





Message from the Chairman

JAMSHYD N GODREJ
Chairman, Ananta Centre, and Chairman of the Board
Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd

2018, like any other year, came with its own markers. It was a year that saw the immigration crisis peak, the Syrian conflict intensify, economies collapse and the climate warning become stronger with natural disasters the world over. What the year spelt out strongly was the universal need for Ethical Leadership and Dialogue.

Leaders with the intent and ability to engage in Dialogue can bring about transformational change in a generation. This applies as much to India as to the world. We are a diverse and complex society – this diversity can work either as an asset or a liability, depending on how we look at things. We need to engage with each other in order to have a more informed and inclusive worldview and work towards the larger good.

It is heartening to see the tradition of Dialogue get strengthened slowly but surely across multiple levels of society. At Ananta we contribute to this strengthening by creating platforms for leaders from across society to come together at both the national and international level. In 2018 we held the second edition of the India-US Forum. This platform brings American and Indian leaders from across the spectrum to shape the future of India-US strategic partnership through consultation and collaboration. It is convened by Ananta Centre and the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The key topics of discussion this year included US-India bilateral ties, defence and strategic coopera-

tion, emerging global geopolitical trends and dynamics, maritime security and cooperation and deepening trade and investments among others.

This is an important platform in the context of the current world situation. The relations between the two countries have reached a new equilibrium the keel of which is the recognition that they are indispensable to each other's goals. America is critical to India rising and if America wants to retain its footprint in Asia, no country can be more valuable than a rising India. India-US Forum helps in this direction.

It is also our intent to mainstream foreign policy conversations. It has too long been a matter for bureaucrats and academics. In a world where interdependencies are growing rapidly, everyone needs to be aware of the country's foreign policies. This is especially true for the youth, who are the leaders of tomorrow. Ananta's Foreign Policy Lecture Series is a step in the direction. Our experts travel the length and breadth of the country to inform and engage students and academics on foreign policies of the country.

Apart from building political capital we must also look at building our economic strength. A people with access to economic opportunities is most likely to be open to higher order conversations around ethics and inclusivity. The Centre held its 6th Growth-Net Summit in Delhi. This convening brings together multiple stakeholders from the new

growth countries for sharing of experiences and perspectives in order to facilitate more informed business and economic decisions.

The Centre also added to its policy dialogue portfolio by initiating different series on defence, gender and AI & Block chain. These are critical areas for our society. I look forward to interesting policy recommendations emerging out of these multi-stakeholder sessions.

Finally, 2018 was also the year of the Ananta Leadership Award. This has been instituted to recognise values-based leadership and its contribution to a strong and open society. Rahul Bajaj was unanimously chosen as the first recipient; he did us the honour of accepting the award. With time I hope that as a society we will strengthen the culture of recognising and valuing ethical leadership. Such leaders are our true capital.

Ananta Centre is growing as an institution and the road ahead is long. But we are in good company. A growing membership shows that more and more people subscribe to our vision; we feel empowered by these associations. Together we can foster change in society through leadership and dialogue. And we will.

Society is not a linear conversation

The Ananta Leaders Fellowship brings together leaders from key stakeholder groups, including the uniformed forces, to better understand each others issues. In this conversation, a few participants share their views on what constitutes a strong and open society.



Ashok Swamy
Commandant (Training)
CRPF Academy

You have been involved in multiple counter-terrorism and anti-insurgency roles and seen conflict at close quarters. Is it a sign of disintegrating society?

a) Conflicts are inevitable. Human social psychology postulates that conflict is a necessary and natural part of society. However, violence is not. Please don't mistake one for the other. Conflicting viewpoints, agendas, priorities, assertions will always exist. Societies are ever dynamic and they never thrive along a linear path. Mahatma Gandhi demonstrated how active non-violence can be a potent method of conflict resolution. Personally, I think the

idea is to negotiate a path, which is acceptable to the stakeholder groups. It is a matter of building consensus. But, when violence starts to become the norm, then yes, we definitely need to sit back and reflect on the causes and remedies. Violence is usually a symptom of deep-rooted malaise. Correct diagnosis of the reasons of conflict is vital for its resolution. We should find out the contributing factors and address them collectively. By 'we', I mean every stakeholder group, represented at appropriate level. The policy makers, academia, civil society, businesses, citizens in uniform – just about everyone who is concerned is important and must abide by their code of conduct and legal provisions.

b) The vision of a good society must be a shared vision. Responsible behavior is a shared duty. Tolerance too has its limits. Resolving an issue through dialogue may not be easy. It requires empathy, intellect and most importantly, the ability to accept multiple perspectives. Serious disagreements, if not handled with maturity and shared concerns, will surely result in increased social stress. As it is said, "An eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind." *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* in Sanskrit means that the whole world is my family. Let the flag of Hope fly high! I hope I have been able to persuade you on this!

In your personal opinion, how is being a

leader in the uniformed forces different from being one in a corporate or civil society set up?

a) Personally, I believe ethics and values are commonly shared across echelons of enlightened leadership. I cannot talk specifically much about the corporate sector, because I have had only a brief experience in that space. But, I do believe that, after a point, leadership is sector-agnostic. It ought to deliver the "larger good of the maximum people." The decision making also requires the same kind of spine and wisdom. Spectacular achievements merit spectacular courage, creativity and conviction, irrespective of the theatre.

b) A business should definitely pursue ethical profits because it brings about positive employment. It provides for the lives and dreams of the people associated with the venture. Good business leaders stay focussed on the fact that in the final analysis, society should profit from their venture. Likewise, in all professions, good leadership will work to create a second line of leadership and cater for posterity. It is much like a good doctor, who would work with the vision that his/her services are not sought. See what I mean? Leaders in uniform must be held to the same standards. There are moral codes of conduct for all, let alone the requirements of discipline and respect for the law of the land.

The Ananta Leaders Fellowship catalyses a cadre of leaders that believes in reason and values. It operates on the premise that every challenge has multiple facets, therefore those tasked with solving them must develop the ability to appreciate different perspectives.



Mr Sudhir Pratap Singh, Former Director General, National Security Guard, presenting the Memento & Certificate to **Ms Indrani Yadav**, Commandant, 135 Mahila Bn, Central Reserve Police Force, Gandhi Nagar

Leaders should just think of themselves as an entity responsible for the human society, irrespective of their areas of influence and specialization.

— Ashok Swamy

c) Each kind of leadership has almost similar type of challenges. The persuasive, conceptual and human skills required are more or less the same. There are no first among equals here. Leaders from all stakeholders' groups must necessarily understand and appreciate each other's challenges. Leaders from different groups form the warp and the weft of the same societal fabric. There should be no airtight turf-specific demarcation when it comes to leadership. Be it the corporate leaders, religious leaders, sports leaders or leaders from the police forces or other spheres, leaders should just think of themselves as

an entity responsible for the human society, irrespective of their areas of influence and specialization. They ought to be in synergy and in a symbiotic relationship with each other. We all are interconnected. Our fates are shared. Together, we can make each other's life more meaningful. The parts make the whole beautiful!

