



Vivekananda International Foundation



Seeking Harmony In Diversity

Annual Report 2016-17

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Annual Report 2016-17



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INTERNATIONAL
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Message from the Chairman



Let me begin by conveying my greetings and best wishes to the entire VIF family, as we emerge into an exciting 2017 from amidst the many noteworthy accomplishments of the year gone by.

2016 saw us build our reputation and standing as India's most rapidly growing and relevant think-tank, through the dedicated pursuit of policy research, incisive analyses, concisely articulated documents, well organised and enthusiastically attended events, and dialogues with a broad spectrum of interlocutors.

We participated in the second leg of the Hindu-Buddhist conference in Tokyo in January 2016, and hosted many major conferences including the 'Quad Plus' conference in Jaipur in February, followed by the trilateral workshop with Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) on Silk Road Trade and Connectivity in March. This theme was further investigated through a dialogue with the National Institute of South China Sea Studies, as well as a seminar on the Indian Ocean region in May. VIF also organised in depth discussions on Disaster Management, the Kashmir issue, and the Indo-Iran undersea pipeline. In addition, we invited delegations from Nepal and Sri Lanka for a candid exchange of views on our relations with these countries.

Since its inception less than a decade ago, VIF has made considerable impact both within India and abroad. Adopting dispassionate and factual examination, it has provided substantial inputs for policy formulation. Through our evolving website, I am confident that our footprint amongst the lay public will also increase in the coming year.

The new year heralds a plethora of scheduled events and possible developments, which could have significant effect on both the national and international polity. I am, however, certain that VIF will be ahead of the curve in interpreting and deliberating on these happenings, and underlining the resulting consequences and emerging trend-lines.

The advent of the Trump Administration is likely to alter geo-political and geo-economic equations across the globe. The incoming president will doubtlessly reshape both America's domestic landscape, and its international worldview, thereby leading to realignment of many bilateral and multilateral arrangements of the superpower, which the United States certainly continues to be.

Of marked import could be the possible rapprochement between the US and Russia, which may lead to an informal alliance to contain a recently adventurous China, which became distinctly more aggressive and militaristic during President Obama's second term. On the other hand, notwithstanding some trade and visa issues, US-India relations should continue on their upward trajectory, and provide for greatest ability in the Indo- Pacific region.

The situation in the West Pacific may turn even more fragile, with North Korean actions adding to the wave of insecurity and unease sweeping the region. The South China Sea continues to be the immediate flashpoint, and any miscalculation on the part of the Chinese leadership could spark an explosive confrontation.



Concurrently, the Islamic world continues to be in ferment, with a host of internecine conflicts between Shia and Sunni factions, and the entire region from the Maghreb, through the Levant and Anatolia, right up to Afghanistan and Pakistan is mostly unstable. The fate of Europe also seems increasingly cloudy, grappling as it is with BREXIT, the migrant crisis, and discord with Russia and Turkey. The possibility of change in the ruling dispensations of both France and Germany add to the uncertainty.

Whilst the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) will perhaps cease to be a geographical entity, the scourge of Islamist terrorism is far from being defeated, and the world is bracing itself for further mindless violence by radicalised elements in non-Islamic host countries. Nations will certainly need to enhance their anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts. India's experience and expertise can surely be leveraged into putting in place international processes and procedures designed to stem the spread of violent acts by lone-wolves and sleeper cells.

I need not reflect much on our intractable western neighbour, except to observe that it is fast running out of manoeuvring space, and despite China's 'all-weather' friendship, Pakistan is likely to be formally branded as the state sponsor of terrorism unless it mends its ways. The CPEC also promises to bring more problems than advantages.

Besides geopolitical anxieties, there are many other zones of uncertainty and disquiet. The effects of environmental degradation, climate change and water scarcity, as also the ramifications of galloping technology, including widespread induction of artificial intelligence and robotics in our daily lives, are difficult to predict and would need constant evaluation. Similarly, instant universal communication and information flows are resulting in restive populations in the poorer and less free areas of the world. Social fractures and fissures, causing immigration and violence, are on the rise, as the aspirational urges of increasingly aware masses gain traction.

After many years of improved economic conditions and prosperity during the quarter century of globalisation and exponential connectivity following the Cold War, the upward curve of wealth creation is at risk. Protectionism and anti-globalisation movements are tightening the grip, and populism based on narrow and parochial interests is on the rise. World trade has actually declined for the first time in many decades, and the future of both the World Trade Organisation, and other groupings such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) could be troublesome.

The purpose of my broad sweep of the state of the planet, as it were, is only to underscore that academics, analysts and commentators need to play an increasingly greater role in focusing myriad occurrences into tangible forecasts for the near and medium future, which is vital for policy formulation. I therefore exhort all members of the VIF community to extend themselves, and strive for even more detailed and pertinent examination of the dynamic and rapidly evolving national and international scenarios, in the geo-political, geo-economic and geo-strategic spheres.

I am confident that the VIF will attain greater heights in the year to come, and I wish each one of you every success.

Vice Admiral KK Nayyar, PVSM, AVSM
Chairman, VIF
(Former Vice Chief of Indian Navy)

New Delhi
May 2017

Director's Preface



Emergence of a Dynamic and Confident India

In pursuit of Intellectual Engagements

A profound transformation of the Indian dispensation, a 'new India' so to say, is evident in the aspirations among the citizens for the fruition of an economically vibrant and socially stable nation. The Indian state has responded to these aspirations by undertaking breakthrough initiatives in practically every aspect of national concerns. Success of such undertakings and initiatives, however, will be influenced, even determined, by external and internal factors, as well as focused policy making in all fields of governance and execution of such policies on the ground. Thus, in keeping with its overall objectives as spelt out by its founders, the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), during the past year, has delved into such challenges and opportunities to remain committed towards its quest for peace and all-round development.

The course of the year gone by, i.e., 2016-17, has been an engaging and interesting chapter in the VIF's thinking, confabulating and analytical discourse. In so doing, the VIF fraternity has had very intensive and extensive exchange of thoughts with leading think tanks, both national and international, and other opinion makers. The Foundation regularly shared its analyses on various issues of national and international interest with the strategic community at large and the Government. As this Annual Report would reveal, the VIF's journey through the maze of strategic complexities has been rather engaging and interesting during this period.

Analysing the Dynamics of International Relations

Over the course of the past year, the dynamics of international relationships have increasingly been afflicted with ambiguities and contradictions. The global scenario became further uncertain and unpredictable with President Trump in the White House, especially with his policy of 'America First', advocacy of more 'Brexit's' and aversion to globalisation. In a globalised world, these afflictions have portends of dangerous fallouts; the vicious bloodbath in West Asia being just one of those. Then there are the ominous forces of radicalisation, terrorism and destabilisation that are active in our Western neighbourhood. There is further disconcertment at hand due to China's continuing brand of hegemonic political and economic approach backed with military power and expansionist policies. Added to that is the perceived US encouragement of China to play a role in Afghanistan which poses a big problem as that is most likely to be aligned with Pakistani interests. The unending war in Afghanistan is in itself a result of various international players working at cross-purposes. Finally, the Russian, Chinese, Iranian and Pakistani combination appears to be replacing the US and NATO forces in this area. In the process, India is being left out, though the abiding 'goodwill factor' continues to be its strength in Afghanistan.

The political and economic balance of the European Union (EU), with the fate of Brexit hanging in uncertainty, is also a major cause of concern for India. This has implications for us, as the EU is India's largest trade and investment partner. It is important that as we develop our global strategy, we send a clear message that we have reserved a prominent place for Europe in it. Economic growth is India's



highest priority and we have to safeguard it. It is also crucial that in the Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) sectors, our overdependence on the US market is made to gradually shift towards Europe and other areas like Africa.

It will also be relevant to mention here that if US-Russia relations were to improve, India could be a beneficiary. In any case, there is an urgent requirement for India to regain its diluted relevance and importance with Russia. Situated at the geo-political and economic hub of all such international linkages, India has to tread a well calculated path in its journey to its rightful destiny.

As the record of our activities detailed in this Annual Report for 2016–17 would reveal, we at the VIF have endeavoured to bring all our expertise, foresight and relationships with other think tanks and strategic experts to keep abreast with the fast evolving geo-strategic and geo-economic complexities. Thus, under the aegis of our *Centre for National Security and Strategic Studies* as well as the *Centre for International Relations and Diplomacy*, there have been comprehensive and candid round table discussions. In addition, there have been exchanges of visits by delegations, scholars, diplomats and interlocutors from the United States, China, Taiwan, Australia, South Korea, Iran, Myanmar, European Union, Japan, Russia, Norway, Canada, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and some more countries. These deliberations have helped both sides to understand each other's expectations and concerns and to seek mutual accommodation in our differences. Accordingly, the strength of our substantial interactions has made it possible for the VIF to develop deeper insight into the complexities that impinge upon our national objectives and interests.

Playing a Constructive Role in the Region

India occupies a position of geographic and economic prominence and as a consequence of this, it has political centrality in regional dynamics. Its security and economic interests and its potential as a major rising power naturally offers it a key role in maintaining regional stability. To that end, India has adopted far reaching diplomatic and economic initiatives with due foresight and purpose. Prime Minister Modi's visionary 'Act East' and 'Neighbourhood First' policies, and stimulation of regional groupings like Bhutan-Bangladesh-India-Nepal (BBIN) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) are but some elements of that initiative. Similarly, the proposed development of Chabahar Port, the North-South Corridor, transit route through Bangladesh to Myanmar, the 'Sagarmala' scheme and Project 'Mausam' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), and fresh attention towards the East African Coast are some elements of India's quest for robust regional connectivity, cooperation and collective security. However, it is a critical necessity that all these visionary ideas are translated into reality on the ground. Indeed, conversion of ideas into reality on the ground in a realistic timeframe remains one area, which we need to improve in India.

During the year 2016-17, the VIF has expanded its scope and interaction with regional and international think tanks, reputed opinion makers, political leaders, academics and diplomats in furtherance of the Government's aforementioned initiatives. Thus, our *Centre for Economic Studies* and the *Centre for Neighbourhood and Internal Security Studies* have organised substantive exchanges of ideas with countries of the IOR, the Central Asian States (CAS) and the Indo-Pacific Region. Understandably, India has also given all-encompassing attention to matters concerning our immediate neighbourhood of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan and Myanmar.

Fostering National Security and Defence Preparedness

Besides the paradigm of security that is in-built into all the aforementioned activities of the VIF, there has also been exclusive focus on matters concerning regional as well as national security and stability. Accordingly, the year 2016-17 saw our *Centre for National Security and Strategic Studies*, analyse the security environment and the nuances of its management through a series of policy level interactions with



foreign and domestic interlocutors. We have set up extensive relationships and dialogue process through many bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral arrangements. Issues like stability in the Indo-Pacific Region including the China Seas, the China-Pakistan axis, the menace of radicalisation, proxy war in Afghanistan and Kashmir Valley, turmoil in Balochistan, etc., have thus been dissected through intense exchanges of views.

In similar vein, our *Centre for Defence Studies* has worked on analyses of issues related to India's defence preparedness to foster clearer understandings of our concerns. Some of the salient matters so analysed are: the Indo-US Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI), India's revised Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP), nuclear deterrence, Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Afghanistan and India, China's territorial ambitions on land and sea, the spectre of sea piracy, presence of extra-regional navies in the IOR and modernisation of the Peoples' Liberation Army's (PLA). Further, the Foundation is in the process of analysing the imperatives and nuances of our long overdue military modernisation. This analysis will be carried out by a Study Group under the aegis of VIF.

In the Furtherance of Governance, Cultural and Scientific Initiatives

During the course of 2016-17, the Foundation has sought to extend its reach over such fundamental areas which promote peace and stability. Thus under the aegis of our *Centre for Historical and Civilisational Studies*, the VIF has harnessed the Indo-centric cultural heritage to promote neighbourhood solidarity. Emphasising on our 'soft power' and cultural heritage, through engagements with Hindu, Buddhist and international scholars with focus on the Indo-Pacific belt, as well as on issues related to 'conflict avoidance and environmental consciousness' are just some examples of this pursuit. So far two such dialogues have already been held in New Delhi and Tokyo.

At the Government level, there have been major initiatives like Swatch Bharat, Make in India, infrastructural development, etc. Demonetisation has been one such monumental initiative to root out corruption and black money. Goods and Service Tax, which is slated to be introduced in July 2017, is likely to be one of the major reforms towards boosting the Indian economy. VIF has driven and supported all these path-breaking initiatives through extensive round table conferences and seminars, and by promoting these worldwide.

Further, our *Centre for Scientific and Technological Studies* has organised workshops and brainstorming sessions for promoting understanding of disaster management, energy security, agriculture, cyber security, internet governance and global commons.

VIF Publications

For the benefit of policy makers and strategic collegiums, the VIF has recorded its conceptualisations, examinations, analyses, commentaries and recommendations on all the above mentioned issues through the production of a series of papers, monographs and professional books in print as well as digitised form. The volume of such productions has seen a quantum leap during this year. These have been distributed widely and have been well-received and appreciated.

Three books, namely, *China's Great War Machine in the Sino-Indian Context* (authored by Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee, a Distinguished Fellow), *Strategic Discourse on The People's Republic of China*, and *Twelve Essays on Terrorism*, the last two authored by our eminent scholars and edited by Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee, have drawn wide appreciation. Details of all these publications are to be found in the end pages of this Annual Report. Needless to emphasise, enthused by the all-round appreciation of our analyses and opinions, we reiterate our commitment to such publications with due intellectual vigour and fortitude.



Seven publications of great strategic relevance in the pipeline, particularly in relation to China and the region, are: (i) *The Kashmir Narrative: Time for Vigorous Adaptations* (Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee); (ii) *Russia's Evolving Equation with China and the United States: Implications for India* (Dr Harinder Sekhon, Senior Fellow); (iii) *Balochistan: Forgotten War and Forsaken People* (Shri Sushant Sareen, Senior Fellow); (iv) *Russian, Chinese and American Interplay in Central Asia and Afghanistan: Options for India* (Prof Nirmala Joshi); (v) *China-Pakistan Nexus* (Prof Gautam Sen); (vi) *China's 21st Century Vision and Security Perspective: Implications for India* (Brig Ashish Sirsikar, Senior Fellow); and (vii) *China's Expanding Maritime Footprint in the Indian Ocean: India's Response* (Cmde Gopal Suri, Senior Fellow). Needless to reiterate, all of our publications and articulations keep intellectual honesty and national interest uppermost in mind.

Another landmark upgradation has been in respect of our Website which has been made more user-friendly and pictorial, with additional features and live tweeting facilities, with an added Hindi Section. Besides the above, features of fortnightly 'Director's Pick', and 'Fortnightly Research and Analyses', of different regions in the world, and weekly columns on 'Policies and Perspectives' and 'Vibrant India' are also some of the added features of our Website.

The Promise of 2017-18

It will be recalled that last year at this juncture we had identified certain areas of strategic exploration which needed better coverage and analyses. Accordingly, we had enjoined our senior faculty members and young researchers to undertake comprehensive research to cover such areas which had received comparatively lesser attention in the past. This year, as we take stock of our explorative and analytical pursuits, we have ensured that most of those gaps have either been covered well, or we are well on course to deal with them. However, some areas still warrant more attention. For example, even though we have run a few programmes on economic studies, we need to give more focused attention to that field. Similarly, while we have conducted some very well subscribed seminars on Central Asian Republics, we intend devoting more time to this area because of its strategic and economic relevance for us. Africa is another very important area for which we have acquired necessary in-house expertise and we intend running a concentrated series of events, especially on the East African Coastal areas. As of today, the Foundation has adequate expertise and coverage of all important regions in the world.

In 2017-18, we will remain committed to making meaningful contributions to the national discourse in general and the process of policy formulations in particular. We also intend to continue with our wide-ranging lectures and *Vimarshas* on subjects of national interests. These would also include a series of lectures and discussions on 'Nation and Nationalism', 'Communicating India' and 'India First' as the basic themes. Besides, a book is under preparation about the herculean and visionary contributions made by Sardar Patel in the shaping of post-independence India. The author is Shri RNP Singh, a Senior Fellow with the VIF and the title of the book is envisaged as *Patel – The Great Unifier of Modern India*.

Presently, we are in the final stages of producing our signature production, a volume titled *VIF Perspective-Issues and Trends* which is themed at 'Securing India'. This volume contains 15 papers, each of these have been authored by top experts delving into topics of contemporary contention. Henceforth, this will be an annual publication.

This year at the VIF, we intend to conduct an expert group study on 'National Security' with particular reference to 'Defence Preparedness', just like we have carried out a study on *India's Nuclear Deterrence* in the current year and made some salient recommendations. In matters of national defence we remain committed to push for the long overdue imperatives of *defence reforms*, *military modernisation*, efficient *defence procurements* and *defence industrialisation*. In that, we would also highlight the call for re-organisation of our *information warfare* (IW) capabilities, of which *cyber and space warfare* are but intrinsic parts.



We have already expressed our resolve to augment our engagements in matters of *economic issues* during the ensuing year. As one part of that engagement, we plan to organise in October 2017, conjointly with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), another set of deliberations at the international level with particular regards to BBIN and BIMSTEC.

Cyber Security and Internet Governance are two critical domains in today's world. We have conducted two elaborate round table sessions on consecutive days in April 2017 on these issues in conjunction with the Ministry of Information and Technology and the National Cyber Security Coordinator. Discussions are also planned to be held with regard to securing of data and its integrity in conjunction with the Ministry of IT.

We intend to bolster the momentum of all such activities with a reiteration of India's *cultural diversity and regional linkages* that our great and ancient heritage bestows upon us. We plan to connect with our neighbourhood, through the conduct of *Samvad: Yangon Dialogue for Peace – Global Initiative for Conflict Avoidance & Environment Consciousness* at Yangon on 05-06 August 2017 in partnership with Myanmar (Sitagu Buddhist University and Myanmar Institute of Strategic Studies) and Japan (Tokyo Foundation) with VIF in the lead. The proceedings of the Samvad Dialogue held at New Delhi in 2015 will be released formally at Yangon during Samvad-II. Like the earlier two dialogues, almost a 100 international scholars from various fields are expected to attend.

Meanwhile, we are coming out with Volumes VI & VII of our flagship project of *History of Ancient India* by the end of 2017, and Volume VIII in early 2018. There are proposed to be a total of 11 volumes as part of this study.

Finally, we propose to slate an inaugural 'Annual Vivekananda Memorial Lecture' on 12 January 2018 – to commemorate Swamiji's birthday. The topic for the first lecture would be 'Swami Vivekananda: The Maker of Modern India'. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has kindly agreed to deliver the inaugural talk. It is proposed to plan this lecture each year by an eminent national or international leader on varied subjects of strategic and cultural interest.

As I Sign off

It is with a sense of utmost grief that we condole the passing away of two of our stalwarts, Lt Gen SK Sinha, PVSM, former Vice Chief of the Army Staff and former Governor of Jammu & Kashmir and Assam, and Shri AK Verma, former Secretary of the Research & Analysis Wing. Both of these esteemed luminaries had been members of the VIF Advisory Board and we depended heavily on their knowledge and strategic acumen.

And as 'the show must go on', we welcome into the VIF fold, Ambassadors Ashok Kantha and DP Srivastava, and Vice Adm Anil Chopra. We also welcome our new young and bright research analysts and interns who have joined us recently. I am sanguine that all of them would find their association with the VIF as an intellectually engaging experience. Jointly we will look forward to taking the VIF, which has already acquired notable prominence in the world of think tanks, to new heights.

Herein, I must highlight the singular contributions made by our learned stalwarts and colleagues who have guided the course of VIF's functioning. I am especially grateful to Vice Adm KK Nayyar, PVSM, AVSM, Chairman, Shri S Gurumurthy, Member of the Trust and a visionary and driving force, and the luminaries of the newly formed Executive Committee. No words of gratitude for our founding Director, Shri AK Doval, presently the National Security Advisor, would suffice for his having been instrumental in the establishment of such a fine Foundation. Our grateful thanks to the Advisory Board, Executive Council and Visiting Fellows who have also added great value to our Foundation.

I deeply appreciate the contributions of my esteemed colleagues Ambassador Satish Chandra, Shri CD Sahay, Lt Gen RK Sawhney, PVSM, AVSM; Ambassadors Kanwal Sibal, TCA Rangachari, PP Shukla; Vice Adm Raman Puri, PVSM, AVSM, VSM; Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee, PVSM, AVSM YSM; and Ambassadors



Ashok Kantha and DP Srivastava. They have been the pillars of our strength. We have also been very ably supported by our Senior Fellows and Research Analysts who have added to the Foundation's strength.

I also deeply appreciate our ever-efficient administrative echelon under the overall coordination of Ms Anuttama Ganguly and Shri Manas Bhattacharya for their mammoth contributions to the smooth functioning of the Foundation. Because of their dedication, VIF is indeed one of the most efficiently administered think tanks.

With the support of our team, we aim to continue to perform with renewed vigour the role of a positive think tank which is totally committed to the furtherance of national cause during 2017-18.

New Delhi
May 2017

General NC Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM
Director, VIF
Former Chief of Army Staff and
Founder Vice Chairman, NDMA





VIF is a non-partisan independent think tank focusing on study of contemporary India – its international relations, security problems, governance, and civilisational issues from an Indian perspective. Monitoring emerging trends, it aims at engaging experts, both within and outside the Foundation, to evolve informed policy options and work out alternative strategies. Through public discourse and interactions, it strives to create greater awareness among people and partner with civil society to make people vital stakeholders in national affairs.

Some of India's leading experts in the fields of security, diplomacy, governance and economy have got together under the aegis of the Foundation to generate ideas and stimulate action that could lead to India's all round empowerment and its ability to contribute to regional and global security and stability. Independently funded, VIF is not aligned to any political party, religious group or business house. Dedicated to India's long-term strategic, developmental and civilisational interests, it aims to ideate on fresh approaches and channelise them to those responsible for managing the affairs of the nation on the one hand and people at large on the other.

VIF works under the guidance of a Trust with eminent people in public life as its Trustees. It has an Advisory Board and an Executive Council comprising of distinguished persons from diverse fields with high professional accomplishments and long experience.

The Director is the Chief Executive of the Foundation and is nominated by the Trust.

