dialogues and also focused on issues central to India. The Seminar on Foreign Policy brought eminent practitioners and policy makers together for a robust and open discussion. The involvement of multiple audiences and publication of proceedings and outcomes led to better understanding.

Today India needs leaders with values and Aspen has been working on addressing this through its leadership training. Its leadership training now begins at the high school level. With high focus on the youth, Aspen offers leadership-with-values programs across business, government, education and non-government sectors. Values may be universal, but their internalization is most effective when done within a society's cultural context. Aspen India devises programmes that draw on this country's rich heritage and cumulative wisdom to

make for lasting internalization by the participants. The past year also saw the beginning of many of the projects that the leadership batch of ILI-3 had undertaken. It is heartening to note that many of them are taking root, helping in nation building and creating a more inclusive society.

All of the above are building blocks towards creating a better society, and consolidate the achievements of Aspen's work in India over the past few years. Indeed, the focus was not just on dialogue and discussions but also on making the much needed impact.

Aspen India's vision of promoting open discussions on issues of public interest facilitates multi-stakeholder participation for a consensual approach to decision-making. Its values-based leadership encourages individuals to review, discuss and implement the principles and ideas that characterize a good society. Ultimately, it enables stakeholders to address global business and governance issues and build on ideas for a better India and a better world.

GAUTAM THAPAR

# SPOTLIGHT >

IN FULFILLMENT OF ASPEN'S vision to create frank and creative dialogue that lead to a more open society, Aspen Institute India organized a series of programs in different parts of the country that brought together people from all walks of life to discuss and debate issues of contemporary relevance. Realizing the importance of plurality in the Indian society, these sessions while focusing on both global and Indian issues debated a wide variety of themes, which however fell under three to four broad areas: foreign policy, leadership, development and ideas and literary achievements.







*India & The United States*

## ENVISIONING A SHARED STRATEGIC FUTURE

Following the launch of the Joint Study Report by Aspen Institute India and the Council on Foreign Relations, USA titled "The United States and India - A Shared Strategic Future" in Washington D.C. and New Delhi in September 2011, Aspen Institute India organized a session in New Delhi with Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill, former US Ambassador to India, Ambassador Naresh Chandra, former Indian Ambassador to the US and Ambassador Brajesh Mishra, Former National Security Advisor on 21st November 2011. The session was moderated by Mr. Gautam Thapar, Chairman, Aspen India.

The discussion focused on the findings of the report on the geo-political and geo-economic issues facing US and India.

Ambassador Blackwill highlighted the three core convictions as the foundation of the Report. One, a more powerful and influential India in international arena is in US national interest. Two, a United States that maintains its power and influence in international arena, especially in Asia, is in India's

national interest. Three, a possible policy collaboration between India and US in all dimensions of their relationship is important to both nations that will help in sustaining a favorable balance of power in Asia and beyond, and also promotes international peace and stability beginning in Asia.

Ambassador Brajesh Mishra said that the US and China should have a good relationship. The Indo-US Nuclear Agreement has been signed but China does not want US and India to have a strategic ally role and would prefer to see India embroiled in its own problems.

Reminiscing about the improved relations between the two countries under Bill Clinton's administration and today's situation, Ambassador Chandra opined that there was some catching up to do on Track II discussions. Outside of the structured dialogue, action-oriented efforts were needed. Sketching a maximalist position on shared common interests, policy prescriptions, interaction can have its limits but it would benefit both US and India to optimize the potential relationship. ♦



## India & her Neighbours

# SOUTH ASIA IN A DECADE AFTER 9/11

“ LEADER  
SPEAK



L to R: *Praveen Swami, Ronen Sen, C Raja Mohan*

**O**n the occasion of the 10th anniversary of 9/11, Aspen Institute India organized a session on “South Asia after 9/11” with Ambassador Ronen Sen, Former Indian Ambassador to USA, Mr. Praveen Swami, Associate Director of The Hindu and Mr. C. Raja Mohan, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research and Consulting Editor, Indian Express.

Starting with the opening remarks, Ambassador Sen gave his personal perspective and insights on how the events unfolded that day when he was in a meeting in Brussels with the ambassadors of EU countries. The discussions that day covered a host of issues which were important to bring them to the UN and in this long list he pointed out that two words were missing i.e. ‘international terrorism’. But the response throughout was disapproving. The Indian delegation was told that terrorism was a regional

issue. But just after 9/11, for the first time, terrorism became a global issue and an act of terrorism was equated with an act of war.

Mr. Praveen Swami pointed out that the terrorism in India as well as 9/11 has its genesis in the specific social conditions. Mr. Swami said, “these young Muslims come from a class which had economic opportunities but did not have a political voice and no real political representation.” Mr. Raja Mohan focused on the big political strategic picture outside India. He said that “ever since Mr. Obama came to power, the term ‘war on terror’ has simply disappeared”. The term now used by President Obama is “challenge of violent extremism”. Mr. Raja Mohan pointed out that there is now a structural change and a relative decline of United States and concluded that “when US leaves Afghanistan and Pakistan’s influence increases, India is going to face a completely different decade”. ♦

**ASPEN'S USP** is to teach people to listen with an open mind and reflect. At a time when in India and in the world we are becoming more and more intolerant of any difference and act in a reactive fashion, Aspen's way of responding is the answer to many problems. Not only India but the world needs leaders with vision and values. Aspen through its Leadership Programmes does influence the youth. However, we have to find ways of reaching a larger audience and making them reflect.

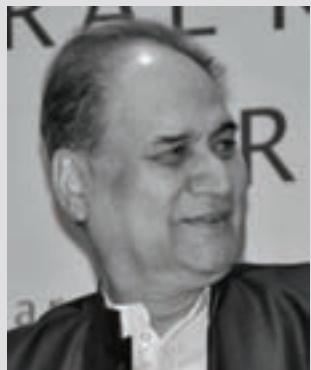
— ANU AGA  
*Member of Parliament,  
Rajya Sabha & Director,  
Thermax Ltd*





ASPEN INDIA with the full support and cooperation of Aspen US has been able to create frank and useful conversations and exchange of ideas on topics of interest to the Indian society. For obvious reasons, there is merit in doing these public sessions which should be encouraged. Most of the problems being faced by the world today are due to absence of leaders of stature in almost every country. India also lacks national leaders of stature. The result of this can be seen in the developments during the last couple of years. It is not easy for any organization to develop leaders. However, Aspen India by its activities can assist this process. It has been playing a seminal role in the transformation of India into an open society.

— RAHUL BAJAJ  
*Chairman, Bajaj Auto Ltd*



## Foreign Policy & National Security

# MEETING THE NEW GLOBAL & DOMESTIC LANDSCAPE



L to R:  
*Shiv Shankar Menon, Gautam Thapar & Rahul Khullar*

The last two decades have seen a change in the international order. Concentration of power has shifted towards Asia and the West is in decline. With it becoming evident that India must revise its foreign policy to meet the challenges of the future, Aspen Institute India organized a workshop on Foreign Policy and National Security. The depth and importance of the Workshop was borne out not only by the intensity and frankness of the deliberations but also by the quality of participants and speakers including the National Security Advisor, the Foreign Secretary and the Commerce Secretary. The workshop was co-chaired by Ambassadors S. K. Lambah and Naresh Chandra.

Members of the discussion argued that India's foreign policy must take into account the changing nature of threats in

the 21st century. The rise of non-state actors, increased importance of climate change, transnational crime and the threat of cyber warfare must be incorporated into India's new security calculus. At the same time India should not be so quick to abandon the core principles of its present foreign policy which have stood the test of time and are still relevant to one degree or another. With the emergence of global institutions, India must be ready to engage them effectively and also play a key role in their functioning. Economic and trade factors are the new drivers in India's foreign policy. Finally, coalition politics and the growing importance of states have demanded that domestic politics impact foreign policies. In the light of the above, foreign policy, a critical part of governance, needs to be redefined. ♦



*Ambassador S. K. Lambah & Ranjan Mathai*



*Foreign Policy*

## NON ALIGNMENT 2.0: A NEW REALITY?

India's evolution from a mixed economy to one that has a capitalist framework has not only transformed the Indian economy but also catapulted it into an elite group of nations that can affect global changes. Given the scale of India's progress, the Center for Policy Research published a document titled Non Alignment 2.0 that attempts to outline "the basic principles that should guide India's foreign and strategic policy over the next decade". Aspen Institute India organized a panel discussion to discuss this report and analyze its findings.

Mr. Shyam Saran, one of the co-authors of the Report argued that the international landscape has been enormously transformed since the idea of non alignment was first conceptualised, and that part of this transformation has to do with the fact that India itself has undergone massive changes. Therefore India's ability to impact the

rest of the world through its actions on a range of cross cutting issues has forced nations to take cognizance of India's emergence. Dr. Ashley Tellis construed his response to Non Alignment 2.0 as that of "respectful ambivalence". While the paper is an extremely complex work that combines the various elements of realism and yet abides by its commitment to idealism, there were question marks over the consistent affirmation of the fundamental source of India's power in the world order. The international system we live in today is characterized by two realities: economic interdependence and geopolitical competition (despite the economic interdependence). These truths have profound implications for policy because an international order characterized by economic interdependence creates continuous gains for all countries participating in this relationship of interdependence. ♦



*Foreign Policy*

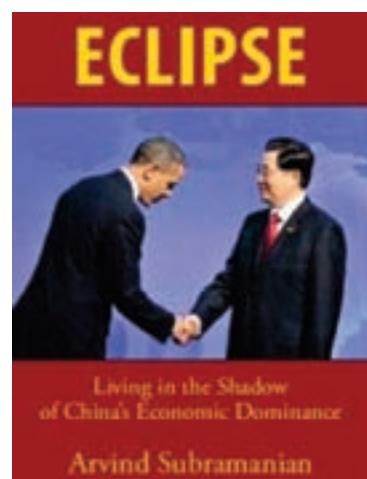
# LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF CHINA'S ECONOMIC DOMINANCE

With the rise of China and an emerging shift in global power equations towards Asia, Aspen Institute India organized a session with Dr. Arvind Subramanian, Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) and Center for Global Development (CGD), on his latest book "Eclipse: Living in the Shadow of China's Economic Dominance". The session was chaired by Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam, Founder and Chairman, Manas Advisory.

According to Dr. Subramanian, in the next 10 to 15 years, the Renminbi will eclipse the Dollar. The current economic system will likely survive China's dominance. There is also a possibility that China with its dominance in the next 10 to 15 years, will behave like a hegemon. When countries deal with a rising power, they try to engage or contain, which is a traditional way, but according to Dr. Subramanian, countries should not contain or engage but should in fact empower China. During the 1870's, UK was the superpower; after World War II the US became a superpower and in 2010 US and China were neck to neck but China's economic dominance is already here and is much greater in magnitude than most people think.