You joined the CRPF after studying business in college. What would be your advice to the millions of youngsters who are at the stage in life where they have to make important career choices?

a) I would say that one should pursue the call of their hearts. Do what you love most! Look at your vocation from the lens of what it does to others. Envision your ambition in life, strive to develop competencies, plan for your dream, manage your resources and cherish to add value to the society. There is ample space for the best of the pack at the top. Honesty of intention manifests. If you want to start a venture that makes expensive shoes, go ahead! But, make sure your products and processes are honest, the environment is not being shortchanged, the distribution of wealth is equitable, and most importantly, lives should become better because of your enterprise. Be a lawyer, be a doctor, be a hairdresser, be a manager, be anything that you want to be; but, let what you do impact other people as well in a positive way.

b) If the litmus test of larger good fails, you will always be unsatisfied, no matter how high you go. Seek bliss emanating from your inner peace. Live meaningfully! Be alive!



Narayan Jaisingh
Deputy General Manager,
Marketing, IDEA Cellular

You are a self-confessed gallivant and have travelled to 15 countries exploring their culture. Did it bring about a greater appreciation of your own?

I would say it brought about the realization that we are all a part of a rainbow actually. And that finally the same things drive us – love, fear and hope. People everywhere want peace; they want their children to grow up happy and healthy. They want food on the table and a good night's sleep. We are actually not that different at all. If everyone had the privilege to roam the world, believe me it would be a different place. We would learn to look at things in different ways, without fearing that it would change who we are.

You were a part of the Ananta Leaders Fellowship programme. What made you decide to participate?

It appealed to the traveller in me. One of the reasons that I love travelling is because it lets me see the world in a new light, every time. When I heard about the Ananta Leadership Programme and the diverse cadre of leadership at the table, it spelt a journey for me; an



opportunity to walk through different paradigms and perspectives and see the usual in an unusual way. Let me illustrate what I mean. Take any social issue, say the rising unrest amongst youth in the country. Now view it through different lenses: business, society, law and order or say even art and academia. Every lens will throw up a new aspect and add to the picture. Finally, what you gain is a rounded perspective that eludes you when you do not have the benefit of a many-sided conversation.

You have often said that you want to be a part of advocacy bodies working to bring in real reforms through forward looking policies. Do dialogues lead to such policies?

Yes, they definitely do. But I also maintain that millennials should be a part of these dialogues. As much to initiate them into the art and importance of dialogue as to get the benefit of their ideas and enthusiasm. These youngsters after all are the ones that will be shaping our future, the sooner we make them responsible for the society they live in the better it is for everyone. We must encourage them to have a stake in building the nation, and develop as many youth leaders as we can in all fields of life.

Well you'll be happy to know we do have youth leadership programmes, two in fact. One for high schoolers and another for college students. What do you think should be the deliverable of programmes such as these?

I believe that a leader is what leader does. To me a programme would have delivered successfully if they are able to put these youngsters on the path of introspection so that they are able to evaluate what they stand for and therefore where they want to go in life. Once again let me illustrate – we are a young country and by virtue of being a mentor to several youngsters in the entrepreneurship space, I have a privileged view of their lives and thinking. All of them want to fly and rightly so.

The almost fantastical mix of technology, changing societal norms and the idealism of their years add up to a heady cocktail. We can teach these kids to either sip or gulp; in my opinion we need to do the former. I know it

is almost counterintuitive given the supposed brashness of youth but believe me kids can be as introspective as they can be impulsive. When you connect these youngsters to their core values, it acts as a great self-correcting system. It keeps them focussed, grounded and most importantly shapes them into people capable of leading the society into the future.



Shefali Vaidya
Writer, Columnist and
Media Personality

What according to you is a good society?

A good society for me is a society that is just, humane and one where nature and animal rights as respected as much as human rights. A good society involves people not just following the letter of the law, but also the spirit. A good society is always evolving, as culture is dynamic. A good society would have equality of opportunities for all the constituents, but no one will be pampered more than another. In a good society, there is no room either for minority appeasement nor for majoritarianism.

How has social media and technology impacted society? Has it affected the role of media as the fourth estate?

Social media is the most wonderful thing that has happened to the world. It has democratised discourse and freed the narrative from the hands of the select privileged few who had controlled it with an iron grip. Now anyone

Social media has eliminated the role of gate-keepers. You are now your own media house, and if you have good content, the world is your market place.

— Shefali Vaidya

with a phone and a data connection can be a citizen journalist or a writer. Social media has eliminated the role of gate-keepers. You are now your own media house, and if you have good content, the world is your market place. You don't need the hegemony of editors, opinion makers, academicians, NGOs, anyone. Your opinion has as much weight as the opinion of a famous journalist. Of course social media spread has also given rise to fake news being shared, but the benefits of social media far outweigh the adverse effects. The one institution social media has lent a body blow to is conventional media. Right now the credibility of traditional media the world over is at an all time low. Every lie/half-truth, every editorial slant is exposed on social media before the day is done. No wonder the traditional media wants curbs on social media.

What is the most important change you would like to see in society today?

The most important change I would like to see in society today is individuals learning to live their life with dignity and responsibility.

Ananta Godrej IDEAS INDIA 2018

IDEAS INDIA is an annual convening of Bajaj Fellows. It serves as a platform for them to come together and reflect on critical issues facing the country, raise difficult questions around them and arrive at possible solutions. At a time when the country is living through one of its dynamic periods, this initiative serves as a springboard for fresh thinking amongst those who have the power to influence change.



L to R : **Shri VP Singh Badnore**, Hon'ble Governor of Punjab and Administrator, Union Territory, Chandigarh; **Anuj Poddar**, Convenor, Ideas India 2018 and then Sr Executive Vice President, Viacom 18 Media Pvt Ltd; **Naresh Gujral**, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and Trustee, Ananta Aspen Centre; **Jamshyd N Godrej**, Chairman, Ananta Centre and Chairman of the Board, Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd; **Kiran Pasricha**, Chief Executive Officer, Ananta Aspen Centre and Ananta Centre, in a Special Plenary Session



L to R : **Pratibha Jain**, Partner & Head, Delhi Office, Nishith Desai Associates; **Jamal Shaikh**, National Editor, Lifestyle Writer, TV Host, Hindustan Times; **Saundarya Rajesh**, Founder-President, AVTAR Career Creators and FLEXI Careers India and **Radhika Shapoorjee**, Consulting Partner, Digitaly.



L to R : **Snigdha Poonam**, National Affairs Writer, Hindustan Times; **Tarun Das**, Founding Trustee, Ananta Centre & Chairman, Institute of Economic Growth; **Pheroza Godrej**, Chairperson, Godrej Archives Council and **Aditya Natraj**, Executive Director, Kaivalya Education Foundation in the Plenary Session 'When We Can't Be Silent Any Longer'.



Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times and Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Aspen Centre; **Govindraj Ethiraj**, Founder, BOOM & IndiaSpend; **Tarun Vijay**, Former Member of Parliament and columnist; **AK Bhattacharya**, Editorial Director, Business Standard and **James Abraham**, Founder and Director, SolarArise, in the Plenary Session 'Fearless Journalism In An Era Of Fake News And Vested Interests'.



L to R : **Ravi Krishnan**, Chief Administrative Officer, Goldman Sachs India; **Chavi Behl**, Vice Principal – Senior School, Aravali Campus, The Shri Ram School; **Ravi Singh**, Secretary General & CEO, WWF-India; **KC Verma**, former Chief, R&AW; **Aditya Somani**, Chairman, Everest Industries Ltd; **Rahul Mirchandani**, Chairman and Managing Director, Aries Agro Limited and Founder, Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs in a parallel session 'Combating An Institution From Within'.