Objectives

- Analyse India's external and internal security environment to offer effective inputs to shape policies and response strategies.
- Offer policy alternatives to contain internal conflicts caused by India's socio-economic disparities and political rivalries.
- Ideate on economic policies and models that would facilitate the well-being and prosperity of one and all.
- Interact with civil society and offer institutional support for exchange of ideas among conflicting groups.
- Deliberate on public policies, the working of national institutions and democratic bodies, and suggest measures for their revival and rejuvenation.
- Evolve benchmarks for good governance and efficiency in public institutions.
- Reassess, formulate and develop India's civilisational and cultural imperatives in an increasingly globalised world.
- Promote initiatives that further the cause of peace and global harmony.





Glimpses











Our Relationships Worldwide

Think Tanks/ Institutions/ Universities having Cooperation/ Exchanges with the VIF

Australia

- Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), Canberra
- National Security College, Australian National University (ANU), Canberra

Bangladesh

- Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), Dhaka

Canada

- Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Vancouver, BC

China

- China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CIISS), Beijing
- China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), Beijing
- Centre for South Asian Studies, Peking University, Beijing
- Research Institute for Indian Ocean Economies (RIIOE), Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, Kunming
- National Institute of International Strategy of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing
- Center for South Asia & West China Cooperation & Development, (SAWCCAD), Sichuan University, Chengdu
- Institute of South Asian Studies, (ISAS), Sichuan University, Chengdu
- Silk Road Think Tank Network (SiLKS), Development Research Council, Beijing
- Centre for Indian Studies (CIS), Shenzhen University, Shenzhen

- Shanghai Institute of International Studies (SISU), Shanghai
- Guangdong Institute of International Studies, Guangzhou affiliated to Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, PRC
- Pangoal Institution, Beijing

Finland

- Finland Future Research Centre (FFRC) University of Turku, Finland

Germany

- The Institute for Transnational Studies (ITS), Munich

Indonesia

- The Habibie Centre, Bali

Iran

- The Institute for Political & International Studies, Centre for International Research & Education (CIRE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iran

Israel

- The Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs (JCPA), Jerusalem
- Galilee International Management Institute (GIMI), Tel Aviv

Italy

- University of Turin

Japan

- Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (JINF), Tokyo



- The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), Tokyo
- The Tokyo Foundation, Tokyo
- The Japan Foundation, Tokyo
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), Tokyo.

Myanmar

- Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), Yangon.

Phillipines

- Yuchengco Centre (YC), De La Salle University, Manila.
- Albert Del Rosario Institute for Strategic & International Studies, Manila.

Sri Lanka

- Pathfinder Foundation, Colombo.
- Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo.

Russia

- Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Moscow.

Saudi Arabia

- The Middle East Centre for Strategic and Legal Studies

Sweden

- Utrikespolitiska Institutet, Stockholm.

Taiwan

- Prospect Foundation.

Ukraine

- National Institute for Strategic Studies (NISS)

Vietnam

- The Institute for Foreign Policy and Strategic Studies (Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam), Hanoi.

UAE

- The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies & Research (ECSSR), Abu Dhabi.

UK

- Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London.

USA

- The Atlantic Council, Washington DC
- The Heritage Foundation, Washington DC
- US - India Security Council Inc. (USISC), Washington DC
- Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA), National Defense University, Washington DC
- The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), University of Maryland
- Hudson Institute, Washington DC
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, Washington DC
- Facebook.

Indian Universities

- Gorakhpur University.

Other Institutions

- International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad.
- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi



Activities

During the course of year 2016-17, the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) continued to command respect and appreciation from strategic think tanks, academia, policymakers and students of geo-politics from across the country and the world. Discussions, seminars, talks and round table confabulations organised by the VIF on issues of national, regional and global salience witnessed wide participation by leading thinkers, analysts, serving and retired diplomats and bureaucrats, highly respected scholars, media persons and representatives of internationally acclaimed think tanks.

The VIF faculty was frequently invited to participate in major national and international conferences both in India and abroad. During such occasions, members of the VIF interacted with their counterparts on a wide range of security, geo-political, and socio-economic issues at the regional and international levels. Indeed, leading national

and international experts as well as think tanks found it educative to consult the VIF on the nuances and implications of contemporary developments in the Indian, regional and global geo-political environment; the advantage, of course, was mutual. The long roll of VIF's professional engagements during the year with leading institutions of strategic studies and analyses from the world over is indicative of the growing recognition of VIF as the nation's leading reservoir of progressive ideas. With several eminent scholars contributing, the books and research papers published by the VIF as well as the content on its website were widely read and appreciated by the strategic community throughout the year.

In the year gone by, VIF has succeeded to a commendable extent in achieving its objective of presenting to the national and international policy and opinion makers its insight on national security and defence, geo-political issues and the challenges of economic progress in consonance with India's national interests. The Foundation looks ahead to carry forward that hoary mission and play its part as India surges ahead to claim its rightful place under the Sun.



Seminars and Interactions



Centre for International Relations and Diplomacy

Interaction with China's Ambassador to India H.E. Le Yucheng, 05 April 2016

VIF hosted the outgoing Chinese Ambassador H.E. Le Yucheng for a farewell interaction on India-China relations where some of our leading strategists, diplomats and China experts discussed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations between India and China.



After exchange of diplomatic pleasantries, the discussions veered round to some hard talking over China's stance on terrorist Masood Azhar and the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK). Other irritants in the bilateral relationship, especially the

boundary issue, water sharing, and hostility against Dalai Lama, were also discussed with an open mind. The Indian side pointed out the inherent danger of selectively dealing with terrorism to the Chinese Ambassador.



Growing economic cooperation and the opening of Nathu La passes for Indian pilgrims visiting Mansarovar were well appreciated. The interaction highlighted the underpinnings of bilateral cooperation between the two nations that was home to 35 percent of the world's population.





Interaction with H.E. Mr. Nadir Patel, Canada's High Commissioner to India, 11 April 2016

A panel of policy experts representing the VIF, the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO), engaged H.E. Mr. Nadir Patel, Canada's High Commissioner to India, over a range of bilateral



issues. The focus was on forwarding bilateral cooperation in a mutually agreeable fashion in the context of agreements reached during Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi's visit to Canada in April 2015.



Opening the proceedings, General NC Vij, Director, VIF, expressed satisfaction on the upward trajectory of cooperation between India and Canada. Underscoring India's commitment towards climate change, he stressed on reinvigorating cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. Cooperation in oil and gas, science and technology, arctic research and counter-terrorism was also mentioned.



In his presentation, H.E. Nadir Patel listed out his government's priorities as governance, economic policies, the middle class, international relations and foreign policy based on multilateralism, humanitarian assistance, climate change, the Syrian crisis and anti-terrorism. He pointed out that India-Canada relations are at its best today, and improving them even further is also one of the top priorities for his government.



The session was chaired by Director VIF, Gen Vij and attended by Amb Rajagopalan, Amb Prabhat Shukla, Vice Adm Anoop Singh among others who participated actively during the interactive session.



Interaction with Prof Naela Quadri, Baluch Leader, 18 April 2016



The VIF invited noted women rights activist and exiled Baloch leader Prof Naela Quadri for a talk on the current situation in Pakistan's restive province, Balochistan. With General NC Vij, Director, VIF, in the Chair, strategic experts including Gen VN Sharma, former Chief of the Indian Army, Lt Gen SK Sinha, former Governor of J&K, and Assam, Amb Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary, Mr PC Haldar, former Director IB, and Mr AK Verma, former Chief R&AW, among others, participated in what was an eye-opener on Balochistan.



Ms. Quadri made a compelling case for the liberation of Balochistan from the tyranny of Pakistan. Questioning Pakistan's usurpation of Balochistan, she described the current situation as genocide. She felt that an independent Balochistan

was conducive to South Asia's security, especially that of India's, because Pakistan, thriving on Balochistan's natural resources, has morphed itself into a rogue state with tremendous nuisance value for countries around it. Worse, Pakistan is almost ready to gift Balochistan away to China on a platter. Giving an insight of Pakistan's hatred against India she said that Pakistan is an artificial state and its further continuance is a big risk to global peace and



security. She expressed dismay over India's reserved approach towards the problems in Balochistan, an approach that may cost India dearly in the long run. While urging India to extend diplomatic and moral support to the Baloch cause, she said that the fiercely independent Balochs would fight to the last person to protect their land, culture and identity. The issue of India extending a helping hand to the beleaguered Balochs was discussed during the interactive session.





Interaction with Taiwanese Delegation, 04 May 2016

Dr Lai Yi-chung, Deputy Director of Taiwan Think Tank and leading strategist of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), accompanied by Dr Mumin Chen, Director, Center for Strategic Studies on South Asia and Middle East, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan, visited the VIF for an interaction on India-Taiwan relations, Taiwan's new South-bound Policy, and related issues.



The welcome address by Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF was followed by two presentations. In his presentation on India-Taiwan relations, Dr Mumin Chen pointed out that in spite of regular contacts, bilateral agreements, diplomatic exchanges, President Tsai Ing-wen's visit, and India being Taiwan's 19th largest trade partner, the trajectory of India-Taiwan relations have yet to reach the desired level. Participants in the discussion felt that there is a need for greater cooperation, especially in the academic and cultural areas.



Mr Lai Yi-chung then made an assessment of Taiwan's priority on its New South-bound Policy which emphasises on greater engagement with countries in Southeast Asia, including India, so as to diversify its trade with dynamic economies. Under the third wave of the broad-based South-bound policy, Taiwan will emphasise on cultural, social, educational and other linkages that exist between the two nations. The speaker hoped that there would be more engagements and participation by both nations at multilateral and bilateral forums as part of the policy.

In the Q&A session, establishment of Mandarin teaching centres, managerial courses in India, the 1992 consensus, policies on South China Sea, global terrorism, and people-to-people contact were discussed.

Visit of Taiwanese Delegation, 30 May 2016

The VIF hosted a four-member Taiwanese delegation led by Maj Gen Yuan-Shiun Chang and comprising of Capt Cheng-Hua Hsu, Lt Cdr Jin-Tong Jang and Capt Tzong Shiao Yen for an interaction over issues of mutual interest. During the interaction, the security environment, India's Act East Policy, maritime challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, economic and security cooperation, and cultural exchanges were discussed.



With General NC Vij, Director, VIF, spearheading the discussions, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Amb TCA Rangachari and Amb Ashok Kantha, among others, exchanged their perspectives with the Taiwanese delegation. The interaction indicated a growing convergence of views across a range of issues despite a low profile of the bilateral relationship.

Interaction with H.E. Mr Hyun Cho, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to India, 21 June 2016

VIF hosted Amb H.E. Hyun Cho for an internal discussion on 'India-South Korea relations and the way forward'. A panel of policy experts – Air Marshal PS Ahluwalia, Amb Ashok Sajjanhar, Amb Ashok Kantha and Mr CD Sahay, among others, interacted with the visiting diplomat on bilateral matters, including trade and commerce, political and security relations and people-to-people exchanges.



Opening the session, General NC Vij, Director, VIF, mentioned that our diplomatic relationship has progressed steadily and satisfactorily, with economy taking the centre stage. Thus the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) of 2010 was upgraded to the Special Strategic Partnership in 2015. However,

the framework of CEPA needs a review, not only because India suffers a huge trade imbalance but also because of stagnation in bilateral trade, adding that 'Make in India' offers new investment opportunities to the South Korean companies. General Vij further stressed that both nations are confronted by inimical neighbours–North Korea and Pakistan, respectively–both enjoying patronage from China. A whole range of areas in defence and security cooperation – cyber security, maritime security cooperation, ship-building etc., were also identified.

Ambassador Hyun Cho, began by saying that in many ways India resembles the South Korea of the 1970s, where the economy is being fuelled by the rising aspirations of the ordinary people. Endorsing the policy reforms since 2014, he said India would emerge as a 'big size America' provided it stayed the course and clocked two-digit growth over the next two decades. This is an opportune time for both countries – while India is ramping up its manufacturing sector with foreign investments, South Korean companies, wary of China's unfettered economic slump, are looking for new avenues for investment, a win-win situation for both.



During the interactive session, both sides examined the possibilities for multi-sectoral engagement, including cooperation in the field of smart cities, energy, agriculture, academia and security.





Interaction with H.E. Ms Harinder Sidhu, Australian High Commissioner to India, 15 July 2016

H.E. Ms Harinder Sidhu, Australia's High Commissioner to India, delivered a talk on 'India-Australia Relations and the Way Forward', followed by an interactive session with VIF's panel of security and foreign policy experts.



General NC Vij, Director, VIF, underscored the importance of Australia in India's Asia-Pacific strategic calculus. He suggested a range of mutual security measures including the securing of common seas in the Indo-Pacific region and tackling terrorist groups, money laundering and drug trafficking. Recalling China's objections over the 2007 'Malabar Exercise', the Director expressed his satisfaction over the resumption of joint military exercises and hoped for revival of that exercise. Further, with Australian uranium for our nuclear energy, and cooperation in management of water, education, smart cities, 'Digital India' and 'Make in India' have opened up new opportunities between the two countries, General Vij pointed out.



In response, H.E. Ms Sidhu, besides dwelling on the bilateral aspects of the relationship, explained the region's economic importance and the security threats, making it imperative for the two countries to evolve a common security framework. On maritime security, she underscored the necessity of keeping sea lanes open for international trade. She also stressed on strengthening the ASEAN-led mechanism, notably the East Asia Summit. While identifying energy, water, education, and science and technology among the areas of potential cooperation, the High Commissioner also mooted the proposal for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CECA) between our two countries.



Vice Adm Satish Soni, Amb Satish Chandra, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, and Mr CD Sahay, among others, interacted with the Australian High Commissioner during the session.

Seminar on 'India-EU Relations: Opportunities and Challenges', 01 August 2016

In a first ever interaction between the two think tanks, VIF, in collaboration with Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC), held a day-long seminar on 'India-European (EU) Relations: Opportunities and Challenges'. Experts on both sides jointly deliberated upon a broad range of measures with a view to broaden the scope of cooperation between India and the European Union, looking



specifically at issues such as renewable energy, trade and economic partnership and the EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA), and countering extremism and radicalisation. The three-member FFRC delegation comprised of Dr Juha Kiskinen, Director FFRC, Dr Tuomas Valtonen, Director of the Technology Research Centre at the University of Turku and Dr Burkhard Auffermann, Senior Fellow, FFRC.



With Amb TCA Rangachari, VIF, presiding, Mr RP Singh, former head of Power Grid, Mr Sanjay Baru, Consulting Fellow, IISS, London, and Dr Burkhard Auffermann, Senior Fellow, FFRC, chaired a session each. Ms Lydia Thomas, Head of Observer Research Foundation's Centre for Resources Management, Mr Piyush Mohit, Head of Strategy Re-New Power Ventures, Mr Pranav Kumar, Head of International Policy and Trade, and Mr Vikash Khitha, L&T Finance Holdings, among others, made valuable contributions to make the workshop a success.



Interaction with Delegation from China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), 05 August 2016

A delegation of China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), led by its President, Prof Ji Zhiye, with Mr Han Liqun and Mr Hu Shisheng, among others, visited the VIF for an interaction on 'India-China relations and the way forward'. Issues that came up for discussion included: trends and prospects for economic cooperation, development of the CPEC in the disputed PoK, prospects for Af-Pak with China as intermediary between the Taliban and the Afghan government, and implications of the recent ruling of The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in the South China Sea dispute involving China and the Philippines. With General NC Vij, Director, VIF, in the Chair, discussions were moderated by Amb Ashok Kantha, while Amb Kanwal Sibal, Ms Bidisha Ganguly, Mr Sushant Sareen and Cmde Gopal Suri, among others, participated.



General NC Vij's opening remarks touched upon the commonality of interests that merit closer cooperation between the two Asian economic giants on the one hand and Chinese submarines prowling in the Indian Ocean and China's growing nexus with Pakistan, among other impediments to a smooth conduct of bilateral relationship between the neighbours on the other.



In his turn, Prof Ji Zhiye described the China-India relationship as one of the defining relationships of the 21st century. He said that China and India can move ahead on economic cooperation while keeping the border dispute at bay, a view contested by Indian interlocutors. Similarly, the Indian interlocutors were at a loss to understand China's economic imperatives behind laying out crucial infrastructure projects under the CPEC that runs through Pakistan's volatile provinces. They expressed dissonance over China treating the entire South China Sea, a global maritime common, as its core interest.



In a candid interaction, both sides underscored the need to narrow down differences as potential for cooperation was great and to mutual advantage. The Chinese side also urged the need to explore areas of potential cooperation between the two countries across regional and international forums.

Interaction with Dr Ashley Tellis on Indo-US Relations, 26 August 2016

Dr Ashley Tellis, an expert on non-proliferation, strategic issues in South Asia, and US foreign policy, was invited for an interaction. The interaction focused on crystal-gazing the potential trajectory of Indo-US relations with a new US President in office. While the current trends in bilateral cooperation, challenges and opportunities were discussed in a holistic manner, the interaction delved deeper into specific issues, especially the scope and limits of the ongoing bilateral defence and technological cooperation, joint Indo-Pacific vision, the Af-Pak situation and China's defiance of international norms, among other issues.



Dr Ashley Tellis presented a realistic assessment of convergence as well as differences between India



and US policy towards South Asia, indicating no major breakthrough in US policy towards the Af-Pak region, especially towards Pakistan, unless, of course, necessitated by a dramatic turn of events. The sense was that the US has not given up on Pakistan, while terrorism emanating from Pakistan's soil and the danger of loose nukes falling into the hands of non-state actors continue to remain a major cause of concern. The US drawdown in Afghanistan however poses considerable challenges to India while Pakistan continues to play its devious game in Afghanistan. It is in this context the urgency of stoking up the ANA (Afghanistan National Army) with required fire power was succinctly underlined by the Indian interlocutors.



Dr Tellis, however, evinced a growing convergence between strategic interests of India and the US, especially towards the Indo-Pacific region where protecting global commons and upholding the international rule of law is a shared concern. He assured that the US technological regimes are amenable to collaboration with Indian companies, and that such collaborations will eventually help

the US military. With expanding defence and technological cooperation, Dr Ashley Tellis urged the need to kick-start cooperation in cyber defence, space and missile technologies.

During the Q&A session, Indian interlocutors sought to ascertain the US perspective on the China-Pakistan nexus, and mutual cooperation in the Gulf. They also underlined the fact that divergence of views on Pakistan was a potential hindrance to taking the strategic partnership to the next level.

Visit of Chinese Delegation, 08 September 2016

Leading a five-member delegation of the 'China Association for International Friendly Contact' (CAIFC), Mr Liu Hanwu, Director, Asian Affairs and Standing Counsel Member of the CAIFC, visited the VIF for an interaction that hinged on the potential for improving ties between China and India, especially around cultural and historical legacies.



Lt Gen RK Sawhney, Dean, VIF, chaired the session, and stressed the importance of history and culture in resonating India's approach to foreign policy. He underlined that differences in perceptions, which have stalled the potentials for bilateral dividends, could be substantially narrowed down if people-to-people relations and the think tanks and media play their due roles in sustaining improved ties between the neighbours. The General stressed that initiatives being taken at the highest political level need to be supported by all.

The head of the Chinese delegation opined that commonality of interests between China and India far outweighs their differences when the common stake is in uplifting about two-thirds



of humanity from hunger and depravation. In a reference to India's export of Buddhism to China, Mr Liu acknowledged the former's contribution in shaping China's cultural lineage. He, however, talked about the damage being done to the relations by an overzealous media blowing things out of proportion. Striking a common chord, Mr Liu stressed that 'Make in India' and 'Make in China' can be made compatible. Possibly peeved over India's growing proximity with the US, Mr Liu Hanwu suggested that as mature nations both nations are capable of sorting out their bilateral differences, and as such there is no place for outside interference in regional affairs.



During the interactive session, there was consensus that bilateral relations have progressed despite the disconcert on many contentious issues, and that improvement in Sino-Indian relations would bring peace and prosperity to the entire region. The key role of think tanks in this respect was appreciated.

Interaction with Amb Amar Sinha, Secretary, Economic Relations, MEA, Government of India, 09 September 2016

Amb Amar Sinha interacted with a select panel of policy experts at the VIF on 09 Sep 2016, focusing on the Prime Minister's visit to Africa and the way forward in India-Africa relations. The interaction focused on adding more teeth to India's Africa policy.

General NC Viji, Director, VIF, while chairing the session, underlined that after decades of neglect and a major departure from the practice of engaging Africa only through the Organisation of



African Unity (OAU), India has decided to engage with African countries on a bilateral basis through a series of sustained engagements.

Amb Amar Sinha gave a broad overview of India's refurbished Africa policy by underlining security and economy as the driving imperatives of India's present outreach to Africa. While Africa, a resource-rich continent, is a big attraction for Indian investors, it is also perceived as a potential bulwark against Chinese expansionism in the Indian Ocean. In view of the grounds already lost India needs to redouble their efforts insofar as their mission in Africa is concerned, the Ambassador stressed.



Amb Sinha's presentation also highlighted that whereas the Chinese have adopted an intrusive model of development, India has chosen to be a partner in development, focusing more on building capacities for the African countries. While Indian projects, flowing from lines of credit, are financed by India, they still remain locally owned with the



Indian role limited only to providing technical assistance and training in soft skills. Undeniably, while India is being perceived as a benefactor, the Chinese are perceived largely as exploiters of Africa's natural resources, and therefore face pockets of resistance across many countries in the continent. Many African countries are further peeved because of unsavoury meddling in their internal politicking by Chinese businessmen seeking more favourable political dispensations.



The ensuing interaction focused largely on making the Indian projects more resilient, result-oriented and time-bound. It was also brought out that India's lines of credit projects in Africa need to be linked up with 'Make in India', especially in the defence sector. Toning up India's Africa policy with military diplomacy and leveraging the Indian Diaspora in Africa were among other major takeaways of the interactive session.

Round Table Discussion: India-Iran Relations, 19 September 2016

Amb Dinkar Srivastava, India's former Ambassador to Iran, conducted a round table discussion on 'India-Iran relations and the way forward'. The focus was on three key issues: terrorism, regional connectivity and India's oil and gas imports from Iran.