The one unusual situation that will emerge is that China will be a precocious superpower. It will be a poor superpower that will not be among the richest. China will not have democracy, openness, technology and leadership; it will also not have the soft power but only hard power.

On India and China, Dr Subramanian felt that India needs to be a part of a larger multi-lateral coalition. China is too powerful for India to tackle on its own but India cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. ♦



## IS IT TIME TO TALK TO THE TALIBAN?

“ LEADER  
SPEAK



*Ajai Shukla*

Afghanistan in the next few years will influence India's security environment." This was the opening remark by C. Raja Mohan, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research and Consulting Editor, Indian Express, moderating a policy dialogue session with Mr. Ajai Shukla, Consulting Editor (Strategic Affairs), Business Standard, organized by the Aspen Institute India on 17 August, 2011.

It is in the above backdrop that experts feel that India may have to amend its strategy on Afghanistan and how that strategy must also include speaking to the Taliban. It is

argued that Taliban's greater influence is inevitable since it represents the real Afghanistan—religiously conservative, fundamental, anti-Communist, and anti-Western outlook.

The differences between the Quetta Shura network and Haqqani network also creates opportunities for India and this could be an opening that New Delhi could exploit. Further, since the Pashtuns comprise the single largest group in Afghanistan, what they do in the next 10 years will affect Afghanistan vis-à-vis Pakistan.

Clearly, going by analysts, it may be a time for a rethink by India on Afghanistan. ♦

IT IS FELT that Aspen's public sessions are of great value and creates a strong positive impact on the society. Many subjects which are covered by Aspen are normally not focused on by other think tanks and therefore Aspen's role assumes greater significance. Many facets of values based leadership are inculcated in the formative years of any individual. So it would be good to see Aspen's greater involvement with youth, especially school children.

— CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE  
*Director General*  
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)





## International Affairs

# THE CHANGING ROLE OF ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

Economic diplomacy assumes greater significance in an era when it has been demonstrated time and again that global economic developments are intertwined.

Developments in the United States, Europe and global environmental concerns are pointers.

To discuss this important trend, Aspen Institute India organized a panel discussion on 'Economic Diplomacy' with Singapore High Commissioner Karen Tan, Ambassador Kishan Rana, Former Ambassador of India to Germany, Canadian High Commissioner Stewart Beck and Mr. Sidharth Shriram, Chairman & Managing Director, Mawana Sugars Limited, who chaired the session.

There were a few key takeaways. One, economic diplomacy is no longer the concern of diplomats. Two, business enterprises are increasingly principal players as seen in the case of India and other countries. In fact, for governance, some countries

like Canada, Australia and South Korea combine foreign affairs and foreign trade and it remains to be seen if such integration can happen in India. In the early 2000, the Singapore High Commission set up an International Economics department which focused on how the foreign ministry could also practice 'economic diplomacy'. In the case of Canada, 'economic diplomacy' changed over the years because of the approach of different governments and also because Canada was too much dependent on trade for its growth. Departments regularly got disintegrated and re-integrated with the change of governments.

In sum, it was agreed that "it is important to understand how the economic interests of a country are related to the economic interests of other countries and how economic diplomacy is becoming a fundamental part of the foreign ministry of every country." 🍀

## Nuclear Safety

# INSIGHTS AND LESSONS FROM FUKUSHIMA

**W**ith the issue of nuclear safety gaining prominence once again post the earthquake in Japan and the subsequent consequence on the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear reactor, Aspen Institute India in collaboration with the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) organized a session on “Nuclear Safety: Post Fukushima.” Prof. Sanjoy Banerjee, CUNY Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering and Director of the Energy Institute, New York and Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, Council on Energy, Environment and Water came together in the lead on this.

Dr. Arunabha highlighted some of the issues that India and the world are facing on nuclear energy. With around 435 nuclear reactors around the world, the Fukushima Dai-ichi incident has put a pause on further expansion plans and in some cases a stop. India could also be in an introspection mode: should it stop or continue with its civil nuclear plans and what kind of regulatory mechanisms should be in place?

Prof. Banerjee explained the anatomy of different types of reactors like Boiling Water Reactor, Heavy Water Reactor and



Pressurized Water Reactor. He explained about the Fukushima plant in particular and what led to the nuclear accident there. He said that “the Fukushima plant is or was the early version Boiling Water Reactor”. The plant was designed to resist tsunamis up to 5.6 metres but the tsunami that hit the reactor was around 14 meters. This resulted in the shutting down of all the external powers, all the generators and all the batteries. The emergency devices were knocked out and the plant did not have any power at all after the batteries ran out after eight hours.

One of the important lessons learned is that countries should have either a passive cooling system in place or have some source of power always running, no matter what happens. ♦

**INDIA NEEDS** values based leaders more than ever before, especially in these times of growing cynicism. Aspen Institute's art of Socratic Dialogue, fine-tuned over five decades, can provide a yeoman's service in providing an alternate, mature, and, reflective way for values based leadership for different age-groups: high-schoolers, college goers and early tenure working adults in addition to existing programs for successful young leaders (25-40 years) and corporate executives. These differentiated offerings, across demographics, can help Aspen India spread its key message of “The Good Society” in a focused way. I am passionate about values based leadership as the means to true nirvana for the society and having opportunities to evangelise the cause gives immense personal satisfaction, especially programs like The Shriram Aspen Leadership School with young adults.

— **AMIT BHATIA**  
*Founder & CEO*  
Aspire Human Capital Management (P) Ltd





*Country Strategy*

## INDIA & GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: FROM INTERESTS TO STRATEGY

Some of India's most distinguished diplomats and foremost policy makers were members of a Working Group on India and Global Governance, a group that had been convened by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) to discuss India's role, as an emerging power, in the complex landscape of global governance. The group submitted a report, "Understanding Complexity, Anticipating Change: From Interests to Strategy on Global Governance", to the National Security Adviser in December 2011. The report recommends that Indian policymaking on global governance could benefit from breaking out of the silos of single-issues and understand how developments in one area affect our interests in other domains. In order to engage in a continuing conversation on the topic, CEEW in collaboration with Aspen Institute India conducted a panel discussion on "India and Global Governance: From Interests to Strategy."

Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, CEO of CEEW and the moderator for this discussion, introduced the topic by remarking that India had an innate ability to

adapt to complex situations. At the same time, it is important for India to undertake long term thinking in various policy issues. Dr. Ghosh further highlighted the 'four chaotic transitions' in global governance that emerging powers like India had to navigate. First, the transition from being rule-takers to rule-makers; secondly, the transition from framing rules to developing new sets of global arrangements in which 'regime design' figures prominently; thirdly, from single regimes to recognizing 'regime complexes' or the multiplicity of institutions with overlapping but often incoherent rules in each area (whether climate change, trade, energy, etc.); and fourthly, the transition from formal institutions towards informal networks, where small groups of states or even non-state actors are framing the rules that would govern emerging issues, like cyber security, outer space, geo engineering, and so forth. Accordingly, it is these transitions that form one of the important themes of the global governance debate and hence the need to anticipate changes in today's world. ♦

## World View

# INDIA & JAPAN: SHAPING THE INDO-PACIFIC



The recent trend in International Relations demonstrates a pivoting towards Asia. Further, with the rise of the two great Asian powers of India and China and the growing geo-strategic importance of the Indian Ocean as well as the increasing relevance of the East Asia Summit (EAS), it becomes important for India to reach out to its neighbours in the east.

Meanwhile, the Indo-Pacific region is still in the process of creation and can be built through Track II diplomacy, efforts of the intellectual academia and the alliance of maritime democracies. In this context, Aspen Institute India organized a panel discussion on "India and Japan: Shaping the Indo-Pacific". The discussion was chaired by Ambassador H.K. Singh, Former Indian

Ambassador to Japan and the ICRIER-Wadhwani Chair in India-US Policy Studies. He introduced the discussion by highlighting the history of positive interactions between India and Japan. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and Japan has reached a conclusion and Japan remains committed to its Official Development Assistance (ODA) towards India. All this shows that in the last ten years this relationship has gained momentum.

Akihiko Tanaka, Professor of International Politics at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, Tokyo University and Amitabh Kant, CEO and MD of the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (DMICDC) joined the panel. ♦

“ LEADER  
SPEAK

ASPEN HAS done outstanding work: generating innovative and out-of-the-box solutions to complex challenges; fostering dialogue with key interlocutors and creating a wider ripple of awareness and persuasion and promoting reasoned approaches and solutions on the contemporary security and economic challenges. By inculcating through the Aspen method value based leadership, it hopefully ushers a more cohesive and reasoned social order. As a trustee of Aspen, I am privileged to be associated with the creative and innovative approaches Aspen constantly seeks in its dialogue. However, I would be happier if it deepened and diversified its outreach.

— N. K. SINGH  
*Member of Parliament  
Rajya Sabha*



*History Recalled*

## THE GILDED AGE



**ASPEN INSTITUTE** India has been at the forefront of developing values based leaders who are already having enormous positive impact on the future of India.

— **L. BROOKS ENTWISTLE**  
*Chairman, South East Asia,  
Goldman Sachs (Singapore) Pte*



**T**here are startling parallels between today's India and the experience of the other large democracy, the US, over a century ago. The latter part of the 19th century, known as America's Gilded Age, saw the rapid growth of its economy as well as unprecedented levels of corruption, exactly like present-day India." The interactive session on Gilded Age was presented by Mr B. J. Panda, Member of the Parliament, Lok Sabha in New Delhi. He drew a striking comparison between the Gilded Age and the Contemporary India which has many features in common – rapid economic growth, the structural transformation from an agrarian to a modern economy and coalition politics. What is referred to as the Gilded Age in America was the period post the Civil War and post reconstruction in the second half of the 19th century which inevitably led to the

emergence of the Progressive era in the early 20th century.

In this entire phenomenal change, a crucial role was played by the middle class and now perhaps their surging numbers through two decades of economic liberalization, combined with their newfound activism reaching a tipping point, said Mr Panda. Another major legislative change that the Progressive era brought about was the change of fundamental ways of party's nomination which had significant campaigns as turning points in recent Indian politics, and all were made possible not by the middle class, but by hundreds of millions of voters who bought into the promise of good governance.