2019

THE MAN WHO WALKS THE TALK

Rahul Bajaj, the first recipient of the Ananta Leadership Award, is a business icon known to walk the talk. In a chat with Ananta, he fields questions about leadership deficit and the role of business in society.



In your lifetime what is the biggest change that you have seen in society?

Rahul Bajaj — To my mind, the central change is the rise of the individual. Individual capability and effort have become the central endowment powering change, rather than capital or connections.

This in a way has been the case since the industrial revolution, but around the 1930s it seemed that it would be the age of organizations.

Schumpeter writing in the 1920s brought the entrepreneur centre stage in economic development.

However, it is somewhere from the 1970s, starting with the Information Technology revolution that an eco-system for fostering enterprise has come into being.

We are now in a knowledge economy.

Its underpinnings are in the unprecedented prosperity of the US and Europe, the globalisation of markets, the development of emerging markets, the end of colonialism, the phenomenal improvement in means of communication and information processing and technological change, the expansion of higher education etc. Recently we are witnessing, especially in USA, UK and European Union, opposition to the excesses of globalization expressed by voters in the US election, Brexit in UK and in the elections in some European countries.

In India, after independence, the change has been from a very controlled economy to a gradually open and market economy.

What role can business play in shaping a better society?

Rahul Bajaj — It is in business's enlightened self-interest to shape a better society. Business development rests on a stable, prosperous society.

In the course of its very existence business shapes a better society by providing employment, taxes to the government and products/services to the customers.

As I see it, environment and inequality are two areas where business needs to focus more. These are the two biggest current and potential destabilizers apart from terrorism.

Climate change has brought environmental degrada-

tion into sharp focus. For all their short termism, large businesses prosper on getting the long term right. R&D and market development need to focus on not creating environmental problems through their entire chain of production and use.

Progress is based on the existence of hope in the hearts of the majority of the people. Inequality extinguishes hope, by making the foundations of individual development, i.e., jobs, education and health services hard to access. With governmental efforts falling short in quantity and quality in our and most countries, businesses need to plug the gaps and show how they can be plugged more effectively and efficiently.

Indian professionals and business have fallen way short on unimpeachable ethical standards. Hence they do not command the trust of society at large.

There is often talk about leadership deficit in society. What are your views on the subject?

Rahul Bajaj — There is and there is not.

In the conventional areas of politics and public institutions it would appear that there is a global leadership deficit. Part of the reason is that they are subject to a much more intense media scrutiny.

We would do well to create a culture of men of stand-



The **Ananta Leadership Award** has been instituted to recognise leaders who embody values-based leadership. It endorses the fact that a leader with a people's perspective can help shape a better society.



ing from all fields entering the public sphere in their 50s, a la Nandan Nilekeni.

In the business sphere however, overall, there is a wider, deeper leadership, in our country and abroad.

However, increasing self-centeredness in society and humungous material rewards in the private sector have often led to shortfall in ethical standards. The line between ambition and greed is thin. Whatever Gecko may say, in leaders "greed is not good".

In open and competitive markets leadership thrives. Leadership is not just selected individuals but a process of generation of leaders. As some fall by the wayside, others take their place.

What would you like to see in the next generation of leaders?

Rahul Bajaj — Unimpeachable ethical standards. Indian professionals and business have fallen way short on this.

Hence they do not command the trust of society at large.

Measuring themselves not by their own growth but by the number of people they have taken forward.

A greater measure of groundedness. Accepting their mistakes, humility and connecting with the larger society, rather than isolating themselves.

The gold standard I believe are men like Dr. Varghese Kurian of Amul. If the next generation is anywhere like him, we will be a different country.

Individual capability and effort have become the central endowment powering change, rather than capital or connections.



ABOVE : **Sanjeev Bajaj** receiving the award on behalf of his father Rahul Bajaj. The latter was unable to attend the ceremony in person.

RIGHT TOP : **Sanjeev Bajaj** reading out the acceptance speech.

RIGHT CENTRE : **Naresh Gujral** speaking of his long association with Mr Bajaj.

RIGHT BOTTOM : **James Abraham**, CEO and founder, SolarArise and Chairman of the Leadership Committee, Ananta Aspen Centre, speaking at the event.



Dialogue and deliberation in public policy: the road to a better society

Ananta Centre works to facilitate multi-stakeholder policy dialogues on important issues that face society. This article examines why it is becoming increasingly important for people to become a part of the policy process.

A society has the innate ability to find solutions to many of its problems. Individuals, communities, corporates, civil society – different stakeholder groups work to address different challenges. Some problems however are too complex for any one section to handle, which is where government intervention in the form of public policies becomes critical.

A public policy is essentially a tool designed to achieve a societal goal. The process of designing this tool is marked by the rigour of research and analysis and results in a product that impacts the lives of the people. As with any product, the success of a policy depends on how well people take to it. Along with effective implementation, adoption by people is important for a policy's success. One of the best ways to encourage adoption is by feeding consumer insight into the design process so that the output has a people's perspective. The best way to get these insights is from the people themselves.

The need for policies with people's perspective is becoming increasingly apparent, more so now that people are a part of both the problem as well as the solution. To come up with, say, a successful pedestrian-only policy in a commercial area, it is no longer enough to factor in infrastructure and regulations. The design also needs to take into account that many people prefer driving to walking and could shun such spaces all together.

A nuanced understanding of an issue is possible when there are constructive conversations between different interest groups in a society. The practice of dialogue and deliberation is the cornerstone of democracy. It connects people, facilitates the exchange of multiple viewpoints and allows informed decisions in the face of challenging circumstances. This is because deliberations actively seek out opposing perspectives, factual information and the inherent ethical dilem-



mas; they lean on structured discussion in pursuit of reasoned judgement. In fact, reasoned judgment is the common pursuit that underlines these sessions.

Technology has helped create an interested and informed public voice. This can be leveraged for the larger good by creating opportunities for people to participate in the governance process. When people contribute to the framework within which they must

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live their lives, there is a sense of ownership and responsibility.

We are a society in churn and live in transient times. The relationship between governments, businesses and civil society is evolving and with it the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. People now want to be a part of the solution. Deepening their engagement in the governance processes will help create a robust and vibrant democracy. In the word of BR Ambedkar – *Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men.*

Ananta Centre creates nonpartisan forums that bring together influencers from all walks of life for exchange of ideas, consensus building, and discussion on important issues facing the country. The output of these discussions often serve to influence policies and programmes.



DIALOGUES WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS (Series): The session titled 'Sino-India Relations Including Doklam, Border Situation and Cooperation in International Organizations' brought together members of the Standing Committee and foreign policy experts to discuss the future of Sino-Indo relations, challenges, opportunities for mutually beneficial relations and the way forward.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND BLOCKCHAIN (Series) L to R : Mr Rajan Navani, Trustee, Ananta Centre and Vice Chairman & Managing Director, JetSynthesys (Jetline Group of Companies); Mr Pradeep Udhas, Office Managing Partner–West, KPMG India; Dr SD Attri, Deputy Director General, India Meteorological Department and Mr Arun M Kumar, Chairman and CEO, KPMG India, discuss 'AI & Block Chain for Efficient Public Services Delivery'.