Initiating the discussion, Amb Srivastava pointed out Iran's strategic significance for India, both in terms of energy security as also in getting access to Afghanistan and beyond. Tardy for much of the Cold War period, the bilateral relationship has been progressing steadily since the joint collaboration with the Northern Alliance against the Taliban

regime and withdrawal of the erstwhile Soviet Union from Afghanistan. Even while Iran reeled under crippling sanctions, India continued to import crude oil from Iran.



Post-sanctions, while Iran seeks to emerge as a regional power, it is becoming increasingly important for India. India's assistance to develop Iran's Chabahar port is largely perceived as India's answer to Pakistan's habitual intransigence, provided the assistance goes on to connect the Port with the hinterland. There was consensus for increasing India's investments in Iran, especially in the hydro-carbon sector. It was also agreed that India should not view its relations with Iran as a subset of her relations with other countries. With India putting the spotlight on Pakistan's gross violations of human rights in Balochistan, its cascading effect on Iran was also discussed. Experts were largely of the view that the Balochistan crisis is likely to remain confined to areas within Pakistan's territories.





Visit of Delegation from China's Pangaoal Institution, 20 September 2016

Leading a four-member delegation, Mr YI Peng, founder President of the Pangaoal Institution, a Beijing-based non-governmental think tank, visited the VIF for an interaction, targeted at exploring potentials for expanding economic cooperation between China and India, especially in the private sectors. The Pangaoal Institution, notably, provides consultancy services to a large network of private business industries with a combined worth of over 5 trillion RMB.



With the visiting delegation intending to assess India's business environment and the potential for Chinese investments in India, the interaction focused on the need for both China and India to expand economic cooperation, in view of the fact that both countries have similar developmental goals. However, mutual trust and right political atmosphere is necessary to foster economic cooperation.



VIF interlocutors pointed out that the boundary dispute was a constant irritant, and a good step to remove mistrust would be to share border maps. It was also noted that with the bilateral relationship landing into rough weathers quite too often, there is need to insulate economic cooperation from political vagaries. Mentioning India's burgeoning trade deficit with China, greater market access for Indian products and curb on exports of Chinese steel and tyres was suggested.



Speaking on behalf of China's private industry, Mr Peng said that Chinese businessmen, enthused by the economic policies of Delhi, were willing to invest in India and run the setups as Indian companies. He however said that tight scrutiny of Chinese firms was impeding businesses in India and urged the easing of visa norms for Chinese businessmen. The delegation was assured that India remains committed to creating a favourable business environment for foreign investors, more so for the Chinese. Both sides recognised that industry to industry ties were vital for expanding bilateral economic cooperation. Exchanges between think tanks as well as representatives of private industries was suggested.

Discussion on 'Russia in the 21st Century: Where From, Where To', 23 September 2016

'Russia in the 21st Century: Where from, Where To', was conducted by Amb PS Raghavan and chaired by Amb PP Shukla, both India's former Ambassadors to Russia. While the focus was Russia's foreign policy strategy under President Putin, especially its relations with major world powers including

Europe, America and China, the interaction also substantially delved into the perceived drift taking place in Russia-India relations over the last few years.



With General Vij moderating the session, Mr Vijai Kapoor, Amb TCA Rangachari, Amb Bhaswati Mukherjee, Prof Nirmala Joshi, among others, participated in the discussions. In his opening remarks, General NC Vij, Director, VIF, underlined the fact that Russia will remain the mainstay of India's military power for the foreseeable future, as over 60 percent of Indian military equipment is of Russian origin. He further stated that even with a weakened economy, Russia continues to be a formidable global military power.



Amb PS Raghavan, analysed the current drivers of Russia's security and foreign policy strategy, a strategy which has worked well both internally and externally even against western misinformation and questions over Moscow's relevance in world affairs. Crediting President Putin for pulling Russia out of economic quicksand, the Ambassador asserted that he has proved Russia's relevance to global affairs, buttressing his argument with Moscow's role in fructifying Iran's nuclear deal, its fight against the

Daesh and stance against the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Ukraine.



Regarding the present state of Russia-India relations, the consensus was that the drift has resulted largely from the Russian perception of India-US relations. Experts also agreed that India needs to have a calibrated policy approach towards both the United States and Russia while keeping her strategic autonomy intact.

Interaction with Ambassador Timothy Roemer, former Member of the US Congress and Ambassador to India, 26 September 2016

Amb Timothy J Roemer, former Member of the US Congress for six terms and former Ambassador to India, shared with the VIF, his perspective on the 2016 US presidential election, as also the future direction in Indo-US relations.



Amb Lalit Mansingh, India's former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to the United States while chairing the session, complimented Amb Timothy Roemer for laying the foundation of vibrant Indo-US relations. Concurring with General Vij's views that the relationship would continue to flourish irrespective of who wins the race to the White House, he said that the US Presidential election remains a globally-watched event as



countries around the globe, including India, have a stake in it.

Amb Roemer, an advisor to the Presidential nominee Ms Hillary Clinton on security and foreign policy issues, offered a fair and objective analysis of the impending election. He pointed at the negative trends that made people angry and frustrated. The outcome however would depend on a number of factors – personalities, connect with electorate, composition of the electorate college itself, and outreach of technology. He however was reassuring that the Indo-US relationship would continue to move in an upward trajectory regardless.



VIF Delegation's Visit to Myanmar, 23-25 October 2016

A VIF delegation led by its Director, Gen NC Vij and comprising of Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Amb Ashok Kantha, Brig Vinod Anand and Mr NMP Jayesh, a Singapore based expert representing the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) visited Myanmar to interact with the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), leaders of the National League for Democracy, Deputy Commandant and faculty of National Defence College and high level officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Naypidaw.



Amb Nyunt Maung Shein, Director MISIS, Yangon, and other senior members of the think tank interacted with the delegation on matters of India-Myanmar relations and the way forward. It was clear that though the Myanmar people are more used to the Indian way of life, the Chinese have more to offer. The VIF delegation highlighted India's 'Act East' and 'Neighbourhood First' policies, pointing out that Myanmar is at the fulcrum of these initiatives.



The delegation also interacted with H.E. Thura Tin Oo (former General), Patron and Chairman of 'National League for Democracy' (NLD) and his senior colleagues, where good neighbourly relations, India's support for democracy, complications of Myanmar's peace process, and stability of India's import prices were discussed. The Myanmar National Defence College at Naypidaw was visited next. Here, Brig La Than Maung explained the insurgency and ethnic problems but was not forthcoming about the military's approach to the Peace and Reconciliation process being promoted by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD.

This was followed by interaction with Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs –Mr Soe Lynn Han of





Strategic Studies and Training Department, Mr Kya Moe Tin of International Organisations and Economic Department, and other officials. Here, Myanmar's evolving international and bilateral relations, situation in Rakhine state, national security and developmental issues, including Pakistan's proxy war were discussed.

Visit of Delegation from Peking University, China, 08 Nov 2016

Mr Liu Xianjing, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Center (ICC) for the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), led a delegation from Peking University (China) to visit the VIF. The visit was aimed at furthering bilateral relations through appreciation of each other's viewpoints on a number of critical issues.



Pendency of boundary settlement, disconcerting security environment in the AF-Pak region, terrorism, ramifications of China-Pakistan economic and security linkages especially in the



POK, China's port building around the Indian Peninsula, bilateral trade and cultural exchanges came up for discussion. The interaction also focused on improving public diplomacy between the two countries as part of confidence building measures. Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Dean, Centre for Defence Studies, VIF, moderated the discussions, while Amb TCA Rangachari, Amb R Rajagopalan, Mr Jayadeva Ranade, among others, interacted with members of the visiting delegation.

Interaction with Delegation from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, 15 November 2016



A 10-member delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, with Mr Yang Yu leading and Mr Wu Songlin, Mr Li Bijian, Ms Zhang Mengzhuo, among others, as members of the delegation, held a broad-ranging interaction with the VIF's faculty on issues of mutual interest.

Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Dean, Centre for Defence Studies, VIF, presented an overview of Sino-Indian





relations during the present NDA-led government's tenure. He mentioned a Modi-Xi chemistry and pointed out that despite serious differences, both countries have managed their relationship over the decades with maturity, and that common economic interests have added new dimensions to the relationship. Those who interacted with the Chinese delegation included Adm Raman Puri, Brig Vinod Anand, Mr Sushant Sareen and Cmde Gopal Suri, among others. The ensuing interaction focused on convergence of views on a whole range of issues like stability in the Af-Pak region, state-sponsorship of terrorism, and maritime challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.

Interaction with Australian Delegation, 17 November 2016



The VIF held a interaction with a five-member Australian delegation led by Mr Graham Fletcher, First Assistant Secretary, North East Asia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia), and comprising of Mr Adam Clancy, Ms Jenny Grant-Curnow, Ms Jacinta Hudson and Mr Cameron Bruce as its members. The interaction focused on some of the recent developments in North East Asia, US foreign policy towards the Indo-Pacific region under President Trump, managing the rise of China, bilateral economic and security cooperation and people-to-people relations between India and Australia, among other relevant subjects. Discussions on the VIF side were moderated by Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Dean, Centre for Defence Studies.

Visit of VIF Delegation to Taiwan, 23 to 27 November 2016

A delegation from VIF visited Taiwan with the aim of giving a new impetus to India-Taiwan Relations. The India-Taiwan Strategic Dialogue commenced with VIF and Prospect Foundation, Taiwan, discussing the PLA's Military Reforms and its implications on Taiwan and India, India-China and Cross Strait Relations and Taiwan's New Southbound policy.



Subsequently, the delegation met senior Taiwanese officials, including Mr John Deng, Minister, Executive Mr Yuan and Mr Chih-Chung Wu, the Deputy Foreign Minister. Areas for development of relationship and specific actions required in the fields of trade and investment, education, agriculture, science and technology, and culture were discussed. Security situation in East Asia and Trump administration's policy on the Asia Pacific landscape were discussed with Mr Joseph Wu, Secretary General, National Security Council and Admiral His-Min Lee, Vice Minister, Ministry of National Defense. Areas of defence and security cooperation were also touched upon.



VIF requested the Taiwanese for a road map for the implementation of its New Southbound policy as applicable to India, which they kindly agreed to. The visit highlighted the large number of areas of convergence in which both India and Taiwan could effectively cooperate together.

Interaction with Delegation from Guangdong Institute for International Strategies, 25 November 2016

A four-member delegation led by Prof Sui Guangjun, Vice President of Guangdong Institute for International Strategies and Party Secretary of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies interacted with the VIF faculty led by Amb Satish Chandra. Prof Guangjun and his team spoke on India-China bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation, their roles in global governance, and cooperation opportunities under the 21st Maritime Silk Road Initiative. From the VIF side Dr Sanjaya Baru spoke on Indian economy and areas of cooperation with China including India's perspective on China's Belt and Road Initiative, while Cmde Gopal Suri described possible areas of cooperation with China in the maritime domain.



Amb Satish Chandra pointed out the areas where China needs to be sensitive about India's interests – like terrorism, NSG membership, the CPEC passing over Indian territory occupied by Pakistan, etc. Prof Sui and his team emphasised on mutual cooperation at the global platforms where both sides share similar perspectives. An interactive session on how best to address mutual differences ensued.

Interaction with H.E. Mr Nils Ragnar Kamsvåg, Norway's Ambassador to India, 28 November 2016

Amid growing uncertainties over Brexit, the VIF invited Norway's Ambassador to India, H.E. Nils Ragnar Kamsvåg for a talk on current and post-Brexit Europe. General Vij in his opening remarks highlighted the political level exchanges that have led to improvement in bilateral ties between the two countries. He also voiced his deep appreciation for Norway's impressive performance in terms of human development index.



Amb Kamsvåg's talk focused on his country's economic and social security policies, especially the state pension fund, which have drawn the attention of many countries, including India. He then shed light on Norway's modular relations with the European Union (EU), which Britain might consider in its post-Brexit relations. A non-EU member, Norway has access to Europe's single market in return for implementation of most of EU legislations; the Ambassador spelt out implications of any such arrangement if the UK were to adopt





the Norwegian model. He also discussed the likely impact of Trump's presidency on US-Europe relationship, the relationship between Europe and Russia and the migration problem in Europe, among other issues.

Finally, Lt Gen R K Sawhney, Amb Prabhat P Shukla, Amb D P Srivastava and Amb Ashok K Kantha, among others, interacted with the Norwegian Ambassador. Questions during the interactive session were related to Europe as a global player, sub-nationalist trends, impact of US policies towards Russia under a new President, and the trajectory of transatlantic relationships.

The Second Australia India Leadership Dialogue (2016), 04 December 2016

This Dialogue was held at Melbourne over four



sessions where 'Politics Update', 'Mutual Trade and Business Co-Operation', 'Security Architecture in the Region', and 'Summary and Next Steps' were discussed. The dialogue was attended by senior leaders from both nation's government, business and civil society. On behalf of the VIF, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney attended.

Delegates discussed a wide range of topics of mutual interest such as geo-strategic interests, regional security architecture, trade and investment, energy, education and skills, water and food, agriculture and agro-processing, and infrastructure. Lt Gen Sawhney, as the lead speaker for Session 3, delivered a talk on the 'Security Architecture for the Asia Pacific', where he articulated that the strategic and economic landscape of Asia Pacific was rapidly changing on account of the rapid rise of Asia as an economic power-house. He emphasised

that in view of this it was imperative that the region strengthens mechanisms to safeguard its economic growth and security..

The Leadership Dialogue helped build cooperation and relationships based on trust between leaders in government, business and civil society from India and Australia.

Conference on 'Security along the Silk Road', 15-16 December 2016



With 11 international and 12 Indian delegates participating, the VIF collaborated with the Near East and South Asia (NESA) Centre for Strategic Studies, USA, to organise a two-day conference on 'Security along the Silk Road'. The major focus of discussions was on political developments in the Central Asian Republics (CAR), economic diversity, energy sector, security threats like terrorism and extremism, and regional connectivity.

Gen Vij, Director, VIF, asserted that the geo-strategic importance of Central Asia comes from its strategic location, abundance of natural resources, and rising security concerns. Dr Roger Kanga from NESA then highlighted the importance of connectivity





and relations that the CARs maintain with other regions of Asia. Amb Gitesh Sarma, from Ministry of External Affairs, offered his special remarks to maintain that India considers Central Asia to be its 'extended neighbourhood' and a priority area in policy-making.

Ms Anna Gussarova (Kazakhstan), Dr Meena Singh Roy, Amb Sikand Tayal and Prof Nirmala Joshi focused on the challenges of Political Developments in Central Asia. The next discussion on 'Economic Diversification and Modernisation', was conducted by Mr Ravshan Sobirzoda (Tajikistan), Mr Yevgenniy Khon (Kazakhstan) and Prof Gulshan Sachdeva. The Energy Sector was discussed by Mr Talant Sultanov (Kyrgyzstan), Ms Shebonti Dadwal and Amb DP Srivastava. Security Challenges were then delved into by Mr Hekmatullah Azamy (Afghanistan), Dr Hana Shelest (Ukraine) and Mr Sushant Sareen. Regional Connectivity was the focus of Dr Xin Zhang (China), Dr Jafar Haghpanah (Iran), Amb Asoke Mukerji, and Amb DP Srivastava. The final session dealt with the role of outside powers, with Amb Ashok Sajjanhar, Dr Roger Kangas (USA) and Ms Ozge Nur Ogutcu (Turkey) participating.



The discussions reiterated that in order to enhance connectivity and integration in the region, India has to develop alternate routes through Iran. Besides, terrorism and radicalism pose serious challenge to Central Asia, and this calls for consorted efforts by all powers to deal with the menace.

Interaction with Ambassador Peter Burian, European Union's Special Representative for Central Asia, 10 February 2017

Amb Peter Burian, European Union's (EU) Special Representative for Central Asia, was invited to deliver a talk on 'EU's Perspective and Strategy for Central Asia'. His address was followed by a presentation by Amb Ashok Sajjanhar, former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, on 'India's Perspective on Relations with Central Asian Republics'. The event was chaired by Amb DP Srivastava, former Ambassador of India to Iran.

Amb Burian's presentations covered the issues of EU's engagement with Central Asia, development of inter-continental and intra-regional connectivity,





investments in the CARs, the 'Southern Gas Corridor' and EU's pledge to provide knowledge, expertise and support to the CARs in developing various sectors of the economy. Though EU is alarmed by the heavy presence of Russia and China in the region, it does not see it as a threat, he commented.

The Ambassador reiterated the importance of security and stability in the region and the concerns of radical violence in Central Asia, Islamic State (IS) activities in Afghanistan where 60 percent of such elements are from Central Asia. He argued that the CARs should strengthen democracy and introduce reforms to eradicate radicalisation. He professed that EU and India share similar priorities in the Central Asian region, and therefore, can cooperate in various sectors, and that developing north-south connectivity between India and Europe through the CARs was a good idea.

VIF-JINF 'Bilateral Dialogue' on India-Japan Relations, 16 February 2017

A bilateral dialogue with Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (JINF) was organised to deliberate on the changing strategic environment in Asia and enhance India-Japan bilateral ties in the context of India's Act East Policy, Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, and India's and Japan's position in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the Pacific regions.

General NC Viji, Director, VIF began by emphasising the special friendship India enjoys with Japan and their stabilising role in Indo-Pacific. Growing uncertainties after the US presidential elections had created an environment of ambivalence that could be addressed through mutual cooperation

in economic, defence, technology and cultural fields. In response, Mr Yasushi Tomiyama, Planning Committee Member, JINF referred to the growing significance of India-Japan cooperation. He stated that Japan remained uncertain of Trump's commitment to security in the Asia-Pacific, and his discarding of the TPP was especially a disappointment.



Deliberations over three sessions commenced with the topic of 'Geo-strategic Challenges in the Indo-Pacific' moderated by Ambassador Kanwal Sibal, where China's assertive rise, its Belt and Road Initiative, South China Sea, resurgence of Russia, North Korea, and the US-2 defence deal were discussed by Amb Aftab Seth, Mr Tomiyama and Amb Rajiv Sikri. The next session on 'Economic, Industrial and Technological Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific', described Japan's role in India's infrastructural development and automobile sector, cooperation in African ventures and partnership potentiality in flagship projects such as Smart Cities, Digital India, renewable and nuclear energy, Sagarmala, etc. This session's participants were





Mr Sabyasachi Dasmohapatra, Mr Ranjeet Goswami, Mr Tomiyama and Mr Vikas Khita. The third session addressed the maritime challenges posed by China's military assertiveness, militarisation of artificial islands in the South China Sea, strengthening law of sea frameworks, improving connectivity, expanding the scope of the 'Malabar' exercises and joint patrolling. Captain Seiji Kurosawa of Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force, Amb Yogendra Kumar, and Vice Adm Anil Chopra participated in this session.

Overall, the bilateral dialogue served to reinforce shared interests and complementarities that could lead to peace and prosperity for the entire Indo-Pacific region.



'Trilateral India-Japan-USA Dialogue' – The Indo-Pacific, 17 February 2017

To discuss shared concerns among India, US and Japan arising out of strategic dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region, VIF collaborated with the US-based Hudson Institute and Tokyo-based Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (JINF) to organise a



trilateral dialogue. Seeking to address the growing military activity and the lack of an overarching security framework has infused a sense of suspicion and apprehension in the region, the key concern of upholding freedom of global commons served as the main theme for these deliberations. The trilateral dialogue was attended by esteemed scholars from the three representative think tanks and leading members of the strategic community in India. A keynote address was also delivered by Dr S Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary of India.

The viewpoints alluded to India's economic dynamism and multi-pluralism translating to the entire region, countering the unequal dependencies that most countries have built up with China, and Japan's need to define its role and contribution to the stability of the region. In this context, the need for India, US and Japan to reach out to the larger region through bilateral and multilateral partnerships assumes priority. It was appreciated that US engagement was indispensable to the Indo-Pacific region. The Trump administration could therefore bring in resurgence of geo-economics along with geopolitics because China's rise through





its G-2 initiative and the failure of its 'Pivot to Asia' strategy has led to a latent ambivalence in the region. Greater defence cooperation, technology transfers and people-to-people interactions for the trilateral to endure was proposed, as was the need to reach out to Russia.



Finally, it was agreed that the three preeminent think tanks should undertake to shoulder the responsibility of encouraging greater cooperation between their three countries.

Interaction with Chinese Scholars on the Belt and Road Initiative, 23 February 2017

With Beijing upping its diplomatic ante on its 'Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)', a group of Chinese scholars, led by Amb Liu Jinsong, visited VIF to seek support for an international conference on BRI slated to take place in Beijing on 14 and 15 May 2017. Briefings on the benefits of BRI that could accrue to India, the delegation opined that India's participation would contribute to the success of the conference.



During the interactive session, the VIF faculty stated that while India supported connectivity across the region, they remained sceptical about many aspects of BRI which would undermine India's territorial and security interests. General NC Vij, Director, VIF, moderated the discussions, while Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Amb TCA Rangachari, Amb Ashok Kantha, among others, engaged the visiting delegates in a productive exchange of thoughts.

VIF Delegation in Washington DC, 28 February-4 March 2017

A delegation from the VIF comprising Director, General NC Vij, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Amb Kanwal Sibal, Lt Gen Davinder Kumar and Dr Harinder Sekhon visited Washington DC for the annual 'Quad Plus Dialogue'. This opportunity was used by the VIF to hold other important meetings with US Senators, Congressmen, senior government officials and members of the Indian Diaspora.

At the US Capitol, there were exclusive meetings with Congressman Ed Royce, Chairman of the United States House Committee on Foreign Affairs,





Congressman George Holding, who is Co-Chair of the House India Caucus and a Representative for North Carolina's 2nd Congressional District, House Democratic Whip and a respected voice on foreign policy and international affairs, Representative Steny Hoyer, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse from Rhode island, an ardent spokesman on important national issues like education, healthcare, social security reform, international trade and economic relations. Chairman Ed Royce, a founding member of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, touched upon various issues of concern in South Asia and spoke about India's difficult neighbourhood, Pakistani madrasas as breeding ground for terrorists and the USD 500 billion Indo-US trade.



more positive, cooperative and responsible role, were discussed.

Around table discussion, hosted by the US India Business Council on US-India defence relations followed. The Defence Acquisitions and India Rapid Action Team (Defence Technology & Trade Initiative, or DTTI) at the Pentagon, and representatives from the State Department, US National Security Council and Industry attended this discussion. India's designation as 'Major Defence Partner' of the US, the bilateral Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), the DTTI framework and India's attractive defence market were discussed with active participation of the private sector.