The session was an exploratory exercise in unravelling the Progressive era over Gilded Age and was moderated by Mr. T. N. Ninan, Chairman & Chief Editor, Business Standard. ♦



## *Outlook*

# THE FUTURE OF THE US-INDIA RELATIONSHIP

The India-US relationship is at a defining moment against the backdrop of a rising China, new developments in Afghanistan, global warming and India's re-entry into the UN Security Council after two decades. The US dependence on Pakistan was primarily to ensure supplies to Afghanistan. It is now clear that it has come at a high price. This dependence will come down with the US reducing its troops in Afghanistan. Also, the US aid to Pakistan will have far more conditionalities attached to it. While both India and the US share common values, the dissonance crops up in respect of trade and high tech denial. R&D cooperation is important in the context of the increasing bilateral business engagements. The benefits of cooperation in the development and promotion of super efficient appliances are enormous, he pointed out. Regarding the rise of China, Mr Blackwill said it was hard to guess where the country would be 20 years hence. He felt that a containment policy may not work well, neither

would a confrontationist approach.

China has not been a responsible stakeholder nation. Its behaviour in terms of trade, currency and geopolitics, especially with regard to South China Sea, raise key questions. Besides, it has kept India entangled in South Asia by providing key support to Pakistan. While India's economic engagement with China has increased exponentially, Indian industry has been at the receiving end of Chinese imports. Indian manufacturing companies are unable to match the Chinese scale of operations and Indian physical infrastructure bottlenecks add to the problems. However, part of the solution lies in making Indian industry much more competitive. The introduction of Good & Services Tax (GST) and structural economic reforms will provide additional strengths to the industry.

Mr. Richard Haas, Mr. Naresh Chandra, Mr Jamshyd Godrej and Mr. Robert Blackwill participated in this group discussion. Dr. C Raja Mohan, Strategic Affairs Editor, Indian Express was the moderator. ♦



**PUBLIC SESSIONS** organized by Aspen India have been highly successful and led to in-depth discussion of important subjects. The quality of subject matter papers and the expert moderation of such discussions have been excellent. Developing future leaders in the community is a program of great importance. The scientific and rigorous selection of promising candidates has made Aspen India's leadership programs very purposeful and effective. Interacting with young persons coming out of a leadership course is a rewarding experience. Spotting potential leaders and inculcating qualities of leadership and commitment to public service are the major elements of Aspen India's Program. Aspen India stands for objective and cool examination of issues of national interest.

— NAresh CHANDRA  
*Former Indian Ambassador to USA & Chairman, National Security Advisory Board (NSAB)*



## Country Outlook

# FOUR REVOLUTIONS AND INDIA'S FUTURE



L to R: N K Singh, Sumit Ganguly & Michael McRobbie

A session on '*Four Revolutions and India's Future*', with Professor Sumit Ganguly, Rabindranath Tagore Chair in Indian Cultures and Civilizations and Professor of Political Science, Indiana University was organized by the Aspen Institute India. The panel also included Dr. Michael McRobbie, President, Indiana University and Mr. N.K Singh, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

Prof. Ganguly explained the four components which he has highlighted as the four revolutions:

- Transformation of India's foreign policy at the end of the Cold War.
- Transformation of India's economy since 1991.
- The notion of 'silent revolution' that

is underway in India, namely, the mobilization of India's poor and how this is transforming India's democracy.

- The Indian polity which has a remarkable way of thwarting Rights and confounding us that could define the future of Indian secularism. The transformation of the economy is pivotal to India's future largely because one has to extend the benefits of economic growth much more widely. A shift in the ideation of foreign policy is important because India needs to move forward with dexterity to respond to global changes. Critically, the silent dimension matters because it will make Indian democracy much more vibrant and representative. ♦



### World View

## INDIA'S ROLE IN THE NEW GEOGRAPHY OF WEALTH

With globalization taking new hues following the 2008 global financial crisis and the rise of India and China, Aspen Institute India organized a session on "What place for India in the new global geography of wealth?" With Mr. Claude Smadja, Founder and President, Smadja and Associates Strategic Advisory and former Managing Director of the World Economic Forum in the lead, Mr. A. K. Bhattacharya, Editor, Business Standard moderated the session.

An interesting observation made was that there are different versions of globalization: an American version of globalization, a Chinese version of globalization and to a large extent a European version of globalization. It remains to be seen how India will assert its own version and project a vision of economic growth. With the difference between India and China's share of world output being three

to one, India needs to have the policies that will allow it to narrow the gap with China. Importantly, a new constellation of growth has emerged. A number of emerging economies like Turkey, Chile and Gulf countries are anchoring their growth momentum around the growth dynamics created by China, India and Brazil. Mr. Smadja termed it as the "New Growth Club."

The time is now for India to take advantage of its diverse population. Mr. Smadja said that "India has a tremendous advantage because of the diverse talent, diverse population and its power in adapting to any environment. Indian entrepreneurs will have more opportunities". He also added that "globalization requires very strong government." In such circumstances, it is important to have an efficient government that can enhance economic competitiveness.

Clearly, lessons for India! 🍀



*Foreign Policy*

## THE UNITED STATES AND THE FUTURE OF PAKISTAN

Pakistan may be in systemic decline. US-Pakistan relations are at a low point with no signs of fundamental improvement. At the same time, the United States is dependent on Pakistan to provide a crucial supply route for supply of US troops in Afghanistan, and is concerned about the long-term safety and security of Pakistan's 100 plus nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, many Indians are critical of Washington's basic policy design toward Islamabad. In the period ahead, what should be the principal elements of US policy vis-a-vis Pakistan?

These were some of the questions and issues raised during an interactive session organized by Aspen Institute India in Kolkata on 8th December with Former Ambassador Robert Blackwill. Ambassador Blackwill stated that the goal is to establish long term relations with Pakistan rather than occasional positive rhetoric. Yet he emphasized that "you cannot walk on both sides of the street in relation to terror". The Pakistani army and US have incompatible objectives

regarding the war in Afghanistan, which in turn is destroying the repair of US-Pak relations. US seeks to leave behind a united, capable, stable independent Afghanistan in 2014, while Pakistan wants Afghanistan dependent on Pakistan - stable but dependent.

US-India have overriding national interests vis-à-vis Pakistan as both have to worry about safety and security of Pakistani nuclear arsenal in the near future. Regarding the safety of the nuclear arsenal in Pakistan, Ambassador Blackwill said the Pakistan army should have a secure control over the nuclear weapons so that they do not fall in the hands of Talibans. "If you also take into account that Pakistan military doctrine seems to be evolving towards battlefield short-range use of nuclear weapons and if you look at the widespread chaos and violence inside Pakistan, I think both US and India will have to worry in the future about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear devices and the material associated with them," he said. ♦



## New World Order

# THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS



L to R: Professor Akeel Bilgrami & Ajay Gandhi

The idea of a clash of civilizations was popularized in mainstream political discourse by the renowned political thinker Samuel Huntington. This concept was further analyzed at a public session jointly organized by Aspen Institute India and the Indian School of Business. Professor Akeel Bilgrami, Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, USA, the keynote speaker for this session, emphasized the importance of understanding the idea of clash of civilizations. He further observed that Islamic countries whether in the Middle East or in South Asia have always been geo-politically important as well as a rich source of natural resources. Thus, there has been a robust interest and interference of western powers in Islamic countries and historically as well, there has been a sustained hostility between

Christianity of the west and Islam of the Muslim nations.

Upon linking the idea of a clash of civilizations with religious identity and identity politics, it is seen that such identities can also be formed under conditions of triumph. An instance of identity as a form of triumphism is seen in the case of the emergence of Zionism and Jewish ideology after the founding of the Israeli state. Specific acts of extremism and terrorism have also contributed towards the idea of a clash. Further, when there is a prevalent sense of defeat and vulnerability amongst the people, the ground is set for the rise of terrorism, establishment of stricter forms of Islamic society etc. The policy of racist immigration policies followed in European countries highlights this sense of defeat and vulnerability. Thus, a clash is a spinoff of this factor. ♦

“ LEADER SPEAK

**ASPEN INDIA** has two principal Missions – to build leaders with values and to build understanding and relationships internationally.

The good news is that this recently-born institution is on the way to fulfilling both these objectives, these dreams.

Especially, its focus in young leadership, including the senior school level through the Aspen-Shriram School leadership programme will impact young men and women at a critical time in their lives. This program has to be multiplied.

This gives me enormous satisfaction. And, even more, hope for the future of India and its people.

— TARUN DAS  
Founding Trustee,  
Aspen Institute India &  
Former Chief Mentor, CII





*In Conversation*

## PROFESSOR SOUMITRA DUTTA: DOING INDIA PROUD

**S**tarting July 2012, Professor Soumitra Dutta, the 48-year old IIT-Delhi alumnus and the Roland Berger Chaired Professor of Business and Technology & the Academic Director of eLab at INSEAD School of Business will take over as the first Indian-origin Dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management, Cornell University, USA. He joins a select group of high performing Indian academics heading global educational institutions. What makes him tick and what are his key messages?

One, his focus on research and writing, beyond teaching, helped him move ahead, perhaps. Professor Dutta observed that ‘technology’ has been the natural starting point for him given his techno-academic background. This is reflected in his book, *Knowledge Processing and Artificial Intelligence*. Later, a definitive theme of business school influences are reflected in his writings in his latest book, *Throwing Sheep in the Board Room*. Therefore, his writings and research work have roots in

technology with a strong application basis for businesses and even national governments. Professor Dutta’s next book will be on *Social Media and Analytics*, and it will aim at making sense of unstructured data.

Second, he believes that Indian companies must undertake higher levels of investment in R & D, globalize the mindsets of the management team, take inspiration from good role models and come up with stable long term policies. Products need to be creatively conceptualized in the context of ‘social, local, mobile.’

Third, he outlined three strategic priorities for Indian business schools to perform better: undertaking adequate and long term research (incentivize research), enhancing the school’s global connectivity and global impact and creating leadership linked with values.

Mr. Tarun Das, Founding Trustee, Aspen Institute India moderated this session with Professor Dutta. ♦



## *Leadership*

# BUILDING A NEW GENERATION OF GLOBAL MANAGERS

**I**t is important for global business schools to build a generation of managers invested with entrepreneurial skills. That was the key message from Robert F. Bruner, Dean, Darden School of Business, University of Virginia at an Aspen Institute India session moderated by Ambassador Kishan Rana, Former Ambassador to Germany.

Taking the centrestage, Dean Bruner explained that the issue of competencies of the new global leader was motivated by three key questions. First, is technical mastery simply

sufficient as a basis for global entrepreneurship leadership? How should one balance global versus local knowledge? And, how should companies and schools respond to these questions?