DEPRECIATION OF THE INDIAN RUPEE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ECONOMY, TRADE AND ENERGY SECURITY L to R: Dr Sabyasachi Kar, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth; Dr Rajat Kathuria, Director and Chief Executive, ICRIER; Dr. Arunabha Ghosh, Founder CEO, Council on Energy, Environment and Water; Mr Ashok K Bhattacharya, Editorial Director, Business Standard.



DIALOGUE ON DEFENCE (Series) L to R : Mr Tarun Das, Founding Trustee, Ananta Centre and Chairman, Institute of Economic Growth; Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, (retd), Former FOC-in-C, Western and Eastern Naval Commands & Director General, Indian Coast Guard and Former Member, National Security Advisory Board; Mr RS Bhatia, CEO (Defence & Aerospace), Kalyani Group, discuss 'PPP in Defence: Rethinking the Role of Government and Private Sector'.



PUBLIC SESSION ON FAKE NEWS L to R : Mihir Sharma, columnist, Bloomberg View; Pavan Duggal, Founder & Chairman of International Commission on Cyber Security Law; Rema Rajeshwari, District Police Chief, Jogulamba, Gadwal District, Telangana; Govindraj Ethiraj, Founder, BOOM and IndiaSpend.



LUNCH IN HONOUR OF AMBASSADOR K SHANKAR BAJPAI
 L to R : **Tarun Das**, Founding Trustee, Ananta Centre and Chairman, Institute of Economic Growth; **Kiran Pasricha**, CEO, Ananta Centre; **K Shankar Bajpai**, former Ambassador to US; **Satinder K Lambah**, Chairman, Ananta Aspen Centre; **Jamshyd N Godrej**, Chairman, Ananta Centre and Chairman of the Board, Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd and **Dr S Jaishankar**, then President, Global Corporate Affairs, Tata Sons Private Limited.

Broadening the gender conversation at the workplace in India

Reshma Anand, CEO, Hindustan Unilever Foundation, has walked the difficult gender path in her rise to the top. In this article, she writes about what we need to do as society to help women realize their potential.

Any conversation on women at work in India has grim overtones. India ranks 120 out of 131 countries on participation of women in the labour-force. Women represent only 24 percent of the labour force engaged in any form of work in the market economy in India, compared to the global average of 40 percent. Not only is women's labour force participation low, the quality of their participation is also relatively poor:

- 68% of urban non-agricultural women workers remain in semiskilled and unskilled occupations
- Women account for 37% of the work force in agriculture in rural India. 63% of them work as farm labourers (not cultivators on their land)

Women are held back by social norms, gendered segregation and the burden of unpaid work: Access to education and decline in fertility rates have failed to improve women's participation in the workforce. Restrictive patriarchal social norms deprive women of agency to choose to study and work. These social norms manifest in other factors like discouraging women to work as household incomes rise, expecting women to take on disproportionate unpaid work, gendered occupational segregation and a clear wage gap. Whether one looks at the urban or rural case, it's clear that we have a long way to go.

Meanwhile, the dialogue on gender parity is flooding mainstream discourse. *Globally and in India, the business case for gender parity is hitting all the right notes.* Women in India contribute to 17 percent of India's GDP while the global average is 37 percent. Estimates suggest that an increase in women's participation rate from the current levels to 50 percent could boost India's overall GDP growth rate by 1.4 percent per year, adding \$770 billion annually by 2025. A US-based study indi-

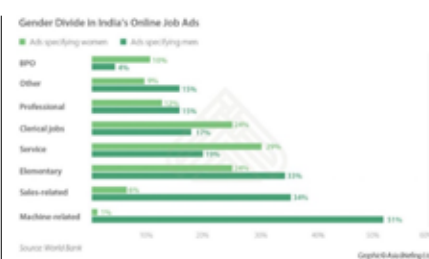
cated that companies with the most women board members outperform those with the least by 16% on Return on Sales and 26% on Return on Invested Capital. In India, with an attrition rate of just 4%, women are twice as likely to stay back in C-Suite positions as against an attrition rate of 8% for male corporate executives. The economic case goes beyond a conscientious plea for gender parity.

And yet, there are significant challenges. Bias is real, it exists: A 2018 World Bank study in India analysed over 8.3 lakh job advertisements across top 20 cities. The study substantiated how the *job market represents and*

Access to education and decline in fertility rates have failed to improve women's participation in the workforce

reinforces existing societal gender norms and occupational segregation.

- Gender was specified in over one-third of job advertisements. 60 percent of all gender-targeted ads mentioned men as preferred candidates.
- Men and women are also preferred for different kinds of jobs. Machine-related jobs, positions in sales, and relatively high-intensive outdoor jobs specifically targeted men. On the other hand, women were in high demand for roles such as housekeeping and caregiving.
- While there was a lower incidence of



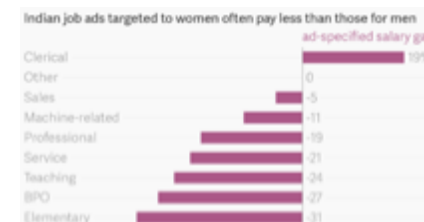
gender-targeting in occupations that require high skills, among ads where gender preference was indicated, women found greater demand in teaching and management jobs. Engineering and IT were male dominated.

The pay gap is a double whammy: The bias against women at the first stage of hiring cascades into gender discrimination for compensation too. Evidence exists across multiple studies confirming that the pay gap is for real and a potential deterrent for women's participation in the workforce.

- In the same 2018 World Bank study as the one quoted above, jobs specifying male preference offered nearly 20% higher monthly salary compared to job posts that targeted women. The salary gap is on account of women being paid less for comparable gender targeted jobs and because they are sought-after for low-quality, low-skill jobs.
- The pay gap was validated in a 2017 report by the Ministry of Statistics & Program Implementation which indicates that women in urban areas with a graduate or higher degree earn 24% less than their male counterparts.

The pay gap exists despite India's Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, which mandates equal pay for the same/similar work and bars dis-

AnantaCentre has launched a five-part dialogue series on women and gender issues called **The Woman Speaks**. This attempts to find solutions to the challenges that women face in multiple environments of under-representation.



crimination in hiring. The pay gap is known to increase with age, work experience and occupational progression, further disencouraging women to stay on.

Several gender parity efforts have had isolated results: A spate of gender diversity and inclusion efforts have been triggered by companies like bringing more women into leadership teams, sending women for leadership programmes, positioning senior women as role models – but real meaningful breakthroughs are still elusive. We have incredible but isolated success stories of women role models who have leaned-in, in a game, where norms are stacked against them. And we end up wondering why efforts at diversity are delivering modest results. It is perhaps because we have missed out on two critical enablers in the dialogue: Culture and Transparency.

Culture eats well-intentioned diversity efforts for breakfast. It's the big elephant in the room that we wish will be taken care of by good intentions. In a country where social conditioning plays a key role in defining gender roles, organizational cultures need to step up to address underlying biases and beliefs, sensitise and create avenues wherein ambitions of both men and women can be served. This can be done by:

- Elevating the quality of everyday experiences at work – calling out the micro aggressions that women often experience in the workplace.