Hudson Institute's South Asia Center hosted a



Next, the fourth and final round in a series of annual 'Quad-Plus Dialogues' was held at The Heritage Foundation's Asian Studies Center; the focus being on common strategic interests among US, Japan, India, and Australia. Interests in the South China Sea, Afghanistan-Pakistan, propagation of extremism through internet, intelligence and space cooperation, and whether China will play a



discussion on US-India bilateral relations which aimed at addressing the ways in which the US-India relationship can be sustained, and ultimately advanced to new levels. Security cooperation in the Indian and Pacific Ocean, potential for cooperation in the Middle East and Central Asia were also discussed.



The visit highlighted that while US-India relations are on a stable trajectory, there remain issues that have to be addressed to take the relationship to the next level.

India-Russia 70: VIF-RIAC Bilateral Dialogue and the Way Forward, 30-31 March 2017

With India and Russia barely two weeks away from celebrating 70 years of bilateral ties, the VIF, in collaboration with the Moscow-based think tank Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), held a joint seminar on 'India-Russia Relations and the Way Forward'. One of the key objectives of the joint exercise was to seek potentials for broadening the scope of bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Among other things, the seminar focused on identifying and plugging differences in perceptions on certain key issues. Over a day and half, participants to the seminar – eminent security and foreign policy experts from the two participating institutions – extensively mulled, debated and strategized over ways and means as to how the bilateral relationship between India and Russia could be put on a fast forward track.



The Russian delegation was led by Dr Andrey V Kortunov, Director General, RIAC, and comprised of four other members – Dr Vasilii Kashin, Mr Sergey Strokan, Mr Samar Shakil and Ms Ksenia Kuzmina, while General NC Vij, Director, VIF, assisted by a broad array of policy experts – Vice Admiral Anup Singh, AVM Manmohan Bahadur, Ambassador Prabhat Shukla, among others – represented the VIF. The seminar extended over four sessions, with a session each devoted to examining issues in



defence cooperation, economic engagements, geopolitical dimensions in the bilateral relationship, and improving ties in science, education, culture and media.

In the opening session, both General NC Vij and Dr Andrey Kortunov underlined that Indo-Russian relations have not only stood the test of time but also holds special significance for the future, keeping in view especially, the emerging security challenges in the region as also India's growing defence and economic imperatives. While the bulk of India's defence inventory – over 60 percent – is still of Russian origin, Russia is likely to continue to retain its pre-eminence in the Indian defence import for a foreseeable future even as India's import bill is most likely to gross over \$ 150-200 billion over the next 10 years. While India is seeking greater economic engagements with Russia, especially in oil and gas and other sectors of the economy, Russia's recent flirtations with Pakistan and opening up to the Taliban in Afghanistan in recent times are being perceived as dampeners to bilateral ties. He urged for greater transparency on the part of Russia when it





comes to regional affairs, especially China, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Dr Andrey Kortunov, on his part, stressed that one of the key preoccupations for Russia has been managing both China and Pakistan, one a rising power and the other a failing state. He however stressed that most of the differences between



Russia and India exist at the level of perceptions which could be substantially reduced by holding regular exchanges at multiple levels, including think tanks.

Joint conceptualisation, research and production of weapons and platforms in India with an eye on export, especially involving private players, development of north-south transport corridor between Russia, India, Iran, Central Asia and Europe, potential cooperation between India, Russia and Iran on terrorism in the Af-Pak region, developing tourism potentials, cooperation in media, student exchange programmes and exposure to each other's society and culture through print and electronic media – a throwback to the old Soviet days – were major takeaways from the two-day seminar. Both the Directors pledged to produce a joint report of the seminar and forward it to the powers that be in their respective countries for their consideration.





Glimpses











Conference on Revisiting India's Disaster Response Mechanism Challenges and Way Forward, 06 May 2016

A one day Conference on 'Revisiting India's Disaster Response Mechanism: Challenges and Way Forward' was organised by the VIF in collaboration with Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF) on 6 May 2016. Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Minister of State for Home Affairs inaugurated the conference. Gen NC Vij, Director VIF delivered the welcome



address and Shri KM Singh, Vice President PPF gave an overview of the conference. Participants in the conference included members from National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Defence Services, AIIMS, Medical Services besides government representatives from Nepal, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Bihar, Gujarat and Mizoram.



Shri Kiren Rijiju spoke about the need to bring high end technology to increase our capacity in the domain of response and he proposed that to achieve this it is essential to integrate all our key institutions such as IIT, IIM and ISRO in the area of research and development. Gen Vij mentioned about India's excellent response mechanism and highlighted the need for appropriate training infrastructure, well-trained personnel and state-of-the-art equipment for NDRF. Shri KM Singh impressed upon the need of having three-tier disaster response mechanism: NDRF at national level, SDRF at state level and Civil Defence, Fire Services, Police, NSS, Civil Society etc., at district level.



The conference made certain recommendations which, inter alia, included establishing a dedicated training institution of international standards for response, SOP for quick decision for international



deployment of NDRF in emergencies, certification for deployment of NDRF team under the aegis of UNOCHA, early administrative sanction for procurement of relief items as National Disaster Response Reserve, amendment of DM Act, 2005 to include SDRF in chapter VIII and implementation of report on 'Revamping of Civil Defence' (2009).

Round Table Discussion on 'India's Indian Ocean Strategy', 11 May 2016

A round table discussion on 'India's Indian Ocean Strategy' was convened to examine the steps that India needs to take to construct a strategy for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The discussion was attended by a number of luminaries including senior retired diplomatic, naval and government functionaries as also senior serving officers.

With focus on the strategic importance of the IOR, the discussions highlighted the susceptibility of India's energy and trade flows to criminal disruption and natural disasters. Considering this vast spectrum

of challenges, it was opined that India's maritime capabilities need to be enhanced commensurately with its increasing responsibilities.

The vision of 'SAGAR' as a means for development of the IOR and its littorals, the US and India Joint Strategic Vision for Indo-Pacific were seen as an appropriate response to the challenges of this region. China's new relationships with the countries in the region, its 'all weather friendship' with Pakistan and the 'One Belt One Road' initiative, which seem to be aimed at solving the 'Malacca Dilemma', were considered as a potential vulnerability. India's relations in the Indo-Pacific – with its strong partnership with Japan, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam, all of whom face similar maritime challenges – were discussed next. Indo-Iranian relations and connectivity with the Central Asian Region (CAR) states to promote energy security and trade were also discussed. Finally, the sector of the 'blue economy' like shipbuilding and port development to boost seaborne commerce was touched upon.





Recommendations for India to discharge its responsibilities towards ensuring security and cooperative development of the region and its littorals were listed as: (a) development of maritime forces and infrastructure and assistance to smaller littorals and island states in building up their maritime capabilities; and (b) building synergy between India and like-minded states to mitigate external influences inimical to the interests of the littoral states. Building up naval ties with friendly countries for protection of common strategic interests in the region was also recommended.

Seminar on India-China Maritime Cooperation, 16-17 May 2016

This seminar was organised in collaboration with Chinese think tanks –Naval Research Institute of People's Liberation Army Navy, the National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCSS) and the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). The participants included Dr Wu Shicun (President,



NISCSS), Mr Ye Hailin (Institute of International Strategy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), Mr Zhang Junshe (Senior Researcher, Naval Research Institute of People's Liberation Army Navy), Ms Yan Yan (Deputy Director, Research Centre for Oceans Law and Policy, NISCSS), Dr Hong Nong (Executive Director and Senior Fellow, Institute for China-America Studies, USA), Dr Saurabh Gupta (Institute for China-America Studies, USA). Amb Ashok Kantha, Vice Adm Anup Singh, Dr Sanjaya Baru, Vice Adm AK Chopra and Cmde Gopal Suri represented the VIF.



The event was aimed at understanding Indian and Chinese approaches to the Indian and Pacific Oceans and to find common ground for cooperation. The following subjects were delved into over four sessions: (a) Strategic Interests in the Ocean; (b) Economic Interests in the Indo-Pacific; (c) Maritime Security Concerns; and (d) Prospects for India-China Cooperation. A host of maritime issues, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and China's Maritime Silk



Route initiative – which is viewed as part of a larger Chinese naval strategy to ramp up its presence in the Indian Ocean and beyond – came up for discussion.

Both sides deliberated on the current situation in the South China Sea, Chinese construction activities and the Philippines vs China case in the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The importance of 'Blue Economy' in the maritime sphere was the focus of discussions in the second session. Next, India's seaborne trade and the Chinese 'One Belt One Road' (OBOR) initiative were discussed to determine common ground for cooperation. The maritime security concerns of both the nations which have a stake in the stability of the IOR and the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) were also deliberated upon. Concerns on account of each country's actions in the IOR and the larger Indo-Pacific were highlighted to understand each other's approach to the oceans.

The interaction underlined the need for both countries to be sensitive to each other's interests. Both sides felt the need to reduce the level of mistrust between the two countries, and suggested maritime Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) with institutionalised mechanism for regular exchanges, hotlines and pre-notification of warships

movements. Bilateral maritime cooperation, greater interaction between think tanks and reducing the level of perceptible differences were also recommended. The most salient inference was the need for both countries to exercise restraint and work within their own spheres of influences in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Interaction with Amb Ashok Kantha on Recent Defence Related Developments in China Implications, 26 May 2016

Amb Ashok K Kantha, India's former Ambassador to China and Distinguished Fellow, VIF, spearheaded an internal discussion on President Xi Jinping's era of military reforms and China's concomitant strategies. In his presentation, the former Ambassador to China touched upon issues related to modernisation of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA), drive against corruption, reshuffle of high military leadership, profile of coercive military posture, and impact of China's sluggish economy on its military budget.



The situation at the India-China border and the deficit in India's defence infrastructure were also discussed. It was suggested that India be wary of China's strategic manoeuvres, and put in place credible counter-measures.





Round Table Discussion on the 'South China Sea Dispute Ruling – Implications', 02 August 2016

This round table discussion on was held against the backdrop of the 2016 award by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) on the South China Sea (SCS). The discussion was attended by Amb Satish Chandra, Amb Rajiv Sikri, Amb TCA Rangchari, Vice Adm Satish Soni, Lt Gen AK Ahuja and many other naval and strategic experts.



With China claiming all features lying within its 'Nine Dash Line', that is 85.7 percent of the SCS, the Philippines approached PCA in 2012 and asked it to arbitrate on interpretation and application of UNCLOS. The award went in favour of the Philippines, with China abstaining from the proceedings. Meanwhile, China has continued to reclaim the Islands.

Even though it is not likely to abide by the PCA ruling it may still quietly follow some of its judgments,



like conceding fishing rights to the Philippines. But given its assertive stand, many analysts also see a possibility of China declaring an 'Air Defence Identification Zone' in the region.



India has requested all parties to abide by the provisions of UNCLOS. The region is important for its geostrategic location and India wants to see the region remain as maritime commons. There was a general consensus that events taking place in the SCS are symptoms of larger strategic adjustments that are going on in the Asia-Pacific region.

Roundtable Discussion on China-Pakistan Nexus: Challenges and Response, 12 August 2016

In an internal round table discussion, some of India's leading policy analysts, including Amb Kanwal Sibal, Amb TCA Raghavan, Mr PC Haldar and Mr KM Singh, among others, discussed the China-Pakistan axis, which is increasingly detrimental not only to India's but the entire region's security as a whole.



While the nexus in the past was largely confined to proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies and co-development of weapon systems, it is now gaining a diversified character of India-centric collusion. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a part of President Xi Jinping's signature 'Belt and Road Initiative', remains by far the most visible and disturbing component of this nexus till date. The corridor, while passing through Indian territories occupied by Pakistan, seeks to reposition Pakistan geo-politically and provide China an access to the Indian Ocean via the Gwadar Port.



China claims that the Belt and Road Initiative is intended, among other things, to stabilise Pakistan economically, but the fact remains that there is much opposition and doubt against the CPEC in other countries. Baluchistan particularly, a region replete with precious natural resources, perceives the CPEC as a complete sell-out by Pakistan. Worrisome is also the adverse impact of the nexus

on international efforts to stabilise Afghanistan. Finally, evolving policy responses – economic and diplomatic, among others – to respond to the rising China-Pakistan nexus were considered.

Interaction with Dr David Brewster on Multilateral Engagements in the Indo-Pacific Region, 07 September 2016

Dr David Brewster, a well known Australian maritime expert and author of 'India as an Asia Pacific Power', held a comprehensive interaction with the VIF's strategic faculty. The purpose was to analyse the potentials for developing a tri-lateral partnership in the Indo-Pacific region between India, Australia and the United States. Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, Amb Rajiv Sikri, Amb DP Srivastava, Lt Gen VK Saxena and Vice Adm Satish Soni, among others, formed the panel that interacted with Dr Brewster.



Dr Brewster shared the key findings of his latest research 'Australia, India and the United States: The Challenge of Forging New Alignments in the Indo-Pacific', ostensibly with a view to gauge Indian reactions thereto. The new dynamics in the region, especially the rise of China and India's own 'Act East' Policy, make it imperative that both India and Australia not only forge closer cooperation but also mobilise new partnerships and coalitions among the 'middle powers' of the Asia-Pacific, an exercise that will fulfil each other's strategic needs, he argued. Further, he pitched for upgrading the engagement between India and Australia to a trilateral cooperation by including the United States in a



strategic troika that would help the armed forces of the three countries to conduct seamless operations, especially in search and rescue operations and against non-traditional security threats. Shared use of training facilities, building a system of shared maritime awareness domain in the Indian Ocean, joint exercises at sea and on land, among others, could form the supporting pillars of such a trilateral cooperation. Underscoring India's penchant for strategic autonomy and differences in perception in building a resilient strategic partnership, the three countries can still selectively cooperate in specific projects in the Bay of Bengal or the Arabian Sea, he opined.



The Indian interlocutors, while in agreement with the need for cooperative security in the IOR, remained sceptical about relying on Australia to balance China, especially in view of their economic dependencies. Showing their preference for a measured and incremental approach in developing strategic relations with Australia, they also proposed revival of the 'QUAD', with Canberra as an observer.

Round Table Discussion on 'ISIS Proofing India' (I& II), 16 Sep 2016 and 08 December 2016

Even if the ISIS phenomenon is defeated on ground, the ideology of the 'Caliphate' and the psychotic mindset that has attracted thousands of individuals around the world to join its ranks is a far bigger threat than any terror organisation. Unless the groupings that possess, preach and practise the



same bestial mind-set are defeated, the Daesh will be replaced by some other outfit.

To examine ways to deal with the spread of such ideologies in India, VIF in association with Policy Perspective Foundation (PPF) organised two seminars titled 'ISIS Proofing India'. Distinguished scholars and community leaders like Maulana Mahmood Madani, Mr Niaz Ahmad Farooqui, Mr Hamidullah Bhat, Mr Arif Mohammad Khan, Mr Shahid Siddiqui, Prof Ali Khan Mahmudabad, Haji Syed Salman Chishty, Mr Sultan Shahin, and Mr Adil Rasheed, to name a few, shared their thoughts during the discussions. The key questions included: motivations of extreme radicalism, the narratives to counter the process, and roles of Islamic scholars, institutions, think tanks, social media and government in addressing these concerns.



Some of the important suggestions that emerged from the deliberations are: (a) 'radicalisation', in a heterogeneous geopolitical context, needed parsing; (b) incidents are merely the symptoms, and not the disease; (c) ideological underpinnings which sustain radicalisation need to be re-evaluated; (d) multi-pronged approach needs to be evolved to address the phenomenon; (e) crucial role is to be played by families, scholars, mosques, *ulemas*, social and political leaders, and main stream and



Joint RCSS-VIF-ITS Conference 'Emerging Strategic Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific', 21-22 October 2016

The Colombo-based Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), in collaboration with the VIF and Institute for Transnational Studies (ITS) of Germany, organised the two-day conference at Colombo. Apart from these three institutions, speakers had been invited from India and the Philippines. Cmde Gopal Suri and Mr Alvite Ningthoujam participated from the VIF side.

social media; and (f) government must play its part in this stupendous task.

While highlighting the misuse of social media, the participants stressed the need for an effectively designed and disseminated tool to propagate

The Director of RCSS, welcoming the delegates, emphasised the rising importance of Indo-Pacific in the military, economic, political and socio-cultural spheres. Influence of China and Japan, apart from



counter-narratives to defeat the hate, phobia, exclusion and violence. Propagation of traditions of 'ijtihad', accommodative social jurisprudential norms and revival of India's Sufi traditions were emphasised upon. It was reiterated that social, political, cultural, and religious forces must aggregate on a platform common in its vision and ends, to stand guard against a challenge which must be taken on in a spirit of collectiveness.



traditional powers like the United States (US), was alluded to, while concern was expressed over threats from non-states actors and terrorism. In his turn, the Director of ITS pointed at the importance accorded by the European Union (EU) to the Indo-Pacific region.

Over the four sessions in two days, the Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka explained Japan's new foreign policy initiative on 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy', and touched upon the tensions between states in the region. The Pakistan High Commissioner was present during this session as also during the closing session though he did not speak. The next session discussed 'Major Strategic Trends in Indo-Pacific' when perspectives on the current issues, role of China, Sino-Pakistan cooperation and India's 'Act East Policy' were analysed. 'OBOR-Vision, Significance and Feasibility' was the next topic when perspective





of the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) initiative and aspects of complementarity between this initiative and the OBOR were also discussed.

The third session on 'China's Increasing Footprints in Indo-Pacific' highlighted the widely-discussed activities of China. Analyst from Manila explained the arbitration case between Philippines and China. The fourth session focused on the 'Global and Regional Dimension of Terrorism and Asymmetric Challenges: Towards a Cooperative Strategy'. Discussing terrorism and radicalisation in Europe and South-Southeast Asia, the consensus was on collective action cutting across political and ideological differences. The session ended with a presentation on the 'Indian Ocean Region and the Maritime Security Implications for Sri Lanka'.

Conference on 'Opportunities for Multi-stakeholder Partnership to Prevent and Counter Radicalisation and Violent Extremism', 16-17 January 2017



The VIF collaborated with Facebook and the US Embassy in New Delhi to organise a conference on the above theme. This was a follow-up of the first such initiative hosted by the VIF in association with the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), the US Embassy in New Delhi, and Facebook in November 2015.

Spread over two days and six sessions, a galaxy of thinkers and experts delved into diverse topics ranging from fundamentalist mindset, factors of radicalisation and extremism, role of governments in devising counter-narratives, technology and local community-based intervention models, the phenomenon of online radicalisation and the theme of state-sponsored terrorism. The panellists consisted of Mr Brian Fishman, Mr Sultan Shahin, Dr Adil Rasheed, Mr Shahid Siddiqui, Lt Gen RK Sawhney, Mr Faiz Sobhan, Mr Tufail Ahmad, Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain, Ms Ankhil Das, Ms Sara Zeiger, Dr Zubair Meenai, Dr Ali Khan Mahmudabad and Haji Syed Salman Chishty.





The second day of the conference was inaugurated by HE Amb Richard Verma, the US Ambassador to India. The following sessions dealt with the geopolitics of radicalisation, with Amb Kanwal Sibal, Mr Amrullah Saleh, Mr Sushant Sareen, Ms Juhi Ahuja, Mr Arif

At the conclusion, Gen NC Vij summed up the essentiality of framing counter-narratives with an eye on trans-national, inter-faith and cross-cultural cooperation to put an end to alienation which fuels conflict; de-radicalisation involving the government, think tanks, non-governmental organisations, academic and religious institutions; research over the bigoted fundamentalists; and the critical need to consolidate and champion the inclusive narrative of tolerance and co-existence which has defined the uniqueness of the Indian example.



Interaction with Tilak Devasher on his book 'Pakistan: Courting the Abyss', 27 January 2017

Mohammad Khan, Mr Irfan Saeed and Mr Raffaello Pantucci participating. The Valedictory Session was addressed by Dr Arvind Gupta, Deputy National Security Advisor, Government of India.

Mr Tilak Devasher, former civil servant, author and columnist, shared key findings of his outstanding research, titled 'Pakistan: Courting the Abyss' in a panel discussion, held with Amb Satish Chandra and Mr Rana Banerji, among other eminent security and policy experts.





Opening the proceedings, Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, set out the agenda for discussions as: The threat Pakistan poses to India in particular and to the wider world, its fractured polity and feudalistic society that breeds terrorism, the problem of loose nukes, and the China-Pakistan nexus. That the book delves into deeper issues such as education, water, demographic challenges etc., was also mentioned.



Mr Devasher presented an analysis of Pakistan's pivotal point in its history. While examining Pakistan's dysfunction as a state, the author contended that Pakistan needs to act real fast to put its house in order; failing which it will slide further into the abyss – in a decade or so if it does not change the trajectory of its slide.



International Conference on 'Security in the Indian Ocean Region', 07 February 2017

The dense lifelines of sea lanes of communication have made the Indian Ocean the locus of global geopolitics. But in the absence of an established regional framework, many non-regional countries are adopting competitive approaches to the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), seeking to gain greater influence over the sea lanes and to garner political and economic benefits that could affect the regional security environment. To address this complex



issue, a conference was organised at the VIF with steerage from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), Japan, with collaboration of the Australian National University (ANU) and SPF, USA. The intention was to consider policy recommendations toward enhancement of regional stability and security of sea lanes.

Experts from India, Australia, the US and Japan presented findings of their studies on various aspects of security. Some of the important recommendations are: The need for a cooperative approach to development of infrastructure;





'Trincomalee Consultation 2017', Colombo, 16 February 2017

The 'Trincomalee Consultation 2017', a Track 1.5 dialogue, was organised by the Pathfinder Foundation (Sri Lanka) in collaboration with Carnegie India, and the Japanese and Norwegian Embassies to discuss the development of Trincomalee port as a regional hub for the Bay of Bengal. The participation included the Sri Lanka Ministries of Defence, Shipping and Tourism, Governor of the Eastern Province, and senior Sri Lanka Navy and Air Force officers. The Indian Government was represented by the Joint Secretary (Policy Planning), MEA and the High Commission in Colombo. The High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Sri Lanka, the Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka and a Deputy Director General from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, besides the Secretary General of the 'Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation' (BIMSTEC) also attended. The participants comprised eminent persons from the business community, academia, and the strategic affairs fraternity of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. VIF was represented by Cmde Gopal Suri and Ms Anushree Ghisad.

relevance of collaboration between India and Japan; cooperation on security of energy supplies, reduction of dependence on oil and gas imports, diversification of supply routes and recourse to renewable sources of energy; contribution from regional frameworks like the IORA, IONS, ADMM Plus etc., to control piracy and natural disasters; and implications of China's access to the Indian Ocean in altering geopolitical equations.