In conclusion, Professor Burner stated that globalization is simply an inexorable force and it will be a dominant theme in the years to come. Global Management is essential to the advancement of the global leader. We need to write a new story that focuses on competencies and entrepreneurial in order to develop the next generation of global business leaders. ♦



“ LEADER  
SPEAK

**ASPEN INSTITUTE** India succeeds in imparting the true essence of the Aspen experience. Values-based seminars, timely policy dialogues, an excellent young leadership program and exciting plans for a new Ideas Festival, all together account for a remarkable contribution to Indian civic life. Operating in the world's largest democracy, Aspen Institute India stands out as a vital member of the Aspen Institute global family. We appreciate the tremendous effort undertaken by its leaders and donors and look for more great results in the years ahead.

— WALTER ISAACSON  
President & CEO  
The Aspen Institute, USA





**INFORMED DEBATE** on issues help in creating transparency and allow legislators greater participation with civil society. Aspen can expand its role by exposing business leaders to issues concerning value based leadership that will raise awareness as well as create incentives and disincentives from the point of view of society. Indeed, the greatest benefit of having Aspen Institute in India is to provide learnings and experience of dealing with contentious issues in society. The above roles contribute towards building a strong and resilient nation. Deepening and broadening these discussions will provide benefits towards building a resilient society. In a democracy there are always contentious issues. The Aspen Institute in India provides a platform for informed dialogue. This helps in achieving my interest in creating a platform for solutions that are lasting and support society in a positive way.

— JAMSHYD N. GODREJ  
*Chairman & Managing Director, Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co Ltd*



### Ideas for India

## IN DIALOGUE WITH SAM PITRODA



With “leadership, innovation and ideas” playing an important role as levers in the country’s growth graph, Aspen Institute India in collaboration with the Group of Technology Companies, Kerala organized a session with Mr. Sam Pitroda, Adviser to the Prime Minister of India on Public Information, Infrastructure and Innovations. Mr. Shaffi Mather, Fellow, Aspen India Leadership Initiative and Advocate,

Supreme Court of India also participated in the discussion.

The consensus of the day was that India as a nation has what it takes to be a great global power; what is needed of our leaders is the statesmanship of a higher order to ensure that various pieces of the nation building fall in the right places. India's demographic dividend, innovation and technology can be key ingredients in building the new India of tomorrow.

With over 550 million youngsters below the age of 25 years and lots of interesting technologies that offer unique ways to address situations and concerns, the country has got the right ingredients ready and all we need to do is use them in the right measure to turn into a reckoning power and make India a leader globally.

He added that, “we are living in very exciting times. The evolution of the Internet has brought about one of the biggest revolutions in the world. The solutions to these challenges need to be thought out innovatively. Innovation offers a unique opportunity to change the paradigm of conventional development. The government is also trying to bring innovation in the way it manages the nation and the seed for the same has already been sown in various areas of e-governance, banking, health care and education.” ♦



## Personality Development

# THE SUBTEXT OF ANGER

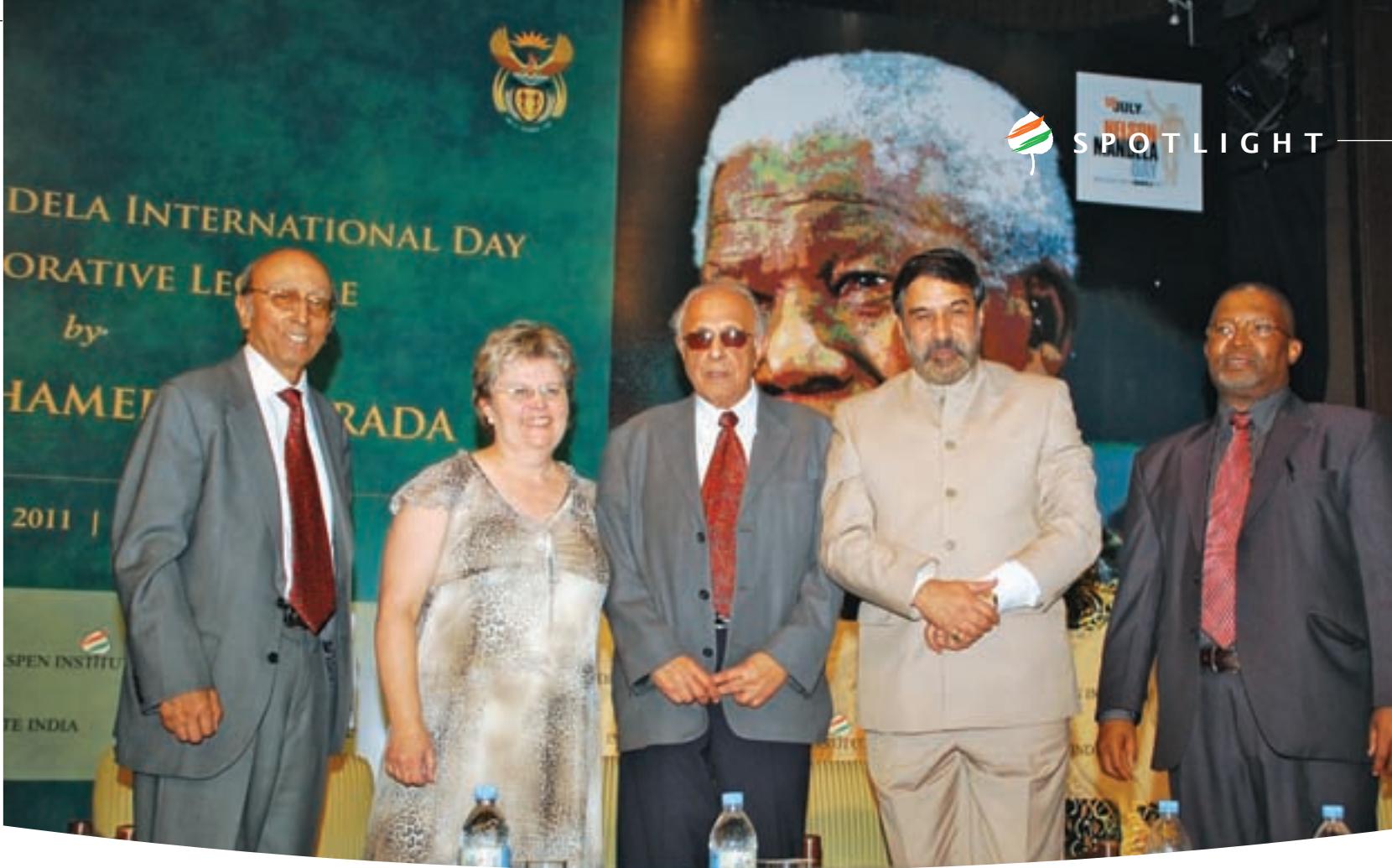
Keeping with Aspen India's broad framework of open dialogue on topics of relevance, a screening of the documentary *The Subtext of Anger*, directed and produced by Ms. Vandana Kohli was organized in New Delhi. *The Subtext of Anger* examines the emotional and physiological costs of living in a world that seems to be chronically agitated, locked in a pattern of fight or flight responses.

The screening was followed by a panel discussion with Ms. Vandana Kohli, Filmmaker, Mr. Mark Parkinson, Director, The Shri Ram School, Dr. Amit Sen, Director and Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist and Dr. Shikha Sharma, Managing

Director, Nutri-Health Systems Private Limited.

The session focused on the theme of the documentary; how "Anger" has become a part and parcel of everyone's life and how to deal with this growing problem, especially among the young population. The panelists emphasized that there is an urgent need to review how we connect with others especially with the youth. Day to day life is getting stressful and there is a neurological link between stress and anger.

At later sessions, the same documentary was screened in two schools of the The Shri Ram Group of Schools. ♦



## Nelson Mandela International Day Commemorative Lecture

# PORTRAIT OF A RARE LEADER

The characteristics that define Nelson Mandela, is not just that he was the right leader at the right time, but also that his leadership was deeply embedded in certain values. These provide clues for all on how to manage conflict, deal with enemies and play the long-term game. His particular style of leadership was fueled by an innate inner strength, a deep sense of self-confidence and years of patience and diligence perfected in an apartheid jail. In line with its vision of promoting values-based leadership, open dialogue and cross-sector outreach, Aspen Institute India, in collaboration with the South African High Commission, on the event of Mandela's 93rd birthday and Nelson Mandela International Day, organized a

commemorative lecture delivered by Mr. Ahmed Kathrada.

Ahmed Kathrada drew on Aspen's focus on values-based leadership. Using this as a point of departure, he highlighted the criteria for successful leadership across a broad spectrum - these criteria *inter alia* were commitment, dedication, compassion, integrity and accountability. However, he took it a step further to point out that in extreme situations like the one Madiba found himself there was need for other values such as physical courage, foresight, spirit of sacrifice, the surrendering of personal considerations, amongst others.

Aspen Founding Trustee Mr. Tarun Das, Union Minister Anand Sharma and the South African High Commissioner graced the occasion. ♀

## Leadership

# WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT IT TAKES



**L**eadership is about the future and it is about change. Leadership is about hope.” With these words, the great visionary C.K. Prahalad decided to focus on India@75. While remembering him, his work, ideas and thoughts have become all the more important. Aspen Institute brought together the young ILI leaders in a panel discussion.

The world today is evolving; nations, institutions and most especially nation states and business organizations need people who can engineer change and development. Effective leadership is one key element in the success of any group venture and virtually anyone can learn to be an effective leader. Leadership is a “Calling” – a calling that everyone is gifted with; though people often choose not to call upon it. Leaders at different points in their lives make choices –

choices that most often than not lead them to opportunities and challenges that bring out the leader in them. What matters is not the circumstances that lead to these choices – they provide the context – but the strength, belief, passion and conviction with which leaders make these choices. What does it take to be a leader? What does it take to draw from within and emerge? What does it take to communicate and connect with many and inspire thousands? Is there a method to this seemingly miraculous or fatalistic process? Is there a way in which each one of us too can reach out to the unlimited potential we all carry within us? What it takes for us to awaken the leader within.

These questions and many related ones formed the crux of the discussion that was skilfully moderated by Ms Bhairavi Jani, Executive Director, India@75 and Director, SCA Group, an ILI Fellow. ♦

I BELIEVE OUR people, who truly constitute society, are acutely aware of the challenges and opportunities that face India. Our solutions therefore by design have to be local, relevant and innovative and will need public involvement. The sessions arranged by Aspen are extremely useful as they bring together the diaspora of Indian society and thought leaders on a common platform to dialogue on issues that are immediate and real. Within this framework both experience and knowledge sharing occurs and solutions are thrown up. If the engagement fabric is so rich, can innovation that addresses real issues, be far behind?