- Recognising that work-life integration is a need for women and men alike: parental leave, part-time work, career breaks are relevant for everyone, including senior leadership. Instead of being stigmatised for availing these choices, women and men who take advantage of these programs should be treated as the norm. With the growing absence of support systems for families, work-life integration options would help immensely in the sharing of unpaid work at home.
- Men at senior leadership must evangelise the cause for parity. They are represented in larger numbers at senior positions and personally have a lot to gain from gender-balanced teams.
- Encouraging networks of women mentored by women and men at senior positions could be a real breakthrough. Often networks end up being more isolated than integrated. While a gender-based network has its advantages, involving men in the dialogue is equally crucial. Mindsets change with engagement, not segregation.

Transparency in measuring progress beyond anecdotal success: If our ambition is gender parity in the workforce in India, we need to go beyond individual stories of success. Bias is measurable, so is real progress. While reports are useful to understand the issue, they tend to be one-off. If reporting progress on diversity is brought at par with reporting on the health of organisations, it could be the real gamechanger. Self-declaration by organisations could include:

- How organisations are faring on gender neutrality in positions across roles and levels.
- Going beyond the statistics of the percentage of women in the workforce to reporting pay parity across comparable

ABOVE: **Pratibha Jain**, Partner, Nishith Desai Associates; **Reshma Anand**, CEO, Hindustan Unilever Foundation; **Suparna Singh**, CEO, NDTV Group and **Amitav Virmani**, Founder CEO, The Education Alliance, at the inaugural session of the Woman Speaks Series, "What Glass Ceiling? Indian Women in the Workplace".

work levels and job roles.

- Investing in ongoing feedback mechanisms to measure the experience of bias in everyday work situations.
- Measuring women's share of unpaid work to identify ways in which employers can relieve or share the burden.
- Incorporating ownership for action and impact on diversity as part of the performance and rewards of senior leaders.

Cultural shifts are always hard work. Measuring intention means high standards of accountability for action. To make real progress on gender parity in our lifetime, we will need to expand the conversation beyond the human resource lens of hiring, skilling and retaining, to shaping mindsets that a level playing field for women is not just a nice thing to do; it is the right thing to do.



Reshma Anand is a Bajaj Fellow of Class 2

How America is partner to India rising

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, *Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times*, writes about how India and the US have reached a new equilibrium, the keel of which is the recognition that they are each indispensable to their respective strategic goals. Once treated as an interesting theoretical construct, the Indo-American relationship is now seen as one of geopolitical consequence.



The second term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will begin with a trade dispute between India and the United States. While this would seem to indicate that all is not well between the world's largest and oldest democracies, the opposite is true. Trade disputes multiply the more countries engage; the longer the economic boundary the greater the number of points of conflict. As telling is how New Delhi and Washington have gone out of their way to avoid letting the dispute escalate and endanger the otherwise excellent bilateral relationship. India and the US have reached a new equilibrium, the keel of which is recognition that they are each indispensable to their respective strategic goals.

There are five related elements to the Indo-US relationship: shared worldviews, defence, trade and investment, knowhow and diaspora. With no other country has India built a platform with so many foundation stones. There is almost no country in the world which can match the depth of the Indo-US relationship in even a single one of these pillars. Similarly, if the US wishes to maintain global pre-eminence, retain its footprint in Asia and preserve its political values no single country can contribute more, in the long run, than a rising India.

The strategic paths of India and the US diverged as often as they crossed during the Cold War. Today the degree of overlap in their worldviews is remarkable. They both share broadly the same view on the primary

geopolitical questions of the world. They are on the same page when it comes to China's new-found assertiveness, the peril of Islamist terror and the preservation of the existing rules-based international order. There remain many points of difference between the two countries. However, it is striking that these days there seems to be a greater gap between the US and its traditional European allies than between the US and India. The two countries are at the heart of the latest geopolitical catchphrases like the "Indo-Pacific" and the "Quad". This convergence has occurred in part because of the way India's own

There should be no doubt: US is overwhelmingly the primary economic partner of India.

interests have expanded and changed along with its economy. Henry Kissinger noted last year, "The US and India have complementary interests. The beauty of that is that we don't need to make an alignment because it is already there."

While India retains a diversity of defence and security partners, the US is now among the number one or two providers of weapons. Some segments of India's arsenal, notably military airlift, naval surveillance and increasingly helicopters, the US is the primary source of hardware. However, it is the rapid movement in agreements that will allow inter-operability and the shared use

of each other's bases and installations that are a better indication of how close the two countries have become.

The most important part of the relationship in terms of ensuring it is a long-term, sustainable pairing of the two countries is the economics. There should be no doubt: US is overwhelmingly the primary economic partner of India. While it is common to just focus on trade figures – and even here the US is India's main trading partner – there is much more happening. While official Indian investment figures normally say the US is the number three or four largest FDI source for India, US-based investment dominates the capital that comes via Mauritius and Singapore. If those figures are included, the US is probably the source of a quarter of the FDI received by India. Less recognised is that the US is the second largest source of remittances to India, roughly on par with Saudi Arabia. Throw in the US's portfolio investments and it becomes clear no country comes even remotely close in its contribution to India's economy than the US. That this is largely private sector investment is a plus, indicating how intrinsically strong is India's economic story.

Of the roughly half-million Indians who study overseas, two hundred thousand study in the US. Science and technology fields are favoured. The knowledge bridge built by these students and by highly-skilled Indian immigrants were at the heart of the rise of India's software and start-up cultures today. Northern New Jersey is the closest thing to an overseas nerve centre for India's pharmaceutical sector. Indian immigrants constitute the single largest pool of scientists, doctors and engineers of their kind in the US – over a million, projecting from US National Science Foundation. The phenomenon of "brain circulation" has meant this commu-

The India-US Forum brings together American and Indian leaders, from different walks of life, to shape the future of India-US strategic partnership through consultation and collaboration. It is convened by Ananta Centre and the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.



ABOVE, L to R : **Rajiv Kumar**, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, Government of India and **Stephen Biegun**, Vice President, International Government Affairs, Ford Motor Company.



BELOW, L to R : **Kenneth Juster**, Ambassador of US to India and **C Raja Mohan**, Director, Carnegie India.

nity contributes increasingly to India's own knowledge capabilities. While the US's lead in global technology means it is the primary knowledge partner for almost every country in the world, the size of this human element undergirding Indo-US scientific cooperation is probably unique.

This in turn reflects the four-million strong Indian-American diaspora. In less than two decades, this has emerged as the most successful overseas Indian population in any part of the world. It is the most educated and wealthiest per capita immigrant group in the US today – dubbed "the model minority" by the Economist magazine. The community today is a vocal and committed supporter of the bilateral relationship. Their success is indicative of the inherent strengths of Indian culture and the potential any Indian is capable of in the proper supportive environment.

While the common democratic values of the two countries is often treated with a degree of cynicism, it is a hue diffused

through the fabric of the relationship. The US is prepared to support the rise of India in large part because it assumes a democracy can never be an enemy. As Indians prosper, and note that their geopolitical rivals are only intermittently democratic or avowedly authoritarian, surveys indicate they have become increasingly conscious of the benefits of their democratic polity. In 2017, when speaking about how democracy was threatened, the then US president, Barack Obama, said, "I believe that a partnership between the world's oldest democracy and largest democracy is the key." Democracy is one of the reasons that Prime Minister Narendra Modi could tell the US Congress, "India and the United States are bound together, by history and culture."