The Conference also had participation from a number of domain experts like Mr Nobuo Tanaka,



the erstwhile Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) and current Chairman SPF, Ambassador Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, Admiral Dennis Blair (Retd), former Commander in Chief of the US Pacific Command, and Professor Rory Medcalf.

The dialogue highlighted the strategic importance of the Bay of Bengal against the underdeveloped state of infrastructure in the region which impedes connectivity and exploitation of the resources of the hinterland. Importance of dovetailing initiatives like India's 'Sagarmala' with the needs of the rest of the region was discussed. The naturally blessed Trincomalee Harbour could be leveraged to provide the Bay of Bengal region with a multi-functional hub for shipping, ship repair, etc. However, this would require the creation of basic infrastructure. Opinions were expressed on India's lead role in enhancing cooperation and responsibility to



promote maritime infrastructure development with a wider regional perspective. The Japanese expressed the possibility of cooperation in this development after detailed feasibility studies.

The Trincomalee Consultation was intended to be the first of such dialogues for enhancing regional cooperation in overall development of the Bay of Bengal littoral.

Interaction with Dr Alinaghi Kharrazi on India-Iran Relations and Strategic Situation in Af-Pak and West Asia, 20 March 2017

Dr Alinaghi (Kamal) Kharrazi, former Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, escorted by Ambassador Gholamreza, Iran's present Ambassador to India, visited the VIF for interaction. The focus was furtherance of India-Iran relations and an assessment of the strategic and security paradigm in our extended neighbourhood (Af-Pak region) and West Asia. General NC Vij, Director, VIF, welcomed the visiting dignitaries. Amb DP Srivastava, Amb Ashok Kantha, Amb Rajiv Sikri, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Mr CD Sahay, among others, participated in the deliberations.



The discussions favoured all-encompassing bilateral cooperation between the two countries, including areas for cooperation in counter-terrorism, science and technology, industry, energy, trade, and culture, among others. The necessity of fast-tracking joint infrastructure-related projects which both countries have jointly undertaken was expressed. Dr Kharrazi, an influential member of the Iranian political establishment who played a key part in improving Iran's relations with its neighbours



under President Mohammad Khatami, flagged his concern about the possibility of fleeing Daesh operatives getting safe sanctuaries in the fragile Af-Pak region, as also in the adjoining Central Asian region. To soften up the hard shell of terrorism, he stressed on the imperative to develop the region economically. The Iranian diplomat stressed on developing further connectivity from Chabahar to Afghanistan and across to Central Asia through a network of roads and railways, an exercise that will make the port economically more viable and competitive, while its economic spinoffs would not only boost intra-regional trade but also wean away poor youths from joining terrorist groups; it will also reduce Kabul's strategic dependence on Islamabad.



Afghanistan's stability, Iran's relations with the United States and regional countries including Saudi Arabia, and Russia figured during the interactive session.











Interaction with Hon'ble Jayampathy Wickramaratne, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka, 14 April 2016

The VIF hosted Hon'ble Jayampathy Wickramaratne, Member of Sri Lanka Parliament and Chairman of the Committee on Constitution Reforms for an interaction on the Constitution-making process in Sri Lanka.



Mr Wickramaratne's presentation focused on techno-legal issues and dynamics of re-writing the Constitution. It emerged that ceding powers to the provinces while retaining a unified character for the government has perhaps remained the biggest challenge before the constitution drafting committee. The Sri Lankan lawmaker however asserted that it is common for concentrated communities to demand greater share of state power. The Indian interlocutors suggested that



incorporating the principle of equality rather than advantage to the majority should be the basis of their Constitution, a more universally accepted norm for democratic countries around the world. They also favoured an early constitution making timeframe so as to protect it from getting vitiated by extraneous factors.

General NC Vij, Director, VIF, oversaw the proceedings, and highlighted the fact that Sri Lanka is India's culturally and ethnically linked important neighbour and occupies a strategic location in the Indian Ocean.

VIF Delegation's Visit to Bangladesh, 20-22 April 2016

At the invitation of Bangladesh Enterprises Institute, a Dhaka-based premier think-tank, a VIF delegation headed by Director, Gen NC Vij,





and consisting of Vice Adm KK Nayar, Lt Gen RK Sawhney, Mr CD Sahay, Amb Rajiv Sikri and two representatives of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) visited Dhaka. The delegation was briefed by Joint Secretary, Bangladesh, MEA, Ms Ranganathan, and Amb Harshvardhan Shringla, the Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka. The three important engagements during the visit were: (1) Round Table Meet on India-Bangladesh Relations at the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI); (2) discussions with H.E. Md Shahriar Alam, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; and (3) meeting with Dr Gowher Rizvi, International Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister. At a special programme, Director VIF also laid a wreath at the memorial of Bangbandhu and went around the museum.



The discussions focused on issues of regional security, de-radicalisation of youth, connectivity issues covering road, rail and river transport, power sector, trade and investment, and Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN). Appreciating the near total identity of ideas and approaches on all these issues, the two sides urged the two governments to develop the relations into a role model. It was hoped that the Teesta water sharing accord would be resolved shortly. These issues were also discussed satisfactorily during the meeting with Mr Alam's meeting when special mention was also made of the recent agreements on land and maritime boundaries. The meeting with Dr Rizvi covered the entire gamut of Indo-Bangladesh relations, highlighting that the Government of PM Sheikh Hasina was keen on building up economic cooperation, connectivity, infrastructure and investment. He urged the government of India to take these up on priority basis.

During social interactions, the delegation met with a large number of distinguished representatives including the Hon'ble Minister for Water Resources, academics, political leaders and other opinion makers. Impression was thus gained of a vibrant and confident civil society to take India-Bangladesh relations to unprecedented heights.

Visit by a Nepalese Delegation, 29 April 2016

A five-member delegation from Nepal, led by Mr Abdul Razzak, Member of Parliament (Nepali Congress Party) and comprising Dr Jagat Bahadur Pathak, Dr CB Pun, Mr Gopi Prasad and Mr Hira



KC visited the VIF for a discussion on India-Nepal relations. It was intended to think out a common positive agenda after souring of bilateral ties, especially since the Madhesi protests was the focus.

In response to Director VIF's welcome remarks, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Nepal urged India to introspect as to why anti-India sentiments are gaining ground in Nepal despite the fact that





Round Table Discussion on the 'Developments in Afghanistan: Implications and Options for India', 11 July 2016

A fresh round of discussion on 'Developments in Afghanistan: Implications and Options for India' was organised to review India's policy against Afghanistan's worsening situation and strain in US-Pakistan relations by the killing of Taliban Chief Mullah Mukhtar Mansoor in a US drone attack.

New Delhi has always stood by its Himalayan neighbour during its many crises in the past. He referred to India's 'misplaced' policies towards a strategically important neighbour, and hinted at certain elements being inimical to India's interests in Nepal. Maj Gen Ashok Mehta, Brig Rahul K Bhonsle and Dr Smruti Pattanaik, among others, formed the VIF panel of interlocutors.

The interaction underlined that Nepal's internal developments affects India, and to that extent, it is legitimate for India to nudge Nepal politically, an obvious reference to the Constitution-making process currently underway in Nepal. Quiet diplomacy to manage and improve public perceptions and the political relationship was proposed. The VIF panel considered the Madhesi problem as that of Nepal's own making and suggested avoidance of its externalisation. Benefits of better people-to-people relationship and India's economic spin offs to Nepal's benefit was discussed. The frankness with which the two engaging sides expressed their views was much appreciated.



The discussion was held against the new factors that have come into play. The much-hyped Quadrilateral Coordination Group peace process involving the United States, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan went awry largely because Pakistan, unhappy with an Afghan-led peace process, worked in tandem with the Taliban to scuttle the peace process. While the effort to revive the peace process is still on, Afghanistan has been limping through a half-baked transition process, a process which the western coalition rightly or wrongly believes would lift





Afghanistan from its present morass towards self-sufficiency both in governance as well as in dealing with hordes of security challenges that might set in once the drawdown is over.

The 'drawdown' itself is being pushed back for the new US President to decide, while Pakistan will make every effort to muscle India out of Afghanistan. The discussion, therefore, dwelt on a range of policy options for India. A twin strategy of continuing with constructive engagement while simultaneously working on hedging strategy to protect its investments in Afghanistan was stressed upon. Besides underlining the need for



equipping and training the Afghanistan National Army (ANA), participants also focused on regional countries, notably, Iran, China, Russia and Central Asian Republics. Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Mr CD Sahay and Prof Gulshan Sachdeva formed the panel discussants while Amb Jayant Prasad, Amb Prabhat Shukla and Amb Satish Chandra, among others, participated in the interactive session.

Interaction with Bangladesh Jatiyo Party Delegation, 03 August 2016

A seven-member delegation of Bangladesh Jatiyo Party, led by Mr Ziauddin Ahmed (Bablu), Member of Parliament and former advisor to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh visited the VIF.



Broad ranging talks with a select panel of experts, which included Amb Satish Chandra, Amb Veena Sikri, Mr KM Singh, Mr PC Haldar, among others, were held, based on shared interests and common challenges. Both sides favoured fast forwarding of bilateral ties. River water sharing, influence of the ISIS in Bangladesh, political dynamics in India and Bangladesh and its ramifications, trade and commerce, connectivity, and energy cooperation, among other things, figured in the discussions.



Talk on Kashmir – Tragedy of Errors and the Way Forward, 16 August 2016

The VIF invited Mr Zafar Iqbal Manhas, MLC from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), for an informal session on the evolving dynamics in Kashmir. The



discussion revolved around a broad set of issues – sense of alienation, autonomy and democratic deficit, developmental stagnation, cross-border influences, stone pelting and radicalisation, and the China-Pakistan nexus in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Perceived acts of omission and commission by New Delhi were also narrated. Mr KM Singh and Mr PC Haldar were among key discussants.



General NC Vij, Director VIF, who initiated the discussion, stressed that any solution to Kashmir issue must be found within the confines of the Indian Constitution, a view shared by the guest speaker.

Interaction with Mr Hasanul Haq Inu, Minister for Information, Bangladesh, 18 August 2016

The VIF hosted Mr Hasanul Haq Inu, Hon'ble Minister for Information and President of the Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh for an interaction on India-Bangladesh relations and the way forward. The interaction covered a broad spectrum of issues: bilateral economic and security cooperation, Bangladesh's internal dynamics, the menace of radicalisation, and South Asian regional cooperation, among many other related issues.



Welcoming the visiting dignitary, Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, touched upon the upward spiral in the mature and meaningful India-Bangladesh bilateral relationship, specifically mentioning the landmark resolution of land and maritime boundary disputes. While flagging concerns over radicalisation in Bangladesh and its spill-over effects on India, he also exuded confidence that outstanding issues between the two countries would get resolved soon.





The Minister, on his part, referred to India's contribution towards Bangladesh's liberation and pointed out that Bangladesh's emergence as a free nation-state was significant, with culture, ethnicity and language shaping its national identity. He spoke of Bangladesh's secularism and its pluralist society that is influenced by thinkers like Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Romain Rolland. He further argued that the 'big gate of cooperation' remains yet to be opened, a pointer to the Teesta water sharing issue. On lack of economic cooperation in the region, the Minister regretted that South Asian countries have opened their doors to the West but not to each other. He also explained that culpability of a few political parties and happenings in the Middle East were responsible for radicalisation of Bangladeshi youth.



During the interactive session, the Minister responded to a broad swath of questions, the notable ones being Bangladesh's perspective on China's 'Maritime Silk Route', trial of war criminals, its armed forces, and the menace of radicalisation in Bangladesh. He maintained that control of radicalisation and retribution against war crimes was necessary to foster a healthy society in Bangladesh.

Intertaction with Amb Tariq Karim, 30 August 2016

Amb Tariq Karim, Bangladesh's former High Commissioner to India and a Distinguished Fellow at the VIF, delivered a talk on some of the recent developments in Bangladesh. He broadly dwelt



upon the Islamic State (IS) factor in Bangladesh, the upcoming elections and the trajectory of Indo-Bangladesh relations should there be a change in the government of Bangladesh. The Talk was followed by an interactive session. Amb Satish Chandra, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney and Amb Veena Sikri, among others, interacted with the speaker.



Round Table Discussion on Situation in Kashmir and the Way Forward, 02 September 2016

In continuation of a series of dialogues and conferences held over the years on Kashmir, a Round Table Discussion was arranged at the VIF where some of the prominent voices on Kashmir – Mr KM Singh, Air Vice Mshl Kapil Kak, Dr Sudhir S Bloeria, Ms Seema Mustafa, Dr Shujjat Bukhari and Prof Gul Wani, among others, were invited to share their thoughts on the current uprising in the Valley and the State's possible future. The session was chaired by General NC Vij, Director VIF. While the interaction was held in a forthright manner, expectedly, the views expressed by the speakers were rather diverse.



Interaction with Dr Haseeb Drabu (Minister of Finance, J&K) on 'Developments in Kashmir', 05 October 2016

VIF invited Dr Haseeb Drabu, Minister of Finance in the BJP-PDP coalition, Government of J&K, for a talk with a panel of security experts, including former ambassadors, retired bureaucrats and ex-military commanders, among others, on 'Developments in Kashmir'.



Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, began with Pakistan's obsession and persistence with inciting violence in Kashmir. The recent killing of Burhan Wani providing its 'deep state' with just another opportunity to reignite violence all over again. Reiterating India's democracy and multi-culturalism, he rejected Pakistan's ridiculous claim on Kashmir on the basis of religion.



Dr Drabu started his talk by delving into the 'counter-intuitive' alliance between –PDP and BJP – as necessitated by people's mandate. He shed light on the dimensions of the problems in Kashmir – social, political, economic, and religious – wherein social disengagement with Kashmir has led to its political alienation. He underlined the need for Kashmir to be brought into national discourse by highlighting its various facets – history, culture, tourism, industry, et al. Insofar as the present turmoil in Kashmir was concerned, Dr Drabu stressed that this was planned well ahead of Burhan Wani's death.



In his talk Dr Drabu touched upon the changing nature of Indian democracy, regionalism, cooperative federalism, and the external and religious dimensions of the Kashmir insurgency. Finally, he stressed on engaging Kashmir at multiple levels, especially through civil society. A lively interactive session followed the talk.



Interaction with Dr Sakhawat Hussain, Former Election Commissioner of Bangladesh, 27 October 2016

Brigadier General Muhammad Sakhawat Hussain, former Election Commissioner of Bangladesh delivered a talk on 'Electoral Governance in Bangladesh', followed by an interactive session. With Mr CD Sahay in the Chair, and moderated by Bangladesh's former High Commissioner to India and a Distinguished Fellow, Amb Tariq Karim, policy experts, former military commanders and diplomats, among others, from the VIF interacted with the Election Commissioner over a range of electoral issues concerning Bangladesh.



In his brief intro-cum-welcome remarks, Mr CD Sahay spoke of the considerable interests in India over the electoral fortunes of political parties in Bangladesh. Dr Hossain then elaborated upon the powers and functions of the Election Commission (EC) of Bangladesh, and its parallels with its Indian counterpart. The EC is an independent multi-member constitutional body that functions through majority-based decisions. It is entrusted with conducting free and fair elections, a task which the Commission has achieved with considerable success. He also explained the initiatives taken by the Commission, such as creation of a comprehensive voter list in digital format and issue of national voter identity cards.

Amb PR Chakravarty, Amb Prabhat Shukla and Mr KM Singh, among other key participants, engaged Dr Muhammad Sakhawat Hussain in a comprehensive interactive session. Conduct of elections in 2008 and 2014, the process of deregistering political

parties, and the role of extremist organisations such as the Jamaat-e-Islami and their alliances with mainstream political parties came up for discussion during this session.

Round Table Discussion on Radicalisation in Bangladesh, 11 November 2016

Around table meet on 'Developing Counter Narrative to Radicalisation: Bangladesh Experience' was held in November 2016. Visiting expert from Bangladesh, Lt Col (Retd), Quazi Sajjad Ali Zahir, recipient of Swadinata Padak, Bangladesh's highest civilian award and author of several books, was the key speaker.



Actively engaged in countering the impact of Islamic radicalisation at the grass roots level, Col Sajjad delved into the role of Islamic institutions, educational entities, mosques and madrassas, hate speeches, motivational lectures by religious leaders and preachers, cyber space, and the social media in promoting radicalisation, particularly amongst the over 8.2 million youth of Bangladesh. He also looked at the role of workers returning from the Middle





East and the enormous amount of unaccounted money flowing into the system that promotes and sustains the radical movement. He suggested that radicalisation has to be studied as a composite whole rather than merely a religious issue to face the daunting challenge of having to protect young minds. He further recommended developing a counter-narrative to prevent radicalisation at the school level, a re-look at the policy of exporting workers to the Middle East, and even using returning workers to expose fanaticism.

Col Sajjad emphasised on developing a peaceful and a co-existent South Asian Islam which envelopes the uprightness and humaneness of our society. The meeting was attended by a large well-informed audience which participated in a lively debate that followed the presentation.

Visit of Bangladesh Enterprises Institute (BEI) Delegation to the VIF, 01 February 2017

A high-powered delegation from BEI led by its President, Amb Farooq Sobhan, visited the VIF. The delegation included Amb M. Humayun Kabir, Vice President, BEI, Major General AKM Abdur Rahman, Director General, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Mr Faiz Sobhan, Brig General Ziaul Ahsan from the National Security Intelligence (NSI), Brig General Mohd Adil Choudhary, Director, Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) and Mr Shahab Enam Khan of the BEI. Earlier, a delegation from Vivekananda International Foundation had visited Dhaka last year at the invitation of Bangladesh Enterprise Institute.



Welcoming the delegation, Director VIF, General NCVij noted the significance of the Indian Government's initiative to invite the Bengal Initiative of Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries at the recently held Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS)-BIMSTEC Meet in Goa (October 15-16, 2016), strengthening its 'neighbourhood first approach' both in letter and spirit. The Director also mentioned the roles and responsibilities of BIMSTEC and the platform of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN).

Discussions focused on a range of issues including Bangladesh-India security cooperation, the growing threat perception after the bakery attack in Dhaka and areas of connectivity, trade and bilateral growth. The BEI delegation highlighted Bangladesh's development goals of becoming a middle income country by 2021 a reality. Delegates reemphasised the growing socio-economic and cultural connectivity under the astute leaderships of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Prime Minister





Shri Narendra Modi. The successful completion of Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) also featured during the discussion.

The visiting delegation expressed concern on: (a) difficulties faced by Bangladesh nationals in securing Indian visas; (b) the slow pace of activities under BBIN and BIMSTEC initiatives; (c) a stalemate on Teesta water agreement; (d) lack of progress in waterways connectivity; (e) non-redressal on the Ganga barrage proposal; (f) firing incidences and erection of barbed wire fencing along India-Bangladesh borders; and (g) the declining India-Bangladesh trade graph due to limited access of Bangladesh goods to Indian markets.



The important concerns from the Indian side mainly pertained to the resurgence of the Rohingyas around India's north-east and their alignment with several Islamist-oriented groups of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Another area of concern was the rise of religious extremism evidenced by killings of bloggers and intimidation of the liberal thought process in an otherwise secular



Bangladesh. It was agreed that the killings and the Holey Artisan Bakery attack were symptoms of growing radicalisation in Bangladesh. Some of the participants also referred to the targeting of the minority population by radicals and the growing drug menace at the border. On foreign policy issues the perception of Bangladesh's growing proximity with China also came up for mention.

Some important take ways from the deliberations were: (a) the need for further cementing mutual trust between the two nations; (b) possibility of Track-2 diplomacy finding its logical conclusion; (c) progress in exchange of criminals and other wanted persons by both the nations; (d) major thrust on all aspects of trade and connectivity; (e) exploring possibility of joint celebration of December 16th Vijay Diwas; (f) greater alignment between the Indian priorities vis-à-vis Bangladesh's growth in trade and commerce; (g) revival of waterways and river connectivity; and (h) positive role to be played by the media of India and Bangladesh.

Visit of Parliamentary Delegation from Myanmar, 20 February 2017

A 10-member multi-party delegation of Myanmar's parliamentarians, led by Mr Oo Hla Sae (Member of Parliament, Arakan National Party), called on the VIF faculty for an interaction focused on India's federal system of governance. The delegation evinced their interest over the system that works so well despite India's geographical vastness and diversity.

In his welcoming remarks, General NC Vij, Director, VIF, shared the experiences of his visit to Myanmar in 2016 and his meetings with Buddhist leaders on the next phase of the global conclave, 'Hindu-Buddhist



Dialogue on Conflict Avoidance and Environmental Consciousness', being hosted by Myanmar on 3-4 May 2017. Incidentally, the conclave – a joint initiative by India and Japan – was first rolled out by the VIF in 2015, with Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi flagging off the initiative.



From VIF, Mr Dharendra Singh, former Home Secretary and member of the Commission on Centre-State Relations, apprised the visiting parliamentarians of various provisions and safeguards enshrined in the

constitution for smooth functioning of India's federal governance. The division of power between States and the Centre, resource sharing, and dispute settlement, among other subjects, were elaborated by him. He stressed that federalism in India is so structured as to preserve India's national unity and integrity. An interactive session followed whence the



visiting delegates clarified doubts on various aspects of India's federal system.

Interaction with Prof Baoz Ganor on Counter-Terrorism, 14 March 2017

The globally renowned counter-terrorism expert, Prof Baoz Ganor, Founder and Executive Director of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism and Dean at the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy, University of Herzliya, delivered a talk on 'Countering "Glocal" (Global and Local) Terrorism – Challenges and Dilemmas', followed by an interactive session. With General NC Vij, Director, VIF, in the Chair, many security and policy experts, including Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Mr CD Sahay, Mr PC Halder, and Mr KM Singh among others, extensively interacted with the visiting professor as a follow-up to the presentation.