I think that through Aspen I can contribute to the task of nation building. I was born and raised in India and feel deeply committed to enhancing the stature of the country in every sphere where we compete at a global level. I am proud to do my bit to evolve a “shared vision” focused on “action” to create a better India.

— SHIVINDER MOHAN SINGH  
*Executive Vice-Chairman  
Fortis Healthcare Limited*





**IT IS CLEAR** that without frank and open conversation we are in some danger of being ‘separated’ on many issues. Especially since the ventilation that Aspen provides is not the sensationalist harangue that otherwise goes on in public spaces. It is open, outright, provocative, yet civilised. And these are essentials to my mind.

If Aspen can help move young leaders into more of a ‘doing’ mode it will make a difference. Unlike Americans, Indians tend to remain in the thinking and talking and discussing mode – at which we are better than most.

Making bright minds mindful is so key – and can be so enjoyable. And to a greater or lesser extent it happens in most Aspen sessions. I find myself stimulated through the open exchanges just as much as everyone else. And this gives the idea under discussion more of a purpose. Hopefully then there’s some enjoyment to the achieving of this purpose.

— SYEDA IMAM  
*Member, National Commission for Minorities*



### Women Achievers

## OUR VOICE, OUR JOURNEY



L to R: *Maitrayee Trivedi Dasgupta, Debashree Chatterjee, Krishna Bose, Jane Thomson & Anupama Arya*

**T**hrough two different sessions of honest sharing, women achievers from different walks of life came together to narrate stories about the journey of their lives. The second edition of “Our Voice, Our Journey” was organized by Aspen Institute India in collaboration with American Centre, Kolkata, to celebrate the International Women’s Day.

The discussion brought into focus personal and social battles and highlighted that “women have many roles – some of which are visible,

others are not”. They explored the lives of women achievers across generations – their challenges, failures and values which had shaped their lives, which in turn inspired the diverse audience of all age groups present that evening.

This certainly was a program with a difference – strong speakers of grit and passion engaged the audience with their stories of how they faced challenges, broke barriers and forged new paths in their journey of realizing their personal potential. ♦



## *Leadership*

# WAS GANDHI A RADICAL?

Even decades after his death, Gandhi stands in the history of modern democratic civilisation as one of the most critically acclaimed political thinkers and widely revered political figures. Gandhian political philosophy has proved itself to stand the test of time. To probe further the aspect of continuing relevance of Gandhian thought, Aspen Institute India organized a public session on "Was Gandhi a radical?" The keynote speaker of this session was Professor Akeel Bilgrami, Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, USA. The session was moderated by Mr. Anuj Poddar, India Leadership Initiative Fellow of Aspen Institute India and Head - Strategy and Business Development, Viacom 18 Media Pvt. Ltd.

Prof. Akeel Bilgrami discussed the remarkable depth in Gandhian analysis that stemmed from his clear, insightful and visionary thinking. The general question driving Gandhi was – how is it that we have come to think of the world as a place not merely to live in but also as a place to master and control? The evolution in Gandhian thought is a reflection of man's role in transforming the course of nature and the shift in the concept of knowledge to live by. Another key feature in Gandhi's thinking process is his rejection of western civilization. Gandhi demonstrates a detailed anxiety as to why India should not follow the path that Europe did in the 17th century. Infact, Gandhi anticipated these anxieties in extremely close detail in his work, Hind Swaraj. ♦


*Session on*

# Electoral Reforms Dream or Reality?

*March 2012*


## *Electoral Reforms*

# VOTING FOR CHANGE

In the backdrop of the recent successful state assembly elections conducted by the Election Commission of India and the critical importance of elections in the healthy functioning of the Indian democracy, Aspen Institute India brought together Dr. S.Y. Quraishi, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Mr. Rahul Bajaj, Chairman, Bajaj Group of Companies and Mr. Tarun Das, Founding Trustee of Aspen Institute India to discuss the issue of "Electoral Reforms: Dream or Reality."

India being home to the largest democracy in the world with more than 750 million voters and a proud history of electoral reforms places enormous responsibility on itself to strengthen the democratic process through reforms in the election system.

But the sheer size and scale paradoxically involves deep challenges that include the criminalization of politics, the widespread use of money power, the trend of paid news, corruption due to unaccounted money and at a macro level the

trend of elections in quick succession. As a response to these limitations, reform proposals made by the CEC included cleansing the existing political system (decriminalization of politics, improving the criminal justice system, making paid news a punishable offence etc.) empowering the Commission (charging the Budget of the Election Commission (EC) to the Consolidated Fund of India, extending the constitutional protection given to the CEC to other Election Commissioners as well, establishing an independent Secretariat for the EC etc.) and enhancing the efficiency of the EC (use of technology like the 'totalizer', use of face recognition software in Photo IDs, common electoral rolls etc.) Overall, there is emphasis on open, verifiable, accessible and empowering electoral reforms.

But beyond all these, in the long term, it was recognized that voter education was the key that could catalyze various electoral reforms into actual reality in the political process. ♦

*Entertainment*

# BEYOND BOLLYWOOD: THE RELEVANCE OF ‘DELHI BELLY’



L to R: Akshat Verma & Anuj Poddar

**A**spen's outreach programmes in India are not all about the serious. That it delves into the multi-faceted Indian society was evident when following the success of the blockbuster movie 'Delhi Belly', it brought on stage Akshat Verma, the movie's Scriptwriter and Associate Director and Anuj Poddar, Head, Strategy & Business Development, Viacom TV 18 Motion Pictures.

India with its myriad cultures imbibes its citizens from different parts of the country with varied life experiences. The special Delhi culture that prompted Mr. Verma to be associated with "Delhi Belly", he believes has a global appeal. What makes his

endeavor noteworthy is that he has been able to make a mark through this film in India where movie making is dominated by Bollywood and themes around that.

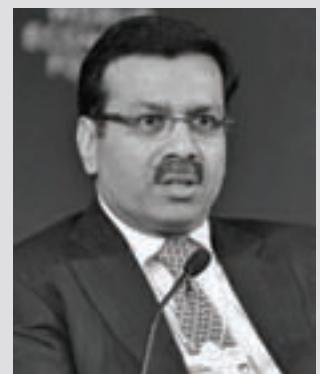
Entertainment is changing in other ways too in India of late. Film culture in India has started to open up in terms of language and sexuality. Movies increasingly have to speak of the language of the youth today to succeed. At another level, some of these fundamental questions also revive the debate about the relevance of a Censor Board in India. As a creative writer, Mr. Verma believes that there should not be any kind of censorship.

However, we may still be some time away from such a scenario. ♦

ASPEN INDIA has been working to create frank and open conversation on topics of interest to society. You cannot run the world's largest democracy by discussing issues only in the Parliament. Organisations like Aspen India play a role to pave the path of frank and open conversation in public sessions. In recent times, Indians have acquired the not-so-bright image of "argumentative" Indians, but even those who believe in leadership with values know that values have to be highlighted all the time for the smooth working of any democracy. Aspen Institute definitely fills an important need. Let us admit that Aspen is not yet a household word, but its program to promote open dialogue in many sectors is being increasingly appreciated.

A democracy cannot be richer than the quality of its people. Aspen India's programme to prepare the people for an effective democracy is, therefore, most welcome.

— SANJIV GOENKA  
Chairman, RP- Sanjiv Goenka Group





ASPEN INDIA'S public sessions have a lot of merit. Too many people in India talk at each other; we need more of talking to and listening to each other. Aspen's philosophy is positive action. Rather than criticize negative trends, we should inspire people to adopt value based conduct by anchoring their thinking in cultural and intellectual roots, through appropriate readings.

I believe Aspen India's USP is action for change. We should engage more with influencers in different walks of life, to encourage working towards common goals – trade union leaders, activists, businessmen, politicians, journalists and government officials. Focusing on positive action, to bring about change among diverse target groups is an aspect of Aspen's work that I like.

— T. N. NINAN  
*Chairman & Chief Editor*  
Business Standard Ltd



### Census of India

## A BILLION & COUNTING



L to R: Dr. C. Chandramouli & Syeda Imam

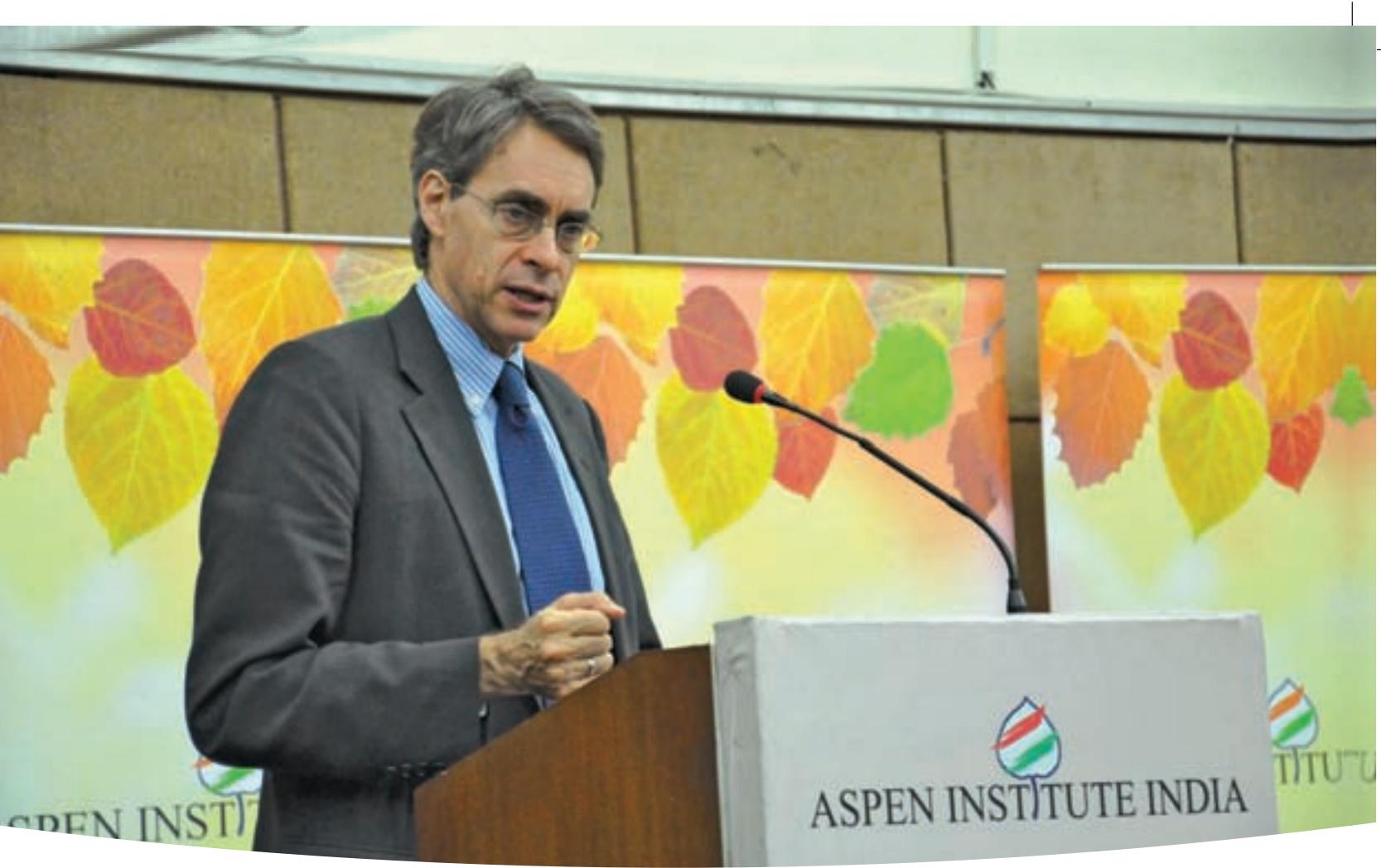
The Indian Census is the largest administrative exercise in the world, unparalleled in its scope and extent with a history of more than a century. To understand more about the 15th National Census of India in particular, Aspen Institute India invited Dr. C. Chandramouli, the Census Commissioner of India to a session that was moderated by Ms. Syeda Imam, Member, National Commission for Minorities.