India's slow but steady rise as a nation confident of itself, able to provide for its people and a constructive player on the international stage will be a much easier task if it has other countries supporting this evolution. The US has emerged, deliberately, as

the primary buttress to this project. It is not a complete accident that some of its allies, notably Japan and Israel, have also become major partners in helping India along. Once treated as an interesting theoretical construct, the Indo-American relationship is now seen as of geopolitical consequence. As Obama declared once, "If India and the United States are working together, I believe there is no problem we cannot solve."



Pramit Pal Chaudhuri is Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Centre



The Ananta Centre delegation interacted with leading think tanks, Congressmen, officials from US Administration and senior economists. The delegates are seen here with Congressman **Steny Hoyer**.

India and Japan: moving in tandem

This article is an overview of India-Japan bilateral relations and the shared vision of the two Premiers. While investments by Japan have increased they are still below potential. On the flip side, there have been landmark agreements such as the signing of the Agreement of Cooperation in the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy.



Andrew Gray (CC BY-SA 2.0)

The transformation in India-Japan bilateral relations is a matter of deep satisfaction to both countries and, of course, raises the mutual aspiration to do more together, on bilateral as well as on global issues. “Japan-India special strategic and global partnership reflects the depth and range of collaboration between the two centres. And this has evolved since 2006, step by step.

At the October 2018 Summit, the two Prime Ministers agreed to a “Shared Vision towards a free and open Indo-Pacific” and it was Prime Minister Modi’s third visit to Japan.

Currently, the range of collaboration stretches from the Economic to Energy to Maritime Security to Infrastructure (the high speed rail project from Ahmedabad to Mumbai). But the level of trade is far below potential and this needs attention and action.

Investment levels from Japan into India have been rising, but still far below potential, taking into account the size of the Indian Economy and Market. It is still difficult to navigate through the multiple processes for approvals and clearances required in India and Japanese companies face challenges. An additional issue is to locate reliable Joint Venture corporate partners with whom long term relationships can be developed.

The most significant bilateral project undertaken is the High Speed Rail project and

it is also the most high profile. The work on this project is underway now.

The differences in culture and systems is a gap to be bridged and work remains to be done in this area. If this issue can be resolved, the bilateral trade levels can be doubled, as also Japanese investment into India. It needs Indians to understand and absorb Japanese culture and language.

The challenge of different cultures and

The differences in culture and systems is a gap to be bridged and work remains to be done in this area. If this issue can be resolved, the bilateral trade levels can be doubled, so also Japanese investment into India.

systems also hampers cooperation on projects in third countries, eg, in Africa and Asia. In principle, both Governments want this dimension to be added to the cooperation matrix but progress is slow.

A new, almost radical, positive development is the initiative for Indian interns to undergo training in India specifically to go and work in Japan. It started with 15 interns but the program is being expanded steadily

based on initial positive results.

A unique gesture, reflecting the strength of the bilateral partnership was the invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit the home of Prime Minister Abe.

Another emerging area of cooperation is space and cyber-security. Both countries are devoting resources and priority to these two new areas of opportunity and challenge and a collaborative approach will only bring benefits across nations.

A pending area for action relates to India’s nuclear power development and liability regime. Japan has historical concerns relating to nuclear issues but continuing exchanges and dialogue need to be concluded to mutual satisfaction so that bilateral cooperation in the nuclear area can be enhanced.

The signing of the Agreement of Cooperation in the Peaceful uses of Nuclear Energy in 2016 was a landmark event for the two countries.

Security and Defence cooperation are rapidly developing, reflecting mutual trust and confidence. Joint military exercises and deeper cooperation especially between the two Navies have been happening.

On the economic front a new dimension was added in 2018 when a Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) of US \$75 billion took place. This was of great support to India by Japan.

There was also the signing of Exchange Notes for a 150 billion yen loan and for six other projects:

- Renovation and modernization of hydro power station in Meghalaya.
- Delhi Metro Phase 3.
- North-East road network connectivity improvement (including Dhubri bridge); Construction of Turga pumped storage in West Bengal.



Manish Prabhune (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Mahakaal (Shiva) statue at Kanda Myojin, Japan. It is a popular place for businessmen and entrepreneurs to pray for wealth and prosperity.

- Construction of the Chennai peripheral ring road.
- Sustainable catchment forest management in Tripura.

Other areas of collaboration include digital technology partnership, healthcare, food processing and solar energy (International Solar Alliance).

The two leaders reiterated unwavering commitment to work together towards a free and open Indo-Pacific, with special emphasis on ASEAN centrality:

- Shared Indo-Pacific vision: rules-based order, freedom of navigation and over-flight, peaceful resolution of disputes etc.
- Willingness to expand cooperation with US and other partners.

– Collaborative projects to enhance strategic connectivity in Indo-Pacific:

- Development of LNG-related infrastructure in Sri Lanka.
- Synergizing development efforts in the Rakhine State of Myanmar (collaboration in housing, education and electrification projects).
- Connectivity in Bangladesh (four-laning roads, reconstruction of bridges).
- Cooperation in Africa (incl. health service).

– Development of India’s North Eastern region through “Act East Forum”:

- Bridge construction across Brahmaputra River.
- National Highway NH40, NH51 in

- Meghalaya, NH54 in Mizoram.
- Disaster and forest management etc.

Special emphasis has been placed on People to People (PtoP) exchanges, especially tourism.

	2016	2017
Japanese visitors to India	210,000	230,000
Indian visitors to Japan	123,000	134,000
Indian tourists visiting Japan	50,000	50,000
Indian students studying in Japan	1,015	1,236
Indian people learning Japanese	20,000 (in 2012)	24,000 (in 2015)
Partnerships between regional governments	13	13

Another aspect is the establishment of Japanese language institutions to enhance Japanese language teaching.

– Setting up Japanese language certificate courses at 100 higher educational institutions and training 1,000 Japanese language teachers.

To make all of this happen, Indian media representation in Japan needs to be strengthened. Media has an important role.

So, while the progress in India-Japan relations has been outstanding, there are still issues to address and higher potential to be achieved. The Abe-Modi partnership will no doubt take stock as well as take the relationship further ahead when they meet in India in autumn.

The Foreign Policy Lecture Series was launched by Ananta Centre to encourage students to engage with India's foreign policy issues. In 2018, foreign policy experts delivered lectures in 29 states and Union Territories, covering a variety of topics.

“Understanding of other countries is an important step to a broader and better worldview. The Ananta Centre’s Foreign Policy Lecture Series acquires special significance, in this context. It brings together experts and students and facilitates learning on India’s Foreign Policy issues.”