General NC Vij set the agenda highlighting the fact that the foremost impediment to an effective global response against terrorism comes at the first entry point i.e., defining what exactly constitutes 'terrorism'. On his turn, Prof Ganor defined terrorism 'as the deliberate use of violence by non-state actors, aimed at civilian targets, in order to achieve political ends'. Stating that irrespective of the motivations, acts of terrorism against hapless civilians can never be condoned, the Prof called for the premium that terrorists must pay for inflicting casualties on civilians. He put the spotlight on various terrorist methods– 'Lone Wolf' or 'Jihadi Zombie' (Personal Initiative Attacks), Independent Networks (Local Initiative Attacks), and the Networks of Organisations (Organised Attacks). Condemning the killing innocents in the name of religion, the Prof

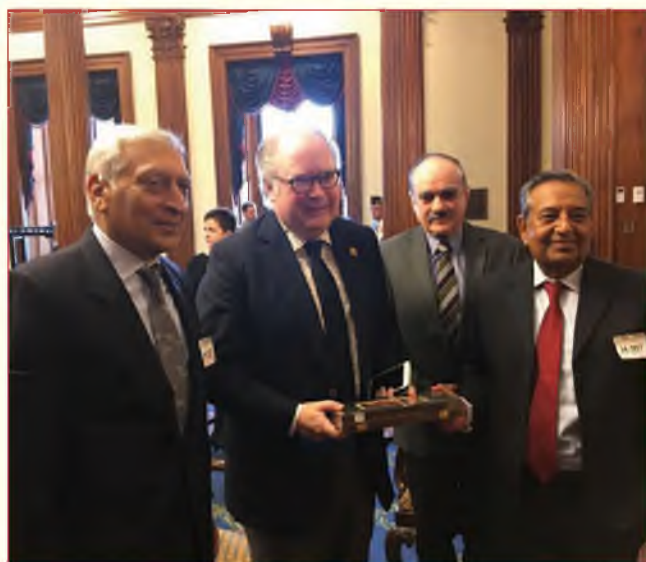


further dwelt on hybrid terrorist organisations such as Hamas, Al Qaeda and the Daesh.

The VIF's faculty, while agreeing that terrorism needed to be fought back in all its forms and manifestations, however, contested Prof Ganor's definition of terrorism as it left out reference to

state-sponsored terrorism of which India is a victim. Terrorism emanating from Pakistan's soil also came up during the interactive session. Finally, experts agreed that an objective definition to terrorism will help in: (1) outlawing terrorist organisations; (2) preventing state sponsorship of terrorism; and, (3) stopping of incitement for terrorism.













Interaction on DTTI with Mr Keith Webster, 06 April 2016

The VIF and the US India Business Council (USIBC) hosted Mr Keith Webster, Director, International Cooperation for the US Under Secretary of Defense Acquisition, Technology and Logistics at the Pentagon for a round table discussion on the current state of US-India defence relations and specifically to assess how far the Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI) has moved in recent months.



Welcome remarks were made by Mr Ben Schwartz, Director Defense and Acquisition, USIBC. Director VIF, Gen NC Vij, explained that an enabling environment now exists in India and the time was ripe for India and the US to genuinely move forward with some key announcements in defence. Other speakers were: Dr KD Nayak, Director ANURAG, DRDO; Mr Dharendra Singh, Former DG (Acqn), MOD; Mr Sudershan Kumar, former Chief Controller R&D, DRDO; Lt Gen JP Singh, former Deputy Chief



of Army Staff; and Air Marshal Manmohan Bahadur, former Assistant Chief of Integrated Defence Staff. The industry perspective was given by Mr Pratyush Kumar, President, Boeing India; Mr Sudhir Sharma, Head, Defence, Ashok Leyland; Mr Nikhil Khanna, President, Raytheon India; Mr Phil Shaw, CEO, Lockheed Martin; Mr Ketan Makhania, Head of Defence, India, Cyient Ltd; and Mr Ankur Gupta, Vice President, Ernst & Young.

Indian participants mentioned that India remains committed to the concept of DTTI as a means of co-developing critical strategic technologies from the US that will help move India's defence industrial ecosystem towards self-sufficiency, addressing critical technological needs, and it therefore looks upon DTTI as the route to meeting India's huge modernisation needs. But what have so far been offered to India under the DTTI are not the transformative technologies that India seeks.



It was reiterated that a positive environment does exist and both countries and their leadership have invested political capital to lay the foundation of a strong and sustainable relationship. Defence, security and technological cooperation are an essential part of these relations. As far as Defence and Security Cooperation are concerned, progress on DTTI is critical. Towards this end, cooperation between the US and Indian defence industries through the 'Make in India' initiative are welcome steps in the right direction and more such areas should be identified to take this engagement between India and the US to the next level.



Round Table Discussion with Mr Keith Webster, Head of International Cooperation (the Pentagon) on DTTI, 05 May 2016

A round table discussion on DTTI with the US trade representative Mr Keith Webster was organised where substantive discussions were held on three key aspects of the emerging dynamics of the India-US strategic partnership: India's Defence Procurement Policy (DPP), transfer of technologies as part of the US defence sales to India, and Foundational Defence Agreements between the two countries, viz., the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA).



Mr Dhirendra Singh, former Home Secretary and architect of India's DPP- 2016; Dr VK Saraswat, former Secretary, Defence R&D and currently Member of NITI Aayog (erstwhile Planning Commission); and Dr Sudershan Kumar, Chief Controller Research and Development, DRDO; among others, represented the VIF.

Indian interlocutors presented a roadmap and listed the drivers behind a revised procurement policy for the Indian Armed Forces. They spoke of technologies which could give fillip to India's indigenous defence production capabilities and drive the 'Make in India' programme in the crucial defence sector. They further underlined that efforts have been made to reduce time taken in strategic decision-making and a to facilitate smooth transfer



of technologies from chosen strategic partners, while the matter of 'offset' will no longer be a hindrance to acquiring technologies which serve India's strategic interests.

Mr Keith Webster, on his part, assured that technology transfer adjustments are also being made on the other end of the bilateral spectrum. However, there are limits in so far transfer of most innovative technologies is concerned. Those limitations stem partly from inhibiting US legislative processes and partly from purely commercial considerations. General NC Vij, Director, VIF, summed up by underlining the need to find a common ground between India's need for high-end defence technologies and the business interests of privately-owned US defence manufacturing companies. The interaction indicated gradual understanding of each other's viewpoints.



Visit of Delegation from the Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS), United Kingdom, 08 June 2016

An 18-member delegation from RCDS, led by Major General Simon Leslie Peters, visited the VIF for an interaction that focused, among other things, on India's foreign policy imperatives amidst the rise in multispectral threat scenarios across the region and beyond.



In his opening remarks, General NC Vij, Director, VIF underlined specific threats and challenges India faces even as the country's foreign policy initiatives remain economy-centric. He maintained that India needs a secure and stable environment for its economy to grow against the situation in the Middle East and Afghanistan, Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Afghanistan and India, China's territorial ambitions extending to the seas, the spectre of sea-borne terrorism and sea piracy, presence of extra-regional navies in the



Indian Ocean – submarines in particular, among other things, have impacted negatively on the region's security environment, thus adding to India's concerns. Appreciating the relationship between the UK and India across a range of areas, the Director underlined that joint action by friendly and democratic countries was the need of the hour to combat common and global security challenges. The Director also underpinned India's role as a net security provider in the region, a role bestowed upon India by geography, especially in the Indian Ocean Region.



The follow up on the presentations were given by a panel of three experts – Amb Ashok Kantha, India's former Ambassador to China, Lt Gen R K Sawhney, formerly DGMI and currently Dean, Centre for Defence Studies, VIF, and Cmde Gopal Suri, Senior Fellow, VIF and an expert in maritime affairs. Amb Kantha pointed out that the economy is driving India's policies towards China notwithstanding the fact that the bilateral relationship with China has remained mired in mistrust, arising out of an unsettled border though a similar approach



towards Pakistan hasn't worked. Lt Gen RK Sawhney asserted that India's involvement in Afghanistan is totally in sync with global efforts to stabilise Afghanistan. He cautioned about the risks of losing gains made in Afghanistan after decades of efforts by coalition and willing partners, should the country be allowed to lapse into Pakistan's strategic backyard yet again. Referring to the port agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan, the General said it has provided Afghanistan with an option, more specifically, an access away from Pakistan to the oceans and to the markets in Central Asia. More such initiatives are needed to lift Afghanistan from the morass it has landed in.

Cmde Gopal Suri, in his presentation, touched on the maritime dimensions to India's security. While he expressed India's concerns at attempts being made by foreign navies, especially China's, to build and revamp ports and bases around crucial chokepoints in the Indian Ocean, he also apprised the visiting delegation of India's renewed focus on the maritime domains, reflected by initiatives such as MAUSAM and SAGAR along with improving ties with littoral countries to keep the Indian Ocean safe for maritime transport. He reiterated India's role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean.



Round Table Discussion on 'Making Defence Acquisitions Work', 30 June 2016

With India's estimated defence expenditure on capital acquisitions likely to cross over \$150 billion over the next decade, the VIF, in collaboration with the Headquarters of the Integrated Defence Services (HQ, IDS), held a round table discussion on 'Making India's Defence Procurement Procedure Work'.

The interaction among experts and stakeholders was intended to highlight the imperatives for streamlining India's defence acquisition processes and making it more flexible, transparent and fast-track, without compromising financial prudence and probity –against a state of 'policy paralysis' of the Government.

In his opening remarks, General NC Vij, Director VIF, stressed that from a macro perspective, the Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) seems to be moving in the right direction, though the nitty-gritty needs to be worked out, especially at the functional level. The keynote address was then delivered by the Defence Minister, Shri Manohar Parrikar. One clear take away from his speech was that the Government was taking a pragmatic approach towards both fast-tracking acquisitions as also incentivising local manufacturers taking up projects with large indigenous content. The Minister also interacted with a broad panel of policy experts – senior bureaucrats, military top brass and representatives from the industry, among others. Mr Dharendra Singh, one of the key personalities behind DPP-2016 was among those who attended the deliberations.





During the deliberations, presentations were made by a team from HQ IDS, comprising of Lt Gen Anil Ahuja and Cdr Vikram Mahajan, on the existing framework of India's defence acquisitions – planning, budgeting, acquisition processes etc., as also the salient changes that have come about in the revised DPP. Following the presentations, an interactive session was held. Some of the proposals that emerged during the interactive session included: creation of Combined Defence Services (CDS), creation of centres of excellence for field trials by private players, articulation of national security strategy, aligning long-term plans with defence outlays, and creation of dedicated centres for training of defence acquisition officials.



RTD on Efficacy of India's Nuclear Doctrine in the Context of Pakistan's TNWs 18 July 2016

A round table discussion on 'Efficacy of India's Nuclear Doctrine in the Context of Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons' (TNWs) was held at the VIF. It



began with a presentation by Brig Gurmeet Kanwal, Visiting Fellow, VIF, to outline the characteristics of TNWs, its impact on strategic stability in South Asia, nuclear scenarios and options for India, and need for review of India's Nuclear Doctrine. The discussion established that even if TNWs are used in the battlefield or against purely military targets, the effect would be strategic. It also viewed the deployment of TNWs by Pakistan as a factor in lowering the nuclear threshold between the two neighbours.



The contours of future conflicts under the nuclear overhang and India's options were also discussed among experts.

Interaction with Maxim Shepovalenko, Russian Navy, 13 September 2016

The VIF invited Capt Maxim Shepovalenko (Retd), Russian Navy, for an interaction on India-Russia relations with emphasis on maritime cooperation. Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Dean, Centre for Defence



Studies, headed the VIF panel which comprised of Amb D P Srivastava, Brig Vinod Anand and Cmde Gopal Suri, among others. Understandably, defence-industrial cooperation between India and Russia, which has experienced some drag in the recent years, topped the agenda for discussion. The prevailing geo-political scene, also came up for discussion when think-tank level cooperation between the two countries was proposed.



Interaction with Taiwan Delegation from National Defense University, 28 November 2016

A two-member delegation from Taiwan's National Defense University (NDU) comprising of Dr Shen, Ming-Shih, Director War College of NDU and Col Chen Yeng Chuan interacted with the VIF faculty.

Brig Vinod Anand, Senior Fellow, welcomed the Taiwanese delegation and recounted the recent visit of the VIF's delegation to Taipei, where they had met a number of high-level officials and forged mutual cooperation with the 'Prospect Foundation'. He dwelt briefly on Indo-Taiwanese relations and how the new government led by Mrs Tsai Ing-wen was giving impetus to Taiwan's relations with India.

While Dr Shen spoke on 'Chinese Communist Party's 19th Party Congress and Power Succession' Col Chen explained 'PLA Rocket Army and Military Transformation'. Dr Shen explained the intricacies and implications of President Xi Jinping being declared 'Core leader'. He also dwelt on the nuances of competition between various factions of the



Chinese Communist Party and how Xi Jinping was promoting his faction's people with a view to consolidate his power. In his view Xi is working towards getting a third tenure and the possibility of his becoming 'president' like what was done by President Putin. Col Chen elaborated on PLA Rocket Force, recent changes in command and control, and its implications.

In the interactive session, questions on China's Central Military Commission (CMC), political leanings of various military and civilian members of the hierarchy, and changes in the structure of the People's Liberation Army's were asked. The NDU delegation and the VIF side both expressed desire to continue mutual exchanges and interact further on the above issues and other issues of mutual concern.









Round Table Discussion on Economy, 26 April 2016

Noting the apprehensions voiced by many of another round of recession in the global economy being triggered by China's economic slowdown, the VIF organised a discussion led by three leading economists on the state of India's economy.



With Dr Vaidyanathan, Professor of Finance, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore, presenting an overview of the global economic scenario, Dr V Aanatha Nageswaran, former investment banker, compared two major Asian economies, China and India, on some of the major matrices. Mr Neelkanth Mishra, India Equity Strategist, Credit Suisse, then focused on the health of India's economy. The overall impression was that India's economy is largely insulated from external



tribulations. It was also hinted that the emerging economic crisis was really an Anglo-Saxon or rather a global one. India's engine of growth largely being its domestic demand, de-coupling from the Anglo-Saxon economy might promise faster growth in times ahead.

Interaction with Japanese Delegation, 07 June 2016

H.E. Koji OMI, Mr Yutaka Kikuta, Mr Takayuki Shirao, Mr Toru Kukaya, Mr Naoyoshi Noguchi and Mr Kazuhisa Yoshida called on the VIF's faculty for an interaction on 'India-Japan Relations: the Way Ahead'. The delegation interacted across a wide range of bilateral and regional issues with a VIF panel comprising General NC Vij, Director, VIF, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney, Dean, Centre for Defence Studies, among others. While reviewing progress





in bilateral relations over the past few years, the interaction also focused on improving defence and technological cooperation, managing the rise of China, and building up cooperation on solar energy, ship building, agriculture, and education, among other elements of soft power.

Round Table Discussion on the 'Slowdown of China's Economy', 21 July 2016

VIF organised an internal discussion on the current trends in the Chinese economy, it was held in two parts. Part one of the discussion, with the theme, 'Slowdown of the Chinese Economy: Implications for India' was led by Dr Arvind Virmani, former Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance (India) and Executive Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF). Amb Ashok K Kantha, India's former Ambassador to China and Distinguished Fellow, VIF, analysed the issue of 'New Normal in China's Economy: Implications for India'.



While comparing the two economies in specific sectors, Mr Virmani stressed that India needs to draw lessons from where China went wrong. He underlined that economic recession which hit major economies of the world in 2008 was more of a global financial crisis that rebounds almost every 75-odd years (his hypothesis contradicts a popular perception which suggests that economies world over tend to dive into recession once every 10-15 years, the only difference being this time around its severity was more). He further opined that China, like many others, misread the situation and did not run a budget deficit. Thus the demand that should



have been created wasn't there, which eventually led to a decline in Chinese exports.

Next, unlike the opinion that gap between the GDPs of the two countries is widening, Mr Virmani, backing up his arguments with data and charts culled from various sources, emphasised that growing convergence in the GDP trends seems to indicate India's GDP will catch up with China's in the next 35-40 years. He also pooh-poohed the idea that China's exports are declining due to a burgeoning middle class, pointing out that the consumption share (usually a good indicator of the strength of middle class) is actually at a very low level. In his opinion, China rode the global export boost of the 1990s to exponentially increase its trade surplus, but since then the tendency to sacrifice long-term economic stability for short-term growth is making a bad situation worse.



Amb Kantha, while bolstering a few of Dr Virmani's arguments, differed on a few others. According to him, the old drivers of growth have stopped yielding results, while the new drivers haven't kicked in yet, although there has been significant

focus on domestic markets of late. Dwelling more on the political economy of China, Amb Kantha stressed that part of the reason China has been flexing muscles in and around the region is because the 'Chinese Dream', a ploy to distract domestic attention away from a failing economy, isn't selling anymore. Coupled with that there are populists slogans like – doubling the income of every Chinese worker by 2021 –a difficult proposition to meet if the economy doesn't grow by 6.5 per cent or more every year. The Ambassador questioned the wisdom of making such populist slogans in the backdrop of economic stability which is still some distance away. He asserted that during the 19th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), President Xi Jinping will be leading the Chinese government to a crossroad, and the CPC must choose one path or the other. The members of the CPC can either allow Xi to consolidate his power and become even more autocratic, or they can 'persuade' Xi to shed some of his powers.



A lively interactive session followed the two presentations. Interestingly, the house was evenly divided as to what percentage of President Xi Jinping's touted China's One Road One Belt (OBOR) running through Pakistan up to Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea, is driven by geo-strategic or economic considerations. Amb Prabhat Shukla, Distinguished Fellow, VIF, was prominent among those who made key interventions during the discussions.

Discussion on China's Economy, 24 January 2017

The VIF invited Dr V Anantha Nageswaran, columnist and former investment banker, to share his perspective on the Chinese economy. Through



his presentation, titled 'China: Death By Thousand Debts (or) Till debt do us apart', he underlined structural flaws in the Chinese economy. He highlighted, among other things, China, in an effort to debt-fuel its economy has built over-capacity in infrastructure. With private investments hard to come by, the government has turned towards policy lenders in an effort to keep pumping cash into the economic system.

Dr Nageswaran argued that in an effort to maintain economic stability, China has resorted to debt-fuelling its GDP, an exercise which could lead to a deep economic crisis in the long run. He stressed China's overall debt has risen astounding to almost 300 percent of its GDP over the past seven to eight years, the highest for any country in the world. With many infrastructure projects being economically unviable and very little assurance that these investments will pay off, lending institutions are staring at looming bankruptcy. Domestic investors in China, shaken by the country's economic slowdown, are looking at ways and means to take





their money out of the country. China's capital outflow, exchange rates, currency manipulations, among other topics, figured prominently in the presentation.

Interaction on the Budget, 14 February 2017

Following the presentation of the NDA-led government's fourth consecutive budget on 01 February 2017, the VIF assembled a high-powered panel, comprising India's best-known economists – Dr Arvind Panagariya, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog



and Dr Bimal Jalan, among others to share their thoughts on the budget and its long-term impact for the economy of India. The discussion also entailed an assessment of a few big-bang measures including the 'de-monitisation' drive and the Goods & Services Tax (GST), and their impact on the Indian economy.

The rationale for merging the Railway Budget with the main Budget, abrogating the distinction between plan and non-plan expenditure, and



advancing the date of budget presentation were also covered. Hailing the budget as visionary, the experts opined that it puts India on a faster growth trajectory. They however urged the government not to lose its momentum on economic reforms.

National Workshop on Doubling Farmers' Income through Scaling-up, 15-16 March 2017

In sync with the Prime Minister's vision of doubling farmers' income by 2022 when the country completes 75 years of independence, the VIF, in collaboration with International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and J. Farms, organised a two-day national workshop on 'Doubling Farmers' Income through Scaling-up'.

A galaxy of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds – key officials from concerned ministries, agriculture scientists, officials from meteorological department, academic institutions, and farmers'



representatives, among others, engaged in comprehensive deliberations over two days consisting of eight sessions, aimed at identifying challenges, opportunities, innovations, enabling policies, institutions and strategy for increasing productivity and doubling the incomes of farmers in different agro-eco regions of India. Besides developing a framework for implementation of strategies, evaluation and monitoring, etc., the workshop also focused on bringing out a blue print for establishing a pilot in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra which could be subsequently scaled up to other agro-eco regions of India.











Round Table Discussion on Deep-Water Gas Pipeline, 22 August 2016

Dr TN Rao, on behalf of South Asia Gas Enterprise Private Ltd (SAGE), laid out a presentation for the VIF faculty on building a deep-water, trans-national, natural gas pipeline system from the Middle East to India.



The focus was on India's gas requirement, evaluation and costing details of pipelines versus LNG container supply and the 'SAGE Vision'. Dr Rao argued that India needs to look at alternative sources in order to meet its growing demands of energy. While TAPI (Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) and IPI (Iran-Pakistan-India) are yet to take off, the Middle East to India Deep-water Gas Pipeline (MEIDP) is preferable on geo-strategic, economic and commercial considerations.



Following the presentation, an interactive session was held with General NC Viji, Director, VIF, Amb Dinkar Srivastava, India's former Ambassador to Iran, Mr Subodh Kumar Jain, Director, SAGE, Amb Rajiv Sikri, among other participants.



LANDSLIP National Stakeholders Workshop, 20 January 2017

VIF organised a day-long national stakeholder's workshop in collaboration with The Landslide Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment, Preparedness and Early Warning in South Asia: Integrating Meteorology, Landscape and Society (LANDSLIP).

The workshop began with an inception meeting over a four-year 'Science for Humanitarian Emergencies and Resilience' (SHEAR) research programme funded by the Natural Environmental



Research Council (NERC) and the Department for International Development (DFID), UK. Aimed at protecting lives, livelihoods and the local economy of vulnerable landslide-prone communities in India, the project envisages a consortium of 36 scientists representing nine organisations in the UK, Italy and India to study the Nilgiri, Darjeeling and East Sikkim regions in order to enhance landslide related multi-hazard risk assessment and



monitoring. The focus was also on understanding the drivers of risk, multi-hazard risk-monitoring and warning systems, and disseminating LANDSLIP project knowledge to the wider region of South Asia –in particular, Afghanistan.