The task undertaken by millions of its unsung employees faces a number of challenges like that of difficult terrain, working in Left Wing extremist areas, hostility of tribes, resistance of local people and logistics related problems. Nevertheless its priorities remain unchanged: reviewing population trends, capturing special trends like women's work, monitoring present information, providing a

comprehensive analysis that can be used for future developmental policies, covering every bit of the country, giving proper training to its personnel, using technology, mass media and social media effectively, all the while respecting the privacy of citizens.

However, certain population trends like that of a decline in the female child sex ratio, reducing gender gap in literacy levels (gap narrowed to almost 16.6%) and the significant dip in the rate at which population grows are disturbing.

Indeed, it is the scale, the complexities, the fact that it delivers and the positive experiences that has ensured that the pioneering and in house expertise and knowledge developed by India in census matters is today much sought after by other countries. ♦



## *Human Rights*

# EMERGING INDIA AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

**A**midst the backdrop of India voting against Sri Lanka at a session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Aspen Institute India decided to hold a talk on “Emerging India and Global Challenges”. In collaboration with Human Rights Watch, Mr. Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch and Ms. Indrani Bagchi, Diplomatic Editor, Times of India came together on the stage.

The shift in global power and the Indian Government’s increased ability to apply pressure on abusive governments has led many human rights groups to pay closer attention to India. The Human Rights Watch and other advocacy groups

lauded Indian efforts against the Syrian regime. By voting against the regime in the UN Security Council, India along with Brazil and South Africa were able to isolate China and Russia into going along with the other Security Council members. With regard to Sri Lanka, it was argued that it is important for India as the “superpower of the region” to vote against Sri Lanka in the UN vote, as it would create the political will to necessary investigate the war crimes.

As India pushes for a permanent seat in the Security Council, it is important that India provides a strong example to the international community and showcases the strengths of Indian leadership. ♀

*Navin Chawla interacting with nuns*



### *Different Voice*

## RELEVANCE OF MOTHER TERESA IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

In an interactive session organized by the Kolkata chapter of the Aspen Institute India, former Chief Election Commissioner and Mother Teresa's biographer, Navin Chawla while recapturing his 23 years association with the saint, spoke passionately about the multi-dimensional personality of Mother Teresa: both simple and complex at the same time. Her faith, compassion and religion aside, Mother Teresa had the qualities of a truly great leader and manager: grit, determination and getting the odds to work for her. Moreover she was an adept multitasker. "How else can one nun set up an order that is now spread across 123 countries? She created a multinational enterprise but with a different motive

than that of business and that, too, without accountants, computers or cellphones," said Navin Chawla. Her management model was also "different". She ran the organization through people. "She set up a base and then found people who would form a chain around that and work for her and that is how it expanded," he said. Recalling Mother Teresa's mission, Mr Chawla summed up: "What we are doing is nothing but a drop in the ocean. But if we didn't do it, the ocean would be less because of that missing drop. I do not agree with the big way of doing things. To me what matters is an individual."

The session was skillfully moderated by Corporate Public Relations consultant Mrs. Rita Bhimani. ♡



## Universal Education

# WHY AREN'T CHILDREN LEARNING?



We are three years away from 2015, the year when the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Education is to be achieved. The school attendance numbers are definitely looking better in most parts of the world. The debate today has shifted to the quality of students graduating from schools. But children are in school, but why are not they learning? In India, for example, nearly 60 % of children in grade 4 cannot read a simple story at grade 2 level, and 76 % cannot do simple division according to a study conducted by Pratham.

In an interactive session conducted by Aspen's Kolkata Chapter, Professor Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee, currently the Ford Foundation International Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and co-author of *Poor Economics* along with Esther Duflo ([www.pooreconomics.com](http://www.pooreconomics.com)) presented some facts on the education system in India and theories on why true

learning was not happening. Statistics reveal that 90 % of children of age 6-11 are enrolled in schools in India According to ASER 59 % of 4th grader and 44 % of 5th graders in India read below the 2nd grade level. These children in schools lag behind in studies compared to the class they study. This lag is of around 2-3 years. In Andhra Pradesh, there is a scheme wherein teachers are given bonus of 3 % of their annual salary if the children perform well. Parents seem to have a discriminate view that study has only one purpose and that is to get a government job. If a child successfully completes his 12th class, then he would be able to get the government job.

There is also a prevalent misconception that to get a the government job, private schools play a critical role and the child who has been able to get admission in private school is intelligent and one who joins a government school is a looser. Parents also have a very wrong perception that private schools will help the child to get them to class 12 which is supposed to be the only goal. Thus education is considered to be a lottery system and a matter of fate. If the child has the caliber he will make it otherwise there is no point fighting fate. Teachers also have the same perception and look after only the top students neglecting the weak ones which later drop out from schools hence increasing the drop-out rates in school. ♦

“ LEADER  
SPEAK

**ASPEN INDIA** is a unique mix of creative work culture, platform for review of developments, promotion of business, mentoring the youth as well as learning from them and exchange of thoughts leading to a widening horizon.

— S. K. LAMBAH  
*Special Envoy to the Prime Minister*

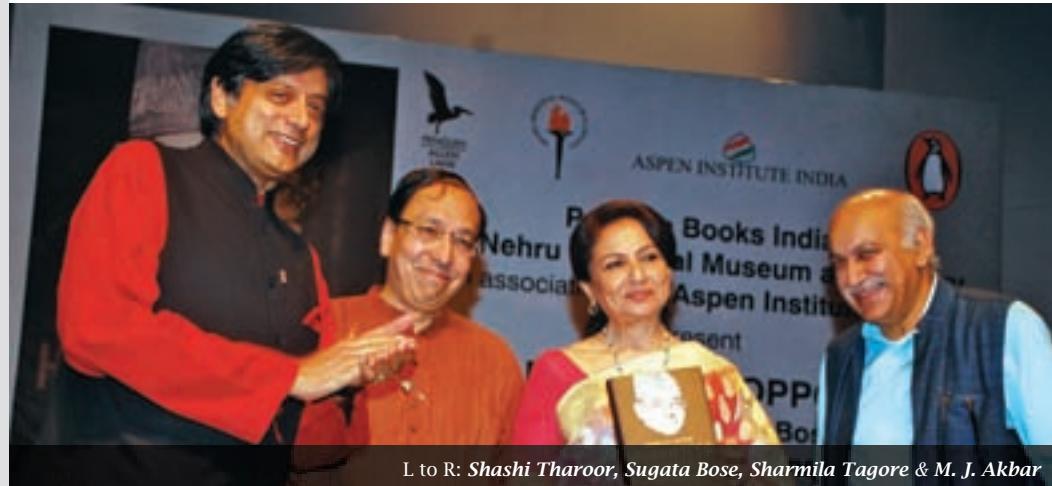


*Book Launch*

# REMEMBERING SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE

EDUCATION IN our country at present is no longer about building a strong character, inculcating good values, and improving listening and analytical skills – far from bringing out the leadership qualities out in young students. Lately, I feel that since our young adults need to take personal decisions much earlier than we had to do, we needed to build certain character traits in them and who better to do it than Aspen India, who was already conducting leadership courses for adults. The recently conducted, highly successful program, which was path breaking has reinforced our belief in partnering with Aspen India.

— MANJU BHARAT RAM  
*Founder & Chairperson of The Shri Ram Schools*



L to R: *Shashi Tharoor, Sugata Bose, Sharmila Tagore & M. J. Akbar*

Aspen Institute India in collaboration with publishing firm Penguin organized the book launch of "His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle Against Empire" in Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi, Dhaka and Chennai through July, 2011.

A literary odyssey on Subhas Chandra Bose, the 408-page book by its author Professor Sugata Bose does justice to every aspect of Netaji's life by drawing extensively both on his public and private lives. Remarkably narrative in technique and paired with political passion with historical accuracy, Prof. Bose has explored the character and charisma of the man, Netaji through the book while providing an elegant and incisive account of one of the most important phases of the struggle for Indian independence.

In Kolkata, the book was unwrapped by Noble Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen in the

presence of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal Ms. Mamata Banerjee. At other centres, Shyam Benegal, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, actress Sharmila Tagore, former West Bengal Governor Gopal Gandhi, senior journalist M.J.Akbar and National Professor AF Salahuddin Ahmed graced the occasion.