— Satinder K Lambah



SPEAKER	TOPIC	UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE
Ambassador PS Raghavan , Chairman, National Security Advisory Board & former Indian Ambassador to Russia	India's Foreign Policy in the Twenty First Century: From Non-Alignment to Multi-Alignment	15th September 2017, Manipal University, Manipal, Karnataka
Vice Admiral (retd) Pradeep Chauhan , Director, National Maritime Foundation & Adviser, Ananta Aspen Centre	Driving Foreign Policy: A Viable Pan-Regional Alternative to China's Maritime Silk Route/ Belt-and-Road Initiative	4th October 2017, Sikkim University, Gangtok
Lt General Arvinder Singh Lamba , Former Vice Chief of Army Staff	Dynamics of Change in South Asia: Challenges for India's Foreign Policy	15th November 2017, University of Rajasthan, Rajasthan
Ambassador Talmiz Ahmad , Former Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Oman & UAE	Political Islam and Global Jihad: Challenges for Global Security	18th January 2018, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Maharashtra
Ambassador Rudi Warjri , Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Ecuador and Costa Rica	Act East Policy and Implications for Northeast	3rd April, 2018, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh
Ambassador Deepak Bhojwani , Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Venezuela and Cuba	The Impact of External Intervention on International Relations	18th April, 2018, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh
Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhyay , Former Ambassador to Syria, Afghanistan and Myanmar	India-Myanmar Relations under Modi Administration	20th April, 2018, Tripura University, Tripura
Ambassador TCA Raghavan , Former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan	Engagement with Pakistan: History, Opportunities and Challenges	26th April, 2018, Central University of Gujarat, Gujarat
Ambassador Rajendra Abhyankar , Professor of Practice of Diplomacy and Public Affairs, SPEA,Indiana University, Bloomington	Syria: The Tragedy of a Pivotal State and its Implications in the Region and the World	27th April, 2018, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Patiala, Punjab
Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar , Former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia	From Look East to Act East, India's Growing Engagement with ASEAN and Beyond	4th May, 2018, North Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya
Pramit Pal Chaudhuri , Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times and Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Aspen Centre	Is There a Modi Doctrine? The Origin and Priorities of Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy	4th May, 2018, Nagaland University, Nagaland
Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhaar , Former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia	From Look East to Act East, India's Growing Engagement with ASEAN and Beyond	16th May, 2018, Mizoram University, Mizoram
Ambassador Rajendra Abhyankar , Professor of Practice of Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana	The Making of Indian Foreign Policy Since Independence	5th June, 2018, Dibrugarh University, Assam
Ambassador P S Raghavan , Chairman, National Security Advisory Board & former Indian Ambassador to Russia	Development Assistance in India's Foreign Policy	21st July, 2018, Andhra University, Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
Ambassador Arun K. Singh , Former Ambassador of India to the United States	US Foreign Policy in South Asia	27th July, 2018, Goa University, Goa
Ambassador S K Lambah , Chairman, Ananta Aspen Centre and Former Special Envoy of the Prime Minister	The Unfortunate History of Gilgit-Baltistan Since 1947	9th August, 2018, Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu
Dr Sugata Bose , Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha	India's Asian Relations	21st August, 2018, Manipur Central University, Manipur
Ambassador SK Lambah , Chairman, Ananta Aspen Centre and Former Special Envoy of the Prime Minister	Relations Between India & Pakistan in the Context of the Visits of the Prime Ministers of India to Pakistan (1947 to date)	19th September, 2018, Jadavpur University, Kolkata
BJ Panda , Former Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha	Contours of Emerging Global Multi-Polarity	IILM University, Gurugram, Haryana
Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhaya , Former Ambassador to Syria, Afghanistan and Myanmar	India-Myanmar Relations under Modi Administration	11th October, 2018, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, New Delhi
Ambassador Deepak Bhojwani , Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Venezuela and Cuba	India's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean	17th November, 2018, Shri Vaishnav Vidyapeeth Vishwavidyalaya, Indore, MP
Dr Mohan Kumar , Chairperson Research & Information Systems in Developing Countries & Former Ambassador to France	India and the WTO	20th November, 2018, XLRI, Jamshedpur Jharkhand
Mr Pramit Pal Chaudhuri , Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times & Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Aspen Centre	Is There a Modi Doctrine? The Origin and Priorities of Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy	12th December, 2018, SCMS College Cochin
Ambassador PS Raghavan , Chairman, National Security Advisory Board & former Indian Ambassador to Russia	Global Challenges: India's Responses	12th December, 2018, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry
Ambassador Rudi Warjri , Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Ecuador and Costa Rica	Act East Policy and Implications for the North-East	13th December, 2018, Institute for Advanced Studies, Shimla
Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar , Former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia	India, USA and China: Shifting Sands of Geopolitics	23 January 2019, UPES Dehradun
Lt General Narasimhan (retd) , Member, National Security Advisory Board	China –i An Overview	March 5, 2019, Jammu University
Indrani Bagchi , Senior Editor, Times of India	Pulwama Terror Attack and India's Foreign Policy	March 12, 2019, Sai International Bhubaneshwar
Vice Admiral Anil Chopra (retd) , Member, National Security Advisory Board	Global Geopolitics And The Emerging World Order	March 14, 2019, School of Management Studies, Hyderabad



← Dr Sugata Bose, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, speaking on “India’s Asian Relations” at Manipur University, Imphal.



↑ Ms Indrani Bagchi, Senior Editor,Times of India, delivering a lecture on “Pulwama Terror Attack and India's Foreign Policy” at Sai International College of Commerce, Bhubaneswar.



← Ambassador TCA Raghavan, Former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan, addressing Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, on “Engagement with Pakistan: History, Opportunities and Challenges”.



← Ambassador Gautam Mukhopadhyay, Former Ambassador to Syria, Afghanistan and Myanmar, delivered a lecture on “India-Myanmar Relations Under Modi Administration” at Tripura University, Agartala.

↓ Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, ret'd, PVSM AVSM, Member, National Advisory Security Board, Government of India, speaking on “Global Geopolitics and The Emerging World Order” at the School of Management Studies, Hyderabad.

→ Mr Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times and Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Centre, delivering a lecture on “Is There a Modi Doctrine? The Origin & Priorities of Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy” at Nagaland University, Lumami.



← Ambassador Rudi Warjri, Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Ecuador and Costa Rica, delivering a lecture on “Act East Policy and Implications for Northeast” at Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar.



← B J Panda, Former Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, delivering a lecture on “Contours of Emerging Global Multi-Polarity” at IILM University, Gurugram.

↓ Ambassador Arun K Singh, Former Ambassador of India to the United States, speaking on “US Foreign Policy in South Asia” at Goa University, Goa.



↑ Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, Former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia, speaking on “India, USA and China: Shifting Sands of Geopolitics” at UPES, Dehradun.



→ Ambassador Deepak Bhojwani, Former Ambassador of India to Colombia, Venezuela and Cuba, speaking on “The Impact of External Intervention on International Relations” at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.



Spinning Jenny to Siri : why AI should shape the development conversation

*There are many points of view on the impact of AI on society, making it important to have multi-stakeholder dialogues to facilitate its informed use. Ananta has been giving the issue due space on multiple platforms including The Growth Net. In this article, **Sameer Walia**, Founder and Chief Executive, Ripples of Hope, writes on how AI can be a positive force for emerging economies.*

The industrial revolution was not a golden period for most that lived through it. It brought in its wake social, political and economic disruption. The world that we know today was not visible in the horizon and few at that time could comprehend what the future held for mankind.

Change, especially when brought about by technology, is often uncomfortable and doesn't lend itself well to optimism and foresight. With the advent of Artificial Intelligence being the modern-day Industrial revolution, we see the same discomfort. AI is already beginning to bring dramatic changes, especially in advanced countries. The Saudi government is expected to pour USD 500 billion into a smart city, Neom, that will connect Saudi Arabia with Egypt and North Africa. 33 times the size of New York, Neom is straight out of a futuristic Arabian Nights; robots will one day outnumber people with cars driving themselves, drones delivering the mail, renewable energy powering 100% of the city and its residents developing all the technologies of tomorrow.