Key speakers to the workshop included Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, Prof Bruce D Malamud and Dr Helen Reeves, among others. Senior officials, including Dr Niranjan Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Dr Saibal Ghosh, Suprintending Geologist, Geological Survey of India, and Met officials from the UK attended the workshop. The event

was also marked by signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the British Geological Survey (BSI) and the Geological Survey of India (GSI).

Workshop on Internet Governance, 30 January 2017

Dr Gulshan Rai, National Cyber Security Coordination Centre (NCSC), Mr Sanjay Verma, Ministry of External Affairs, Mr Samiran Gupta, India Head of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), among others, participated in a day-long workshop on Internet Governance, organised by VIF. The focus of the workshop was on having Indian concerns met in the system of global internet governance. A wide range of issues to include India's growing tele-density, increasing dependence on the Internet for delivery of government programmes and services, transparency and accountability in internet governance, multi-stakeholders model of internet governance, location of servers, domain names, and intellectual property rights, among other issues, were discussed in depth.

Interaction with Mr Samiran Gupta, the Head of 'India for ICANN', 23 February 2017

Mr Samiran Gupta, India Head for Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was invited for a discussion on issues of internet freedom and security. ICANN, a non-profit organisation, was founded in 1998 in the US with the objectives of preserving operational stability of the





internet, promoting competition, representation of the global internet community, and developing consensus-based policies.

In his opening remarks, Gen NC Vij, Director VIF, while highlighting increasing threats in the cyber domain posed by a few state and non-state actors, urged that the internet, an identified global common, must remain open and free from threats. Mr Samiran Gupta's presentation delved into a range of topics such as the evolution of internet and the present eco-system of internet governance.

While urging the VIF to actively engage with ICANN's policy development processes, Mr Gupta

stressed that the internet is gravitating towards the Asia-Pacific region, which necessitates the countries to not only beef up their infrastructure but also engage with ICANN in policy development processes. Internet censorship, free basics, dark web, etc., were some of the issues that came up for discussion during the interactive session.

Gen NC Vij, Lt Gen RK Sawhney, Mr CD Sahay and Mr Sushant Sareen, among others, attended the discussion. The interaction was moderated by Lt Gen Davinder Kumar, former Signal Officer-in-Chief of the Indian Army and former CEO and Managing Director of Tata Advanced Systems Ltd.







Buddhism as a Science: A Talk by Mr Robert Thurman, 05 April 2016

Mr Robert Thurman, the celebrated Buddhist scholar, recognised by Time Magazine as one of the 25 most influential Americans of 1997, visited the VIF to deliver a talk on 'Buddha as a Scientist'.



Filled with humour, Mr Robert Thurman described how Buddha was way different in a sense that he did not claim any tryst with God, nor did he authorise himself to found a new world religion. He was the one who truly understood the reality of self and the world at large. Buddhism, according to Thurman, is more knowledge-based than faith-oriented. Pointing out that 'Nirvana' was the state of knowing the ultimate reality which brings ultimate happiness to mankind, he stated that the essence of Buddha's teachings is that the more one knows of ethics, mind and wisdom, the less one

suffers. Questions from an inquisitive audience showed that while pan-Asian effort to revive the Nalanda University is praiseworthy, incorporation of religious studies are necessary to revive the university to its pristine glory.

Round Table Discussion on 'Bicameralism and the Role of Rajya Sabha', 27 July 2016

With the Rajya Sabha increasingly perceived as an arena for political muscle-flexing there is a need to review its composition and functioning. Notably, while the Prime Minister has been making a pitch for holding centre and state elections simultaneously, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister has suggested scrapping the Rajya Sabha altogether. In order to debate the issue and build consensus, VIF invited current and former Members of the Parliament representing major national and regional political parties and constitutional experts, notably Dr



Subhash C Kashyap and Dr VK Agnihotri, both former Secretary Generals of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha respectively, for a round table discussion.

With Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, in the Chair, Dr A Surya Prakash, Distinguished Fellow, VIF and Chairman, Prasar Bharati moderated the discussions. In his agenda-setting remarks, General Vij argued that setting up the second chamber in the Indian Parliament was preceded by an extensive debate among framers of the Constitution who agreed that it was necessary so as to bring sobriety in debate over legislations and quality of bills passed.



Interaction with Prof Daya Thussu on Leveraging India's Soft Power, 19 August 2016

In seeking to analyse the potentials of India's soft power, particularly in relation to her foreign policy objectives, a talk by communication strategist, Prof Daya Kishan Thussu, was organised. As the Professor of International Communication and Co-Director of the India Media Centre, University of Westminster, London, Prof Thussu has conducted an in-depth study on India's soft power and has followed it up with the publication of a book titled, 'Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood'.

The Professor presented a panoramic overview of India's soft power, ranging from strengths of her cultures to cuisines, Bollywood to Yoga, dance and music, and finally to the Indian Diaspora. He underlined that India's rich and syncretic culture

The panel of Parliamentarians comprising Mr Shivkumar Udasi (BJP), Mr Tarun Vijay (BJP), Mr Kishore Chandra Deo (Congress), Mr Rajeev Gowda (Congress), Mr DP Tripathi (NCP), Mr Bhartruhari Mahtab (BJD), and Mr Rajeev Chandrasekhar (Independent) made valuable contributions. Discussions centred around obstruction of proceedings, members not belonging to the state they represent, selecting members with expertise,



simultaneous elections, etc. The broad consensus was that the Rajya Sabha is a Council of State and must represent the interests of the states. It was agreed that politically complex issues need to be studied in greater depth leading to broader consultations. To evolve consensus on reforming the Rajya Sabha, it was agreed that the matter could be referred to a select committee of the Parliament.



has the potential to be a beacon of inspiration for other countries. He pointed out that China is extending the reach of her soft power across the world, spending huge sums to do so, even invoking 'brand Buddhism' while continuing with muscle-flexing to exert military and cultural hegemony over Asia.

Dr Thussu pointed out that India's creation of a billion-member 'Aadhar' biometric database, her 'Mars Mission' and internalising Islam's softer version are among many of India's most notable achievements, which remain but little known to the outside world. Besides other measures, Prof Thussu suggested a role for Indian IT industry in leveraging the components of soft power to further India's interests at the global level.



Launch of Snowflakes of Time – Kanwal Sibal, 11 November 2016



Amb Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary and one of India's best-known diplomats, launched his collection of poems 'Snowflakes of Time: Memories and Musings' at the VIF. The collection, besides revealing a thoughtful, sensitive and introspective persona of Amb Sibal, also reflects



his views on some of the major diplomatic challenges he faced as a career diplomat spanning over forty years of service. Adding to the delight of the audience, he read out stanzas from his collection in a voice that rang with emotions and nostalgia.



Talk by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 08 February 2017

For a second time, the VIF had the honour of hosting the Nobel Peace Laureate, His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people. This time he chose to speak on 'Ancient Indian Thoughts and its Relevance to the Contemporary World'. The Dalai Lama addressed a packed auditorium which had a number of prominent Delhi-based personalities, including former bureaucrats, ex-military officials and diplomats, besides media personnel, sitting in the audience.



HH Dali Lama, living in India since 1959, recalled his association with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and the support extended to him in setting up centres of Buddhist studies across India. He stressed that ancient Indian learning remains relevant to modern science and promotes better understanding of the human mind as compared to modern psychology.



Scientific and system-based approach to studying Buddhism was evolved in Tibet in the eighth century with the arrival of an Indian master, Shantarakshita,



he said. He explained the Nalanda tradition of learning and debate. Touching upon the present education system, secularism, growing violence, etc., His Holiness underscored that humanism and compassion, both essential ingredients of the ancient education system, can play a great part in so far as healing the mind and purifying the soul are concerned.



True to his style and expectations of many in the audience, His Holiness the Dalai Lama kept the



hall spellbound throughout with a mesmerising talk, peppered with liberal doses of humour and sporadic bursts of sarcasm. A lively interactive session followed the talk.





Talk on Netaji's Contribution to the Freedom Movement, 10 February 2017

The VIF organised a talk on the contributions made by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose towards India's independence movement. The talk was delivered by US-based Dr Kalyan De, an engineer by profession and scholar of India's freedom struggle. Quoting extensively from official British documents to validate his arguments, Dr De stressed that Netaji's contribution towards India's freedom struggle has been far deeper than what is realised so far. The 'Quit India Movement', for example, was never entirely Gandhiji's or the Congress' show. Even while Netaji escaped to Germany, he played a dominant role in the conduct of 'Quit India Movement', but these facts were never made public because it served no



one's interests, neither British nor Congress'. At the end, Dr De took questions from the audience.





Glimpses







Reaching Out

Vimarsha

Waterways on River Ganga – Environmental Challenge and Opportunity, 28 July 2016

In the series of public lectures on contemporary issues of national importance that are hosted by the VIF at regular intervals, a 'Vimarsha' was organised with Ganga Activist Dr Onkar Mittal and Environmentalist Dr Hishmi Jamil Husain to discuss the proposed waterways on the River Ganga and its implications on ecology and development. A large number of luminaries and enthusiasts attended the Vimarsha, an event very popular among Delhi's intelligentsia.



As part of his introductory remarks, General NC Vij, Director, VIF, highlighted that the survival of River Ganga is invariably linked to the survival of millions who depend on it for water, energy, agriculture, and spiritual needs. The theological and historical significance of Ganga and sustenance of various initiatives to clean up the river was also touched upon.

Dr Onkar Mittal, an advocate for better urban governance to prevent pollution of the Ganga, posited that environment and development are but complimentary, ascribing thoughtless urbanisation as the main pollutant. Damage to Ganga started with the construction of railways and the process continues unabated with dams, canals, industries and deforestation afflicting the river. While several



initiatives were taken to keep Ganga free of pollutants and its flow uninterrupted, it remains among the most polluted rivers. Analysing merits and demerits of various Ganga action-plans, Dr Mittal argued that a successful plan to restore the rights of the river must include waste management, river protection, education and empowerment of urban local bodies.

Dr Hishmi Jamil Husain's presentation focused on the proposed waterways on Ganga, part of the Central Government's pet Ganga Development Project. He supported the plan on counts of safety, fuel-efficiency and the environment. Elaborating on sustainability, components and major challenges for navigation, he believed waterways to be the transport of the future.

Views of the speakers found resonance with the audience chipping in with their comments on finding the right balance between development and ecology.



Talk on 'Freebies and Good Governance' by Mr BP Singh, Former Governor of Sikkim, 17 August 2016

While 'freebies' are considered among the expedient means of providing succour to the needy poor, these come at a heavy cost to the national exchequer, as precious economic resources have to be diverted away from developmental projects. The dichotomy in meeting the objectives of a welfare state which also aspires to move up the index of socio-economic development was explained by one of India's most accomplished public administrators, Mr BP Singh, former Governor of Sikkim and Home Secretary to the Government of India, as he spoke at a Vimarsha, organised by the VIF.



Opening the proceedings, certain representative cases of distortions to the fundamentals of 'good governance', that the nation has had to suffer over the years, were highlighted by Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF. He suggested that among many hurdles against good governance, a trust deficit between the bureaucracy and the political class and a propensity among the latter to acquire mass following by making enticing decisions were the reasons that compromises are made against the best interests of the nation. The Director lauded Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi for propagating the mantra of 'Citizen First' to guide both the bureaucracy and the political class towards a reign of good governance in India.

While dwelling upon the objectives of a welfare state, Mr BP Singh explained that resources of the state have to be utilised in a manner that benefits the interests of the larger sections of society. He



cautioned that denying to the poor the right to live with dignity while making distinctions between good and bad freebies he opined that these were appropriate when aligned to the development of marginal sections of the society. Contrarily, it was worrisome that the distinction between a welfare state and short-term political populism was getting blurred as political parties find freebies as an easy way to capture power.

Pointing at spread of awareness and rising aspirations, the speaker offered a 10-point agenda for good governance, decentralisation, development at the grassroots levels, education, accountability and transparency being some of these. He also suggested mechanisms to protect the dignity of honest bureaucrats and executives for them to serve free of apprehensions. There followed an intense question and answer session.



Vimarsha – Talk by Mr Prakash Singh on Police Reforms in India, 15 September 2016

At a Vimarsha organised at the VIF, Mr Prakash Singh, former DG BSF, spoke on, 'Preparing the Central and State Police Forces to Deal with The



Multi-Dimensional Challenges of Tomorrow'. A large audience, comprising former bureaucrats, diplomats, military veterans, members of the academia, and informed citizenry attended the event.

At the start, Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, alluded to the long-delayed police modernisation against the challenges to India's internal security. While a plethora of problems, including criminalisation and politicisation, afflicted the police, neither the states nor the Centre have been willing to undertake police reforms, both throwing the ball in each other's court, he said, and stressed upon a wholesome approach to police modernisation.

Mr Singh, a crusader for police reforms in India, spoke of a distressed police force fighting against odds to keep the country safe from multitudes of internal threats – terrorism, transnational crimes and left wing extremism, among others. He analysed the difficulties besetting the police force – under-staffing, fatigue, inadequate equipment, poor training, miserable living conditions, and low morale. Governed by an archaic 1861 Police Act, the police remain stuck with the observations made in 1902, that of it being 'corrupt', 'inefficient'



and 'oppressive', he said. As the recommendations of several commissions and committees gather dust, Mr Singh had to approach the Supreme Court in an effort to nudge the political establishments towards police reforms, but to no avail. Even after the Supreme Court passed seven directives related to setting up of state security commissions, fixed tenure for police officers, separation of investigation from law and order and establishment of police complaints authorities and police establishment boards, the governments have found convenient ways to circumvent these, he pointed out.

Mr Singh urged that the Central Government should take the onus to pass an effective Police Act which would also serve as a model for state governments. He underlined the need for an internal security doctrine, legislation against organised and transnational crimes, and procedures for crowd control. In view of the excessive workload Shri Prakash Singh suggested that social crimes such as beggary, prostitution, domestic violence, etc., should be kept out of the purview of India's police.



De-monetisation: The Balance Sheet – 'Vimarsha' with Shri S Gurumurthy, 12 December 2016

Shri S Gurumurthy, widely acclaimed as a champion of 'economic nationalism', explained the underpinnings of de-monetisation to a large audience during a Vimarsha. In his introductory remarks, Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, explained the objectives of de-monetisation, namely, curbing black economy, rooting out corruption, and weeding out fake currency in terror financing. It was strange that some of the political parties have chosen to oppose this path-breaking initiative while the common people have braved inconveniences in the larger interests of the nation, he said.



In a highly illuminating talk, Shri Gurumurthy referred to economic indicators to press home the point that de-monetisation was not only necessary but timely and inescapable. Describing it as a 'Financial Pokharan' that will bring about a paradigm shift in India's economy, he stressed that de-monetisation had become inevitable due to



'total mismanagement' of the economy, especially with asset-inflation fuelling the GDP growth. Pointing at the fall of real estate black wealth and the surplus cash in the economy, he stressed that even if all the de-monetised currency notes get



ploughed back into the system, bulk of the ill-gotten or hidden wealth would enter the banking system for productive usage. Touching upon security related issues, he pointed out that by blocking illegal banking and non-banking (Hawala) channels and counterfeit currency, de-monetisation had clammed up the terror groups.



Shri Gurumurthy's expose was highly appreciated by the audience by frequent applause. A vigorous interactive session with a well-informed audience followed.



Vimarsha on 'Uniting India: Sardar Patel', 02 February 2017

Under the aegis of VIF Vimarsha, Amb G Parthasarathy, former diplomat and author, was invited to deliver a talk on the role played by India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, towards India's post-independence unification. A large gathering of intellectuals, comprising former bureaucrats, retired military commanders and media professionals, among others, attended the event and interacted with the speaker following the lecture.



Introducing the topic, Gen NC Vij, Director VIF, paid tributes to Sardar Patel's leadership and administrative skills as evidenced by integration of over 560 states into a united nation, by which he scotched British intrigue to leave India divided and weak. The Sardar was a great visionary and stabilising force amid the turbulence that followed partition.



Amb Parthasarathy headed the task force constituted by the Prime Minister to compile an authoritative account of Sardar Patel's achievements for wider dissemination to the public at large. He shared the findings, titled as 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' to describe Sardar Patel's achievements far above those of Bismarck and Garibaldi, in light of India's greater diversity and geographical expanse. He stressed that proper understanding of Sardar Patel needs to be propagated to tackle national challenges and to offer a role model for the young generations to emulate. He also spoke of nationalist fervour behind construction of Sardar Patel's magnificent statue on Narmada and the digital exhibition, 'Uniting India –Sardar Patel', organised by the Culture Ministry at New Delhi. The talk also

covered the accession of key states like Hyderabad, Junagarh and Manipur, etc. The interactive session witnessed brisk participation from the audience.



Vimarsha: Nation and Nationalism –Talk by Mr MJ Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs, 27 March 2017

Mr MJ Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs, was invited to speak on 'Nation and Nationalism' at the VIF's Vimarsha, which began with Gen NC Vij, Director, VIF, committing to the army motto, 'India First', that applies equally to other countrymen too.



Mr MJ Akbar envisaged that the shape of the 21st Century will be determined in the first 20 years, just as it happened in the last century. Two World Wars in the first half of the last century not only ended the era of empires and colonies but also gave rise to nation states, he opined. Elaborating on the philosophical underpinnings of nation states, Mr Akbar stated that whereas empires and colonies were exploitative and were defined by territories subjugated, it was the 'will of the people', even with inherent contradictions, that defined nation



states. In the Indian context, 1947 saw the first exercise of will of the people and the creation of rational political space around it. The Hon'ble Minister went on to add that even as dilemmas of the nation states are still being resolved, their existence is facing challenge from the faith-based political order which various terrorist groups are seeking to establish. Vouching for nationalism, he described it as an antidote to terrorism.

Significantly the Minister posited that unlike other countries who seek to create instruments for 'balance of power', India's foreign policy is largely fuelled by 'power of balance'. Quoting copiously from history, the Minister spoke to an inspired and applauding audience comprising of former members of defence, civil and diplomatic fraternity, academicians, and media professionals.





Scholar's Outreach

01 Apr 16: Shri RNP Singh addressed a National Seminar on 'Governance Reforms for "Make in India", Rural Infrastructure and Sustainable Agriculture Initiatives', organised by India Policy Foundation and CUTs International, at India International Centre, New Delhi.

04 Apr 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker on 'Advancing the BBIN Agenda', at a Roundtable at Delhi Policy Group, New Delhi.

05 Apr 16: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee addressed the SRM University Academic Council, Lucknow, on 'Fundamentals of Military Education'.

10 Apr 16: Shri Sushant Sareen spoke on border security and management at a conference organised by Forum for Awareness on National Security FANS, Amritsar.

14 Apr 16: Brig Vinod Anand was a discussant in 'India's Asia Pacific Strategy and Act East Policy', at a conference organised by Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) in Beijing.

25 April 16: Dr A Surya Prakash was the Keynote Speaker on 'Freedom of Speech', Department of Public Administration, University of Lucknow.

27 Apr 16: General NC VIJ delivered a lecture at the Head of Think Tank meeting at Sapru House, ICWA, New Delhi.

05 May 16: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha delivered a lecture at the Visva-Bharati University, Shanti Niketan on the theme of 'India-China Relations: Looking Ahead'.

14 May 16: Shri RNP Singh presented a paper on 'Social Philosophy of Dr BR Ambedkar' at a seminar organised by Centre for Social Justice at Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

26 May 16: Shri RNP Singh presented a Paper on 'Gita Press and Making of New India', at a seminar organised by Council for Social Development at Lodhi Estate, New Delhi.

30 May 16: Ambassador DP Srivastava co-chaired a Seminar on UN Peace-keeping, Center for Land Warfare, New Delhi.

06 Jun 16: General NC VIJ delivered a lecture at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

09 Jun 16: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee briefed on drafting of 'National Security Strategy' at a roundtable discussion at the Delhi Policy Group, New Delhi.

11 Jun 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Keynote Address on 'Role of Public Service Broadcaster in India', at Rotary Club, Chennai.

13 Jun 16: Shri RNP Singh addressed a seminar on 'Pakistan Watch', organised by India Policy Foundation, at Constitution Club, New Delhi.

18 Jun 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Valedictory Address to Short-Term Course for Media Professionals, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

25 Jun 16: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee conducted a discussion on 'Convergence of External and Internal Security', at the National Security Guard, New Delhi.

03 Jul 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Keynote Address on 'The New, Emerging India', Gatisheel Gujarat Conference, New Jersey, USA.

6-9 Jul 16: Shri Alvite Singh Ningthoujam presented a paper titled 'Widening Footprint of ISIS: An Indian Perspective', at the conference jointly organised at Sichuan University, Chengdu, by the VIF, New Delhi and Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), Sichuan University, on the theme 'China and India: Regional Cooperation and Development'.

07 Jul 16: Shri Sushant Sareen presented a paper on Pakistan at the Sichuan University, China during the VIF-Sichuan University Dialogue.

18 Jul 16: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee delivered a talk on '21st Century Warfare', to the officers of Canadian Joint Operations Command in Vancouver.

20 Jul 16: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to the Higher Command Course at the Army War College, Mhow.

25 Jul 16: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture on 'Situation in Pakistan' at the College of Defence Management, Hyderabad.



03 Aug 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered a lecture on 'Never Run Down a Public Broadcaster', Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

17 Aug 16: Brig Vinod Anand presented a paper, 'India's Approach to Strategic & Legal Implications of PCA Award' at an international conference organised by Nha Trang and Pham Van Dong University, Vietnam.

19 Aug 16: Shri PK Mishra delivered a lecture on Indo-Bangladesh Relations and submitted a paper to the officer students of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi.

30 Aug 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Keynote Address on 'Media and Society: Challenges and Prospects' at National Media Conclave, Manav Rachna University, Faridabad.

08 Sep 16: Ambassador Ashok K. Kantha was a speaker at the India-China CEOs' Forum, hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industry, New Delhi.

12-14 Sep 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker at the International River Symposium, jointly convened by The International River Foundation, Brisbane, Australia and South Asia Water Initiative, The World Bank, Washington, DC, New Delhi.

13 Sep 16: Ambassador Ashok K. Kantha delivered a lecture at the Naval War College, Goa on the subject of 'Rising Aspirations of China'.