Netaji was an uncle of Sugata Bose's father, Sisir Kumar Bose, a distinguished pediatrician and a freedom-fighter. "Subhas Chandra Bose was an inspirational figure who also had to court many controversies through various stages of his life, in his pursuit of India's independence or in establishing international alliances that were questioned at that time. The book had to address various complexities and I couldn't think of anyone else other than Sugata Bose who could have done justice to it," declared Prof. Sen. ♦



### *Role of Central Banking*

## FUELLED GROWTH WITH FINANCIAL STABILITY

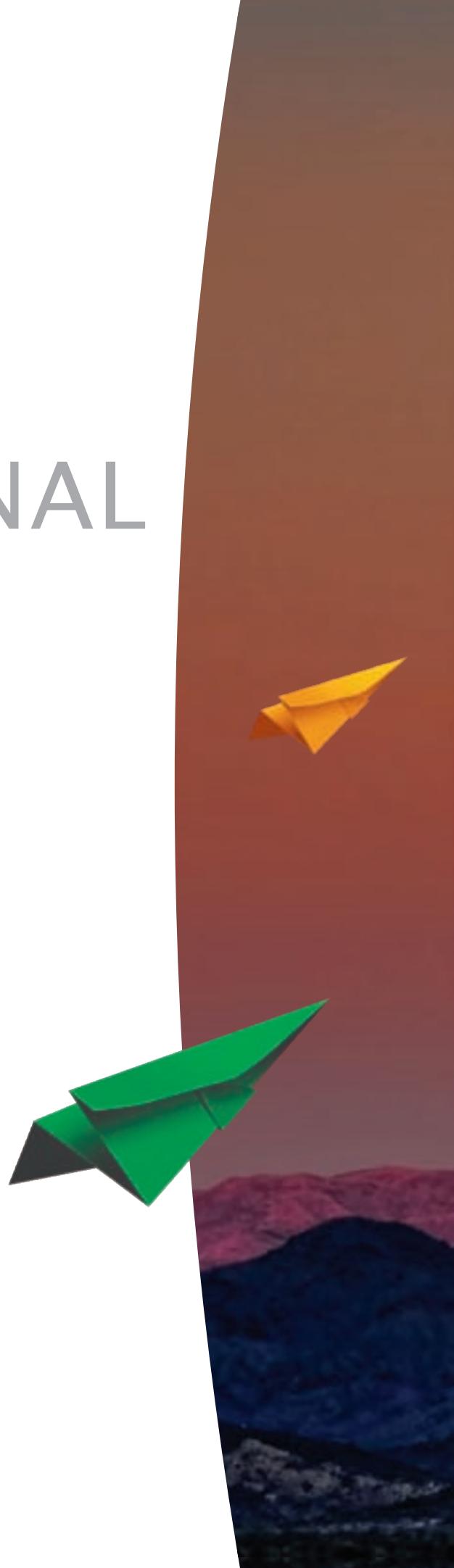
Great fluctuations in the international financial system leading to financial crises have become a common phenomenon in the last two decades. This can be attributed to the changes in finance brought about by increasing interdependence, internationalization and integration. This has the unintended consequence that failures and lack of growth can significantly impact not only individual economies but also markets, financial intermediaries, and economies around the world. In the immediate aftermath of the recent financial crisis, there is a need for a new

paradigm and way of doing things. The time was due for someone to step on the oar and steer policy makers and academicians to a new direction.

This task has been best fulfilled by one person who can be said to be the most appropriate for the task. Rakesh Mohan's publication of *Growth with Financial Stability: Central Banking in an Emerging Market*, which provides a unique and fascinating perspective, is therefore a most timely contribution. Aspen Institute India, in collaboration with Oxford University Press and ICRIER, hosted the launching of this great volume which featured a great and educative discussion forum. ♦

# INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ➤

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES are a key part of Aspen's work in India. In keeping with this mission, Aspen Institute India in collaboration with its various partners in different parts of the world that matter to India organized Track II dialogues. These dialogues aim to create a platform that can discuss strategic, economic, trade, foreign policy and other issues of shared interests. While these are designated Track II, they in fact, have a high level of government interface, reflecting both Aspen India's relevance and importance. These strategic dialogues have helped foster greater understanding between countries, bilaterally and sometimes multilaterally. These dialogues in the year that went by brought together senior former government officials, policy analysts, business leaders and select members of the media.







### XVI US-India Strategic Dialogue

## FOCUS ON ASIA TO CREATE SHARED WINS

Against the backdrop of changing Pakistan-US relations and the increased need to consult more deeply on the critical issues of Iran and Afghanistan, the Aspen Institute India organized the XVI session of the India-US strategic dialogue. The agenda of this Strategic Dialogue focused to a large extent on Pakistan, Afghanistan and China. It was found that an overarching strategic dialogue was necessary to review progress in relations, provide policy guidance and propose new areas of cooperation.

In order for the US to pull out from Afghanistan without adversely affecting the region, India must step up its role in the war ravaged country. India is already a major donor to Afghanistan (having provided over \$2 billion in aid), and is committed to setting in motion certain commercial ventures in the region. A poorly executed US withdrawal could seriously risk Indian assets in the country and it is imperative that both the US and India jointly seek to

maintain peace and stability in Afghanistan beyond 2014. It has been acknowledged that Pakistan has a widely destabilizing effect on the subcontinent. With Pakistan's economy faltering the internal situation could only get worse. This might impact the safety of its nuclear weapons, an issue that US and India take very seriously. Several shifts must first occur within Pakistan before one can effectively engage the country. Finally, derailed trade investment between India and USA in numerous areas highlights the need for greater efforts to be made in building the economic side of this relationship. Trade between the two nations must be taken to new heights.

With the US refocusing on Asia and countering Chinese ascendancy, it is imperative that it has strong and powerful allies in the region. Similarly, with India's growing influence it must now project power globally and it needs a powerful ally in the US to not only hedge its bets but also reach the next level of global influence. ♦



## Track II Dialogue

# INDIA-US COOPERATION ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL OPPORTUNITIES

The positive shift in ties between the US and India over the last decade has opened up several avenues of cooperation between the two countries. Relations with India are a priority for the US government, with President Obama calling it the defining relationship of the 21st century. Recognizing that a strong bilateral relationship will benefit both countries and the importance of discussing energy and climate change issues, Aspen Institute India in collaboration with Aspen Institute USA, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), World Resource Institute and Center for American Progress convened a Track II dialogue.

Despite their differences, participants agreed that bold action on climate change and energy issues would stimulate the economy and help create jobs. An exchange of ideas between influential non-governmental actors would help identify important issues and areas for cooperation and facilitate trust building between both sides. The dialogue group agreed that in order to maintain the 2 degree Celsius commitment, emission cuts were necessary, but not at the cost of India's development. It is vital that the US develops a long term roadmap beyond 2030 for



L to R: Todd Stern, John Podesta & Jamshyd N. Godrej

climate change action; and India devises better energy access systems. Participants also agreed that greater emphasis needs to be laid on urban planning to tackle the issues of population density, transportation etc. with renewable energy requiring greater exploration and technical innovation.

During two days of rich and varied discussions, participants ascertained areas where bilateral ties on climate change and energy could be further strengthened. In the process, it added a new dimension to an already dynamic relationship. ♦

*Ninth Trilateral Dialogue*

# INDIA-JAPAN-US: TOWARDS CONVERGENCE & COOPERATION



L to R: Tarun Das, Anand Sharma, Yoshiyuki Kasai & Richard Armitage

In the backdrop of changing dynamics in the Asian region and with the United States increasing its focus on the Asia-Pacific region, Aspen Institute India organized a “Track II” trilateral dialogue between India, United States and Japan. The dialogue, which focused on convergence and cooperation between these liberal democracies, was co-chaired by former Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, Mr. Yoshiyuki Kasai, Chairman, Central Japan Railway Company and Mr. Tarun Das, Founding Trustee, Aspen Institute India. A public session was subsequently held in order to share the conclusions of the dialogue with a wider audience.

Delegates acknowledged that there have been both positive developments and new challenges in the bilateral relationships of all three countries, but reaffirmed that each has invested in relations with the other for longer term strategic objectives and not just immediate transactional returns on specific economic or security issues. Indeed, all three nations share strong common interests in an

open and secure Indo-Pacific maritime domain; in the emergence of an inclusive and integrated Asia-Pacific economic architecture; in stability and development in Afghanistan; in the development of safe and secure energy resources, including nuclear power; in countering terrorism and proliferation challenges, particularly those emanating from Iran and North Korea; and in continuing support for the adoption of democratic norms internationally. At a fundamental level, Japan and the United States benefit from a strong and prosperous India; India and the United States from a strong and prosperous Japan; and both Japan and India from continued American leadership in the international system.

The importance of a trilateral dialogue between the US, India and Japan was acknowledged. In order to have an effective multilateral framework one needs a core group of members, and these three countries with their similar agendas are well placed to push the various evolving multilateral frameworks forward. ♦



### *Fourth India-Israel Forum*

## EXPLORING NEW AVENUES OF COOPERATION

After decades of pursuing a policy of non-alignment, 1992 marked a shift in India-Israel relations, with India formally establishing full diplomatic ties with Israel. Two decades hence, ties between the two nations have progressed beyond traditional diplomatic exchanges and have now extended into strategic and military cooperation. A shared history of British colonial rule, democratic values and the fight against fundamentalist forces have further strengthened this relationship. With the intention of deepening ties and further broadening the relationship, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Aspen Institute India in partnership with Tel Aviv University (TAU) conducted the fourth India-Israel Forum.

Discussions focused on the importance of agricultural cooperation and the need to improve agricultural yields. Israeli innovators have the potential to play a major role in developing Indian manufacturing and providing technical innovation.

With a 75% water recycling rate, Israeli know-how could help India acquire clean-technologies, reduce water scarcity and introduce better waste management practices. India will need over \$ 1 trillion of investment in infrastructure over the next five years, and the time is ripe for private sector investment from Israel. However, for India to create an inviting investment climate it needs to iron out the flaws in its land acquisition policies and streamline other regulatory barriers.

Moving forward, trade between these two nations needs to evolve from the traditional areas of diamonds, agriculture, chemicals and expand into new sectors such as renewable energy, telecom and real estate. The two governments must also support collaboration in R&D and encourage greater industry academic links. A Free Trade Agreement is currently under negotiation and its conclusion would further strengthen relations between India and Israel. ♦



## *India & China: Dialogue and Cooperation*

# “FRANK DISCUSSIONS CAN LEAD TO CONSENSUS”

Pragmatism and open dialogue set the tone for the Third Track II Strategic Dialogue between India (Aspen Institute supported by CII) and China (China Reform Forum) held in May, 2011. It was recognized that while it was natural for both the sides to have different views, the message that evolved was that being candid could help arrive at a consensus in many areas of dialogue.

Indeed, India and China have had a number of high level exchanges. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has met with Premier Wen Jiabao and President Hu Jintao over 20 times. Trade has boomed. There is also increasing cooperation in multilateral forums and India-China cooperation. The two need to increase the mutual trust. It was felt that China and India should start from the

respective country's fundamental interests and meet the other half way.