However, for many developing countries grappling with fundamental development issues, signing up for AI on the strength of these advancements is akin to taking a leap of faith. The questions that emerging markets battle with are far more basic – will AI increase unemployment? Will it take control over human society? Will it put people at the mercy of those who make it? Given the inevitability of AI, it is time to examine these fears.

First the most debated issue of all – unemployment. Automation has been a part of our lives for almost two decades now. AI is the next level of this ongoing automation. It is true that AI will take over jobs but that is an outcome of every technology cycle. First the computer, and then the internet, changed the way we lived and worked. It made certain

jobs obsolete but also created new ones. AI will do the same. It is important to note that in emerging economies a significant number of workers belong to the unorganized sector and engage in unskilled work; AI is unlikely to venture into this sector.

What AI will do is to shift many marginalized people to a better life. Emerging economies can actually jumpstart their development by using AI-first approach. Instead of waiting to grow to a point where they can absorb AI technologies in core areas like business, these countries can use it right away to address critical development challenges. Emerging economies often strug-

Emerging economies can actually jumpstart their development by using AI-first approach

gle with service delivery in critical areas like education, health and governance. AI could greatly increase the quality of service delivery and help these countries up a growth path radically different from those taken by the now-mature economies.

In education for example, AI systems help teachers do away with mundane but necessary tasks like evaluation and have them focus on delivering education. In places where teachers are in short supply, AI can step in to deliver content through inclusive, global classrooms that cater to a variety of students, including those that speak different languages

or have visual or hearing impairments. For example, Presentation Translator is a free plug-in for PowerPoint that creates subtitles in real time for what the teacher is saying and displays them on the presentation. Products like Azure Cognitive Services allow speech recognition and translation so that students can hear or read what is being said, in their own native language. In short AI, can create a seamless and quality learning space.

AI technologies can also transform healthcare. Emerging markets are notoriously short of doctors and the situation is likely to continue for a while. AI can address this through robot-aided surgery, virtual nursing and assisted workflow. Robot-aided surgery significantly improves precision and speeds up the procedure, allowing doctors to do more quality surgeries in the same period of time. Patient stay is shortened considerably because such procedures are less invasive. In short, for the same resources more people can be served quality healthcare. Virtual nursing assistants also work in this direction. They remotely assess a patient's symptoms and deliver alerts to clinicians only when patients need to be examined. This reduces unnecessary hospital visits and reduces the load on an already taxed workforce. AI also cuts down on administrative tasks through applications such as voice-to-text transcription. This relieves stretched professionals of administrative and non-patient care activities such as writing chart notes, prescriptions and ordering tests and leaves them with more time to spend on patients. In short AI technologies can make quality healthcare truly accessible for all.

AI is an unbiased entity. Theoretically, it has the potential to transform the development landscape through neutral delivery of services. However as with most scientific developments, there are ethical considerations. AI is born of the human mind, which to begin

with is biased. It is important to have a code of ethics for machine decision-making. All stakeholders must be clear about the fact that AI should augment human efficiency and not replace it.

Developing AI solutions requires money and skill, hence not every country has the ability to produce them. While it is the prerogative of the manufacturers to pick and choose what they want to make available to

the rest of the world, it is also the responsibility of the buyer to be clear about why they are purchasing a certain technology. The ethics of the market could help drive that of the design. A gun can be used for both subjugation and defense; intent is all important. If used well, AI can be a powerful weapon against inequity and social ills. Like Spinning Jenny once upon a time, Alexa and Siri could be harbingers of better times to come.



Sameer Walia is a Bajaj Fellow of Class 4



A break out session at the **ASPEN MICROSOFT NEXTGEN WORKSHOP**, deliberating on the importance of AI in Health and Education.

The Growth Net Summit works to catalyse stronger engagement between the countries of the new constellation of growth. It focuses on developing innovative approaches to the common challenges confronting the economies and societies of these countries.



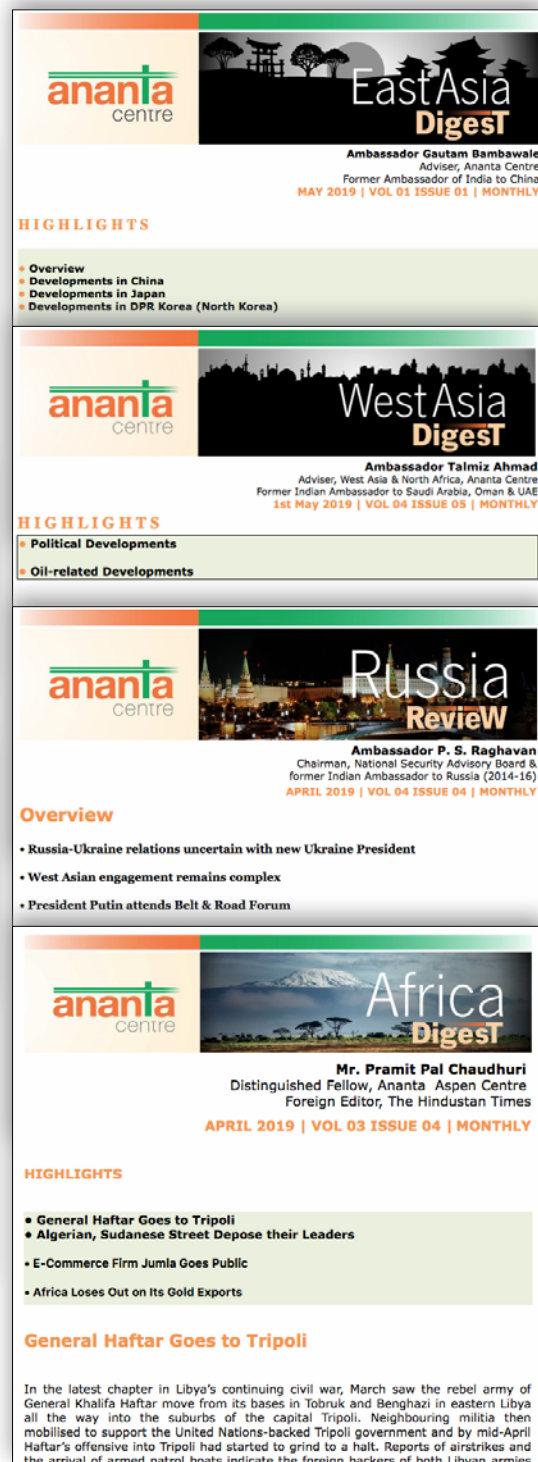
L to R : **Hardeep Singh Puri**, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India and **Lawrence Wong**, Minister for National Development, Singapore.



L to R : **Claude Smadja**, Founder & Chairman, Smadja & Smadja, Switzerland; **Jamshyd Godrej**, Chairman, Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Co Ltd, Chairman, Ananta Centre, India and Past President of CII; **Piyush Goyal**, Minister of Finance, Railways and Coal, Government of India and **Harshavardhan Neotia**, Chairman, Steering Committee, The Growth Net Summit and Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group, India.



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