14 Sep 16: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha delivered a lecture at the Goa Naval Area, Karwar on 'India-China Relations: Looking Ahead', at the invitation of Western Naval Command.

14 Sep 16: Shri PK Mishra delivered a lecture at FICCI on 'Border Management in Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Pakistan Borders' to FICCI and paramilitary officers and submitted a paper.

16 Sep 16: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha delivered a lecture at the Western Naval Command Headquarters, Mumbai on 'India-China Relations: Strategic Perspective'.

20-24 Sep 16: Dr Harinder Sekhon presented a paper, 'India and the East Asian Security Architecture' at a conference on 'Freedom and the Rule of Law', in Belgrade.

21 Sep 16: Brig Vinod Anand moderated a session on 'Jointly Building Lasting Peace: Concept, Dialogue and Institutions', in an international conference at Yichuan, China.

22 Sep 16: Shri Sushant Sareen presented a paper on terrorism at India-Russia think tanks meet, Moscow.

25 Sep 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Inaugural Address at a conference on 'Value-based Media for Healthy and Happy Society', Brahmakumaris, Chennai.

28 Sep 16: General NC Vij delivered a talk on Higher Defence Organisation at the USI, New Delhi.

28 Sep 16: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture on Balochistan at Lucknow University.

09-14 Oct 16: Dr Harinder Sekhon delivered lectures on 'India's Act East Policy under PM Modi', and 'Main Trends in Asia-Pacific and the Dynamics of the US-China-India Relations' at the Institute of South Asian Studies, University of Sichuan, Chengdu.

10-12 Oct 16: Lt Gen RK Sawhney spoke at the 7th Xiangshan Forum, co-hosted by the China Association for Military Science (CAMS) and China Institute for International Strategic Studies (CISS) in Beijing.

18 Oct 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Inaugural Address at Doordarshan-UNICEF-BBC Media Action TV Series Launch, Maurya Hotel, New Delhi.

07-08 Oct 16: Ambassador DP Srivastava spoke on 'India's role in the United Nations', at the 3rd Symbiosis Model United Nations Conference, Pune.

21 Oct 16: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture on Balochistan at Atma Ram Sanatan Dharam College, Delhi University.

21-23 Oct 16: Commodore Gopal Suri presented a paper on 'China's Increasing Footprints in the IOR', at a conference on 'The Emerging Strategic Dynamics in Indo Pacific' at the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

21-22 Oct 16: Shri Alvite Singh Ningthoujam presented a paper titled 'Terrorism, ISIS and India: Developments and Challenges', at a conference



organised in Colombo by the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Sri Lanka; the VIF, India; and the Institute for Transnational Studies (ITS), Germany; on the theme 'Emerging Strategic Dynamics in Indo-Pacific'.

22 Oct 16: Shri Sushant Sareen made a presentation on terrorism at the Asian Forum for Global Governance (AFGG) conference, New Delhi.

28 Oct 16: Shri PK Mishra delivered a lecture on 'Technical Plugging of Gaps & Technical Equipments to be Used in Bangladesh & Pakistan Borders to Stop Infiltration of Jihadis, Fake Currency, Militants, Arms & Ammunitions'. Submitted a paper to the BSF Academy on technical equipment required by border forces.

02 Nov 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker on Restoring River Connectivity, Seminar on Connectivity, India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dhaka.

3-4 Nov 16: Ms Neha Sinha presented a paper on 'Role and Contribution of Indian Diaspora in Indo-Mozambican Relations' at an international conference on 'New Indian Migrants and the Indentured Diaspora: Emerging Opportunity for Indian Foreign Policy' held at Calcutta University, Kolkata.

05 Nov 16: Dr A Surya Prakash spoke on 'Indian Parliament – Time for Reform' at India Ideas Conclave, India Foundation, Goa.

08-09 Nov 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker at the Water Diplomacy Workshop, convened by The Hague Institute for Global Justice and the IUCN, Bangkok.

09 Nov 16: Commodore Gopal Suri presented a paper on 'The Navy & Coast Guard in Furtherance of Foreign Policy', at a Seminar on 'Whither Indian Ocean Maritime Order?', organised at India International Centre, New Delhi.

12 Nov 16: Dr A Surya Prakash spoke on 'Impressions of Colonisation on Political Discourse', Bhopal Conference, Vidhan Sabha Parisar, Bhopal.

17 Nov 16: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha was the Keynote Speaker at the 'Industry - Academia Conclave' hosted by IIM, Shillong. He spoke on 'Understanding "New Normal" in China and in India-China Relations'.

17 Nov 16: Brig Vinod Anand presented a paper on 'South Asia's Geostrategic Dynamics and Sino Indian Relations' during an international conference organised by National Institute of International Relations, CASS and RIIOE in Kunming, Yunnan.

17 Nov 16: Shri Sushant Sareen made a presentation on CPEC at Round Table of the same issue organised by Policy Planning Division, MEA.

18 Nov 16: Brig Vinod Anand gave a talk on 'India's Strategy on South Asia and Indian Ocean' to the students and faculty of Research Institute of Indian Ocean Economies, Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, Kunming, Yunnan.

18 Nov 16: Shri PK Mishra delivered a lecture on security scenario in Odisha, particularly involving Naxals, SIMI, IM and Bangladesh Migrants at the India Institute of Mass Communication, organised by Media of Odisha and Prabasi Odisha Sangathan.

19 Nov 16: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture on India-Pakistan relations and India's National Security Strategy at Jaipur Dialogues, Jaipur.

25-26 Nov 16: Dr. Rashmini Koparkar presented a paper on 'Significance of TAPI Pipeline for India's Energy Security', at the National Seminar on 'Human Security in India: Issues, Challenges and Responses', organised by Department of Politics, SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, University of Mumbai.

26 Nov 16: Shri RNP Singh addressed a Seminar on 'Urbanisation : A Solution to Poverty', organised by Chetan Kasyap Foundation, at Hailey Road, New Delhi.

04-06 Dec 16: Lt Gen RK Sawhney delivered a talk at the Australia-India Leadership Dialogue in Melbourne, Australia, co-hosted by the Government of Australia and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII).

05-06 Dec 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker at the 2nd Conference on 'Planetary Security: Addressing the Risks Generated by Climate Change', Peace Palace, The Hague.

05-10 Dec 16: Dr Harinder Sekhon made a presentation on the theme of 'India's Identity in the Global World' at a conference at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Berlin.



08 Dec 16: Dr Harinder Sekhon Spoke on 'Donald Trump: a View from India' at the South Asia Bureau of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin.

09 Dec 16: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha spoke at the First India-China Think-Tanks Forum, hosted in New Delhi by Ministry of External Affairs and others.

09 Dec 16: Shri PK Mishra delivered lecture to Rotarian's and Rotary School faculties of Gurugram on Uri Attack and Indo-Pak relations.

14-15 Dec 16: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker, Chair and participant at the 'Indo-Asia Connectivity for Shared Prosperity' Conference convened jointly by CUTS International, Kolkata and US State Department, Kolkata, India.

18-19 Dec 16: Ambassador D P Srivastava spoke on 'Blue Economy' at the Symbiosis International Relations Conference, Pune.

28 Dec 16: Shri Sushant Sareen presented a paper on Indo-Pak Conflict at a conference organised by German-South East Asian Centre for Excellence, Bangkok.

29 Dec 16: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Keynote Address on Rashtra Kavi, Dr KV Puttappa's dream of creating a 'Vishwa Manava' through education and social change, Kupalli Village, Shimogga District, Karnataka.

09 Jan 17: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered a lecture on 'Social Media and its Role in Semi-literate Society' at SGT University Gurgaon, Haryana.

11 Jan 17: Shri PK Mishra delivered a lecture on cross-LoC trade, organised at India Habitat Centre attended by leaders of Kashmir, including Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti, Kashmir media, Kashmiri Pandits, Kashmir business community and Indian Chamber of Commerce.

13 Jan 17: Shri RNP Singh addressed a seminar on 'Role of Think Tanks in India', organised by India Policy Foundation at Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

21 Jan 17: Shri RNP Singh presented a paper on 'Democracy, Violence and the State' at a seminar organised by India Policy Foundation at Speaker Hall, Constitution Club, New Delhi.

23 Jan 17: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee mentored a brainstorming among social activists, academics and civil servants at Raipur and Patna.

24 Jan 17: Ambassador DP Srivastava spoke on Chabahar at the Naval War College, Goa.

27 Jan 17: Shri RNP Singh addressed a seminar on 'Homeless and Labour Process: Exploring Through Visual Sociology', organised by Lokashraya Foundation at Hailey Road, New Delhi.

30 Jan 17: Shri Sushant Sareen delivered a lecture to foreign diplomats on India-Pakistan relations, Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi.

30-31 Jan 17: Ambassador DP Srivastava spoke on 'India Looks Beyond Chabahar with Iran's Geo-Political Revival', at the seminar, 'New Great Game in Asia' organised by 99 Mountain Brigade, at Bareilly.

03 Feb 17: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered speech on 'Role Of Prasar Bharati, DD and AIR' at the International Film Festival, Bangalore.

10-11 Feb 17: Shri CD Sahay delivered a lecture to Young CEOs Gujarat Chapter on 'National Security: Role of Intelligence Agencies' at Ahmedabad.

11 Feb 17: Shri RNP Singh addressed a Seminar on 'Bend in the River: Global Trends and Trump Checkmate', organised by India Policy Foundation at Hauz Khas, New Delhi.

16-17 Feb 17: Ms Anushree Ghisad was a panellist in track 1.5 diplomatic initiative, 'Trincomalee Consultations: Regional Cooperation for Economic Prosperity and Maritime security in the Bay of Bengal' at Colombo, Sri Lanka, organised by the Pathfinder Foundation, Sri Lanka and Carnegie India under the sponsorship of the Government of Japan.

20 Feb 17: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha delivered the Professor ML Sondhi Memorial Lecture at DAV College, Jalandhar on 'Engaging China in an Uncertain World'.

21 Feb 17: Shri CD Sahay was the Lead Speaker on India-Pakistan Relations at Chaophrya Dialogue, New Delhi.

22-23 Feb 17: Ambassador Tariq Karim was the Keynote Speaker at the roundtable, 'New Architecture for the Middle East', convened by El Majlis El Hassan, Amman, Jordan, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Strategic Foresight Group of Mumbai.



25 Feb 17: Shri RNP Singh addressed a Seminar on 'National Pension Scheme for Informal Workers in India', organised by Lokashraya Foundation, at Hailey Road, New Delhi.

27-28 Feb 17: Shri Ramanand Garge contributed a title, 'Maritime History of India during Maurya Dynasty' at University of Mumbai Seminar on 'Maritime History and Heritage of India' at Mumbai.

13 Mar 17: Brig Vinod Anand presented a paper on 'India and its Maritime Interests in the Indian Ocean Region' to the faculty and students of Guangdong Institute for International Strategies, Guangzhou.

17 Mar 17: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered the Inaugural Address on 'Trajectories of Regional Language Media' at Karnataka Media Academy, Centre for Media Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

21 Mar 17: Brig Vinod Anand presented a paper on 'India-Vietnam Defence & Security Cooperation: Achievements and Prospects' during an international conference organised by Ho Chi Minh Academy of Political Science, Hanoi.

23 Mar 17: Dr A Surya Prakash delivered a lecture on 'Democracy in India – Our Legislatures, Our Representatives', at 11th Oliver Tambo Lecture, Department of Developing Countries Research Centre, Delhi University.

24 Mar 17: Ambassador Ashok K. Kantha delivered a speech at Rotary Club of Delhi Midtown on 'Sharing Space with China'.

26 Mar-1 Apr 17: Shri Alvite Singh Ningthoujam made presentations on terrorism, counterterrorism and ISIS at the 'Next Generation Initiative', organised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

27-28 Mar 17: Dr Rashmini Koparkar presented a paper on 'China- Uzbekistan Cooperation in Reviving the Silk Road: Special Reference to the Kamchiq Tunnel', at the National Seminar on 'Post- Cold War Geopolitics, Geo-Economics and Geo-Culture in Central Asia', organised jointly by 'UGC Central Asia Programme', MMAJ Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, and Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi.

29 Mar 17: Ambassador Ashok K Kantha was the Keynote Speaker at the China Seminar hosted by Defence Services Staff College, Wellington on

the theme of 'China – An Aspiring Global Power: Challenges and Opportunities'.

29-30 Mar 17: Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee delivered talk to students and faculty of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, on 'China's Military Strategy', he also chaired a discussion among top strategic experts on 'Rise of China', for the students and faculty of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington.



Resource Research Centre and Library



The VIF's Resource Research Centre and Library has evolved relatively over a short timespan into an excellent knowledge hub for the in-house research community. The Resource Centre provides information and key inputs to the VIF's research faculty both as routine and on receiving specific requests from them. The Library has a growing collection of peer reviewed books, journals and other print and non-print materials, primarily in the areas of defence/strategic studies, international relations/diplomacy, neighbourhood studies, economic studies, science and technology, media, and civilisational studies, among others.

Automation – The Library has a digital database, while its activities, including lending, procurement, cataloguing etc., have been fully automated from the beginning. The On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is accessible from every computer terminal in the building.

Digital Library – One of the key features of VIF's Library has been its continued focus on e-resources. The Library has a unique database of e-resources, which includes e-books, white papers, publications of various national and international organisations, annual reports of various ministries, occasional

papers, monographs, etc. Besides picking up useful data from open web sources, the Centre also has been adding to its digital database by picking up contents from paid sites. The Library subscribes to a number of electronic journals and magazines of national and international repute.

Membership of DELNET – The VIF's Library is also linked to DELNET, a consortium that promotes resource sharing among libraries. The inter-library loan and document delivery services provided by DELNET are hugely popular amongst the VIF's research faculty.

Collection – The VIF's Resource Research Centre and Library came into being barely five years ago. Over the years, the Library has added 2,095 quality books to its database, either by way of direct purchases or received as donations from charitable mentors and well-wishers. In addition to a huge collection of Public Opinion Trends (POT) on SAARC countries, the database also includes 748 E-books and over 9,000 other E-resources in the form of monographs, occasional papers, journal articles, etc.

The Library is fully wi-fi enabled.

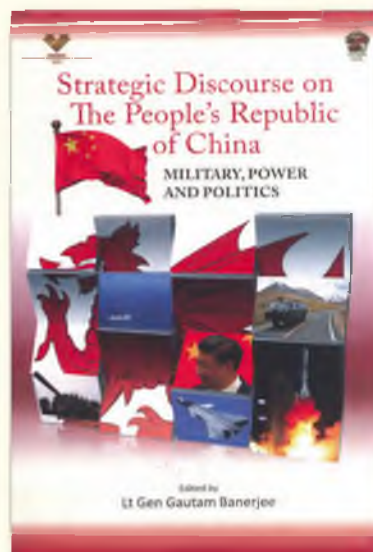




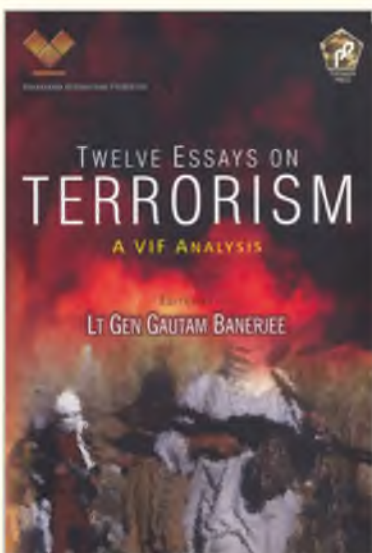
Publications



India's most formidable practitioners of statecraft—diplomats, defence professionals, along with some of the most respected scholars, provide a highly analytical and authoritative vision, not just for securing India but in understanding the current geostrategic realpolitik, as it pans out, making this an essential reading for not just professionals engaged in diplomacy and security, but for the uninitiated as well.



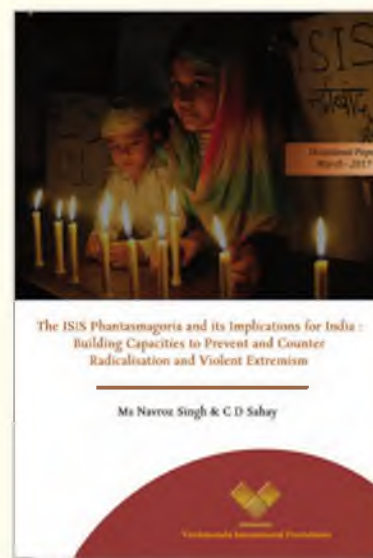
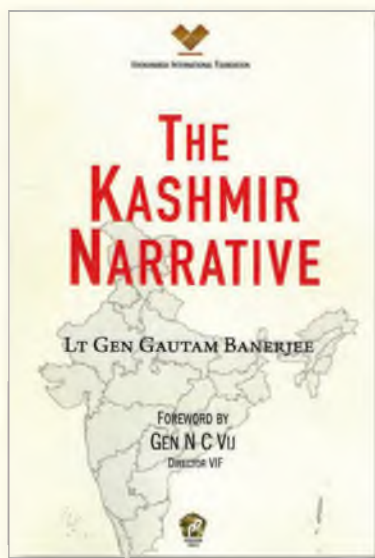
The PRC is India's neighbor since 1950. Before that, Tibet had de facto fulfilled the role. Past unfamiliarity with Chinese way of politico-diplomatic expressions, aided by China's adversarial posture towards India, makes it imperative for India's strategic community to study China's moves very carefully, and draw conclusions for managing the strained relationship. This book is a compilation of such observations, analyses and inferences.

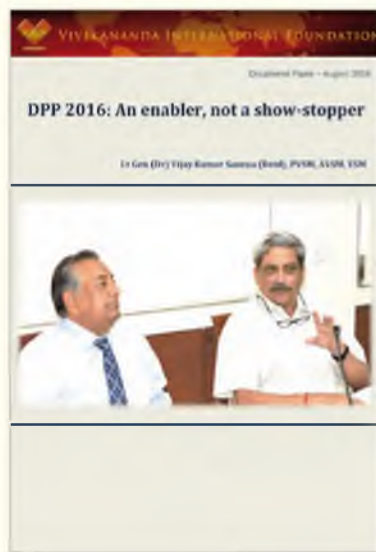
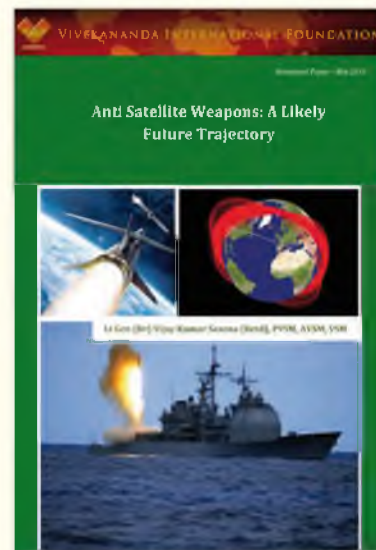
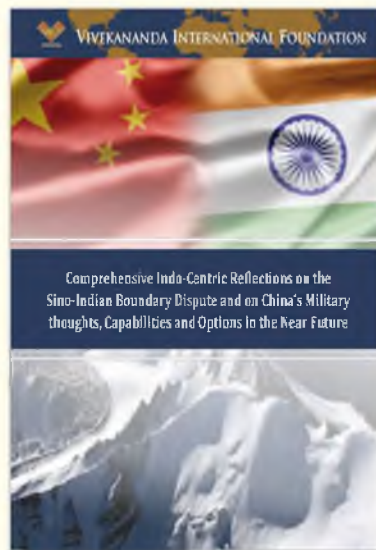
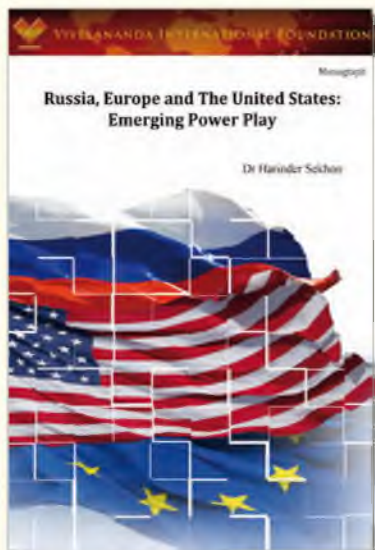
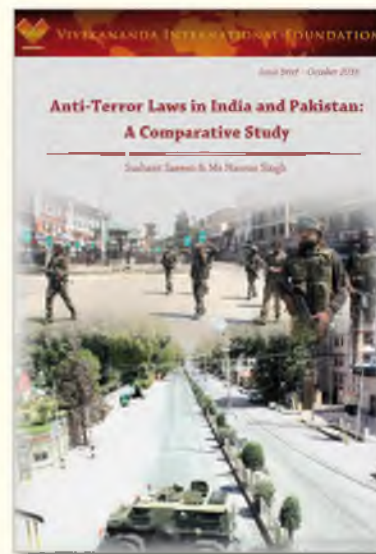
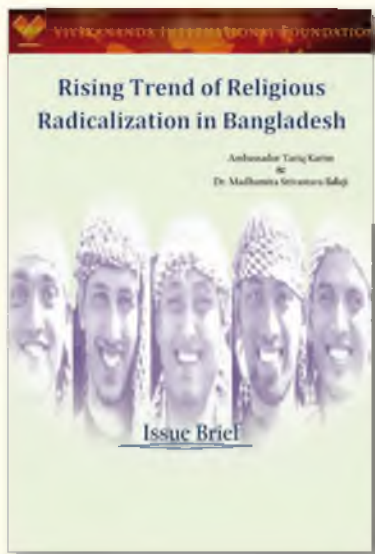


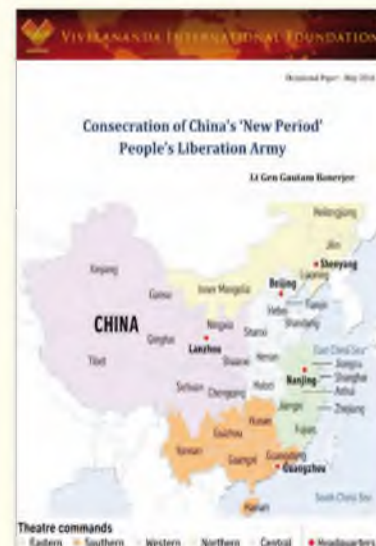