Beyond security and geo-political discussions, there was also recognition of the economic development in this part of the world's region. China and India are important players as they hold nearly 40% of the humanity. If our endeavor to develop succeeds, it is good not only for the population of the two countries but also for the rest of Asia and the whole world.

However, for the future, it was posited that the economic side could form a crucial part of our relationship. We have reached a bilateral trade volume of US\$ 60 billion and have set a target of US\$ 100 billion. Tourism is another promising area of development. ♦



## Fourth India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue

# BUILDING ON THE STRONG FOUNDATION



The Fourth India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue in April 2011 in New Delhi started on a high note emphasizing the traditional historical and cultural ties and the close relations by India with Singapore and through Singapore, with ASEAN and the East Asian community. It recalled the qualitative transformation of relations over the years to comprehensively cover not only the economic and cultural areas, but now also the security and defence dimensions. Increasingly, Singapore is also a strategic location for Indian firms.

However, the Dialogue cationed that while bilateral relations are now excellent and multi-faceted, complacency should not be allowed to set in. It was recognized that both countries must strive to further strengthen and expand the scope of relationship by constantly looking for new ideas and new areas of cooperation.

Towards that, a checklist was made to identify and solve problems between India and Singapore. For example, Singapore investors in India face problems like archaic, non-transparent and frequently changing rules and regulations, often with retrospective effect; land acquisition and conversion problems and labour issues.

For the road ahead, it was felt that Singapore and India can work together proactively towards a meaningful and substantive agenda for EAS, to make it an inclusive platform, particularly after the inclusion of USA and Russia in the grouping. The proposed CEPEA and connectivity master plan are important in this process of integration. The Indian side pointed out that EAS would be ASEAN-driven and India would be happy to cooperate. In this respect, it was felt that India's role can be important as it has no political baggage in South East Asia. ♦

# LEADERSHIP IN ACTION ➤

## India Leadership Initiative

THIS SECTION CAPTURES A select cross section of successful projects from the third batch of the India Leadership Initiative (ILI). During the program, the Fellows take up inspirational projects that help in nation building and creating a more inclusive society. What is noteworthy is that for many, these projects are part of their life even after their Fellowship and even incorporated into their work. In fact, the ILI often changes the course of their lives in some way or the other.

The India Leadership Initiative (ILI) is a unique leadership building program which has been running successfully since 2006. Initiated as a joint collaboration between Aspen Institute India and Aspen Institute USA, ILI was established to meet the need for values-based leadership in India. ILI is a part of the Aspen Global Leadership Network (AGLN) which comprises of over 1500 Fellows in 45 countries and continues to grow. The Fellows share a commitment to enlightened leadership and to using their extraordinary creativity, energy and resources to tackle the foremost societal challenges of our times.





## *Project Chinar, Kashmir*

# BHAIRAVI JANI

*Director, SCA Group of Companies*



For Bhairavi Jani, Project Chinar is in some ways a culmination of a life long journey that started in childhood. Having visited Kashmir frequently from her younger days, on a bright summer day in 1989, while walking along the Dal lake, there was a bomb blast in which five innocent people died. She with her family left Kashmir almost immediately and would not return to the paradise for 20 years. When finally she did return in September 2010, her first stop was the Delhi Public School, Srinagar. The need for a sound support system that would deliver an open and objective environment in which youngsters could plan their lives and work towards their dreams was immediately realized. Like the Chinar tree which is so ingrained in the Kashmiri psyche, culture and life, this initiative was undertaken to create a mechanism in Kashmiri schools for their students.

Its progress so far has been creditable. In partnership with the Delhi Public School, Srinagar, students of 9th, 10th, 11th grades were given career counseling sessions as pilot cases. This was followed by a teachers' workshop and evolved into a program in four undergraduate campuses in the

Kashmir valley as well. In subsequent months, Project Chinar collaborated with the Confederation of Indian Industry, the University of Kashmir and the Islamic University to select MBA students for corporate training. The Godrej Center of Excellence of CII, The Bajaj Foundation and Godrej Industries came forward to train 100 students. The first batch of 30 Kashmiri students have completed their first management training of 6 weeks and are in the process of getting employed. The target is to have 5,000 youth employed.

At another level, Project Chinar has partnered with the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) and the CII Naoroji Center for Excellence in a program styled UDAAN targeted at helping the youth of Jammu and Kashmir who are seeking to enhance and grow their careers. Says Bhairavi Jani, Fellow, ILI-3, "While the first batch of 30 students were trained and certified, including getting industry project experience in December 2011, it has now successfully completed the first 100 student training and certification. The target is a 1000 students over the course of the next five years." ♦



*Swabhimaanya*

## AKSHAT RATHEE

*Managing Director, NODWIN Group*

**S**wabhimaanya, a synonym for self respect and pride, is a birthright of every individual. It is on this philosophy that the for-profit institution, Swabhimaanya was founded to serve the under-served section of our society - the urban poor, ensuring greater reach of essential products and facilities that would help them continuously improve their way of life. It helps bridge this gap between the providers of products and services with the users at the bottom of the consumer's pyramid and works in the segments of upoor financial services, mobile telephony and loyalty for fuel.

With revenues till March 2012 of about ₹72 lakhs and 100% growth in the last three quarters, its services has impacted about 70, 000 lives so far. Currently, it is working with a Micro Finance Institution (MFI) to provide packages to their borrowers at approximately ₹300/year and have about 55, 000 families as its customer base. In Phase

II, it will appoint these borrowers as retail channels for its products and services, providing self-employment opportunities and plans to partner with similar other institutions. It also has started a service to provide insurance for domestic house help an estimated at about 90 million across the country. It is also trying to work with large security agencies providing security guards to commercial establishments and offering complimentary ₹25,000 accident cover to Mumbai Dabbawallas from next month onwards. In return, they will distribute the company's handouts across the households they serve. It currently has offices in Delhi NCR, Chennai and Bangalore even as more are coming up in Jaipur, Mumbai, Pune and other large cities this year.

Sums up Akshat Rathee, Fellow, ILI-3 who is spearheading Swabhinaaya, "We are aiming to reach out to one million lives in the first year with a dream of reaching 10 million and more eventually." ♦



## No Village Left Behind (NVLB)

### KARANDEEP SINGH

*Chief Financial Officer, Flipkart.com*



No Village Left Behind (NVLB) is an initiative that seeks to transform Punjab into a model state by 2020. Its strategy rests on improving child literacy in rural Punjab and getting farmers to access latest market information and key agricultural expertise. Its mission is fairly well defined: NVLB will seek to improve child literacy by reaching out to the masses in villages and providing them access to cheap and affordable education. It will bring children back into the educational system and encourage them to remain in school till they complete class XII. The initiative will also define market information and agricultural expertise in order to improve the agricultural possibilities. They will advise farmers on what is the best price for their crops, what crops to

grow during a particular season, inform them about various government schemes etc.

The initiative is already having an impact. It has begun the process of creating new schools and is already expanding its network of schools with the aim of adding 70+ schools to its roster in the next 2-3 years. Thereby, it ensures affordable education that will enrich the lives of youth in over 150 districts across Punjab. NVLB is also in the process of setting up an advisory board that will help guide the activities of the mission. Says Karandeep Singh, Fellow, ILI-3, "Through such initiatives, NVLB aims to improve the social fabric of Punjab and provide an example to other Indian states desperately in need of reform." ♀

## Aspen India Publications

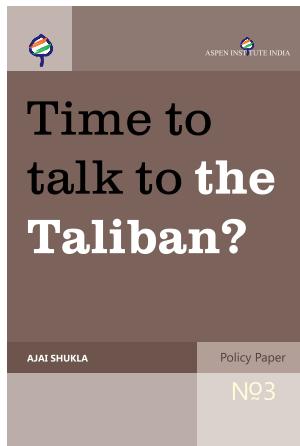
# A MATTER OF RECORD

B ringing out publications that reflect Aspen India's views and disseminating thought leadership records is an important aspect of Aspen India's work. Towards that, the year that went by saw three important publications.

The first one captured the U.S.-India relationship that has undergone a transformation over the past decade. The improvement in bilateral ties and multilateral cooperation has been supported by presidents of both parties in Washington and prime ministers of two quite different coalitions in New Delhi. Within that context, the US-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and Aspen Institute India co-sponsored a U.S.-India Joint Study Group to identify the shared national interests that motivate both the United States and India and, from these interests, to derive clear policy prescriptions that would assist both nations to achieve common goals and to advance the bilateral relationship. The findings of the study group were then brought out as a publication.

The second one was a shorter publication styled, "Is it Time to Talk to Taliban?" Without a doubt, strategic decision makers in New Delhi have already debated that question before they decided to continue relying primarily on a humanitarian and development aid programme for retaining Indian influence in Afghanistan. That aid programme goes alongside New Delhi's successful political engagement of the Karzai government, and its traditional links with the Northern Alliance groups. New Delhi, therefore, faces complex changes in Afghanistan and must mitigate its risks by broadening its engagement with emerging power centres in that country, particularly the Taliban.

The third was a Policy paper titled, "Durand Line."



In an attempt to secure or depict borders or frontiers several lines were to be drawn in India and elsewhere during the period of the British Empire. These include the Durand Line (1893) that was to represent the limits of the respective spheres of influence of British India and Afghanistan in the Pakhtun belt. More than 100 years later, in the current regional geopolitical situation, the relevance of the Durand Line cannot be over-emphasized. The region's future is very much dependent on the strategic game that is currently being played all over the region, essentially for a stake in its vast oil, gas and mineral resources, with new entrants, most noticeably China. There are legitimate apprehensions that this game could fuel new hopes in Pakistan for continuing to play a role, both outsourced and otherwise, around the Durand Line. Thus, the future of the Durand Line is in a way connected to the strategy that would be adopted by the players of this strategic game. ♦



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**ASPEN INDIA** focuses on leadership development and frank and open dialogue on the most important problems and challenges facing society at large and helps foster the transformation of Indian society. It also engages the civil society, inclusive of business, NGOs, Governments and other stakeholders on issues of importance to India's development and national security.



**ASPEN INSTITUTE INDIA**

2P, SECTOR 31, GURGAON-122 001 (HARYANA), INDIA  
TEL: +91-124-421 8619-23 | FAX: +91-124-421 8624 | Email: [admin@aspenindia.org](mailto:admin@aspenindia.org) | Website: [www.aspenindia.org](http://www.aspenindia.org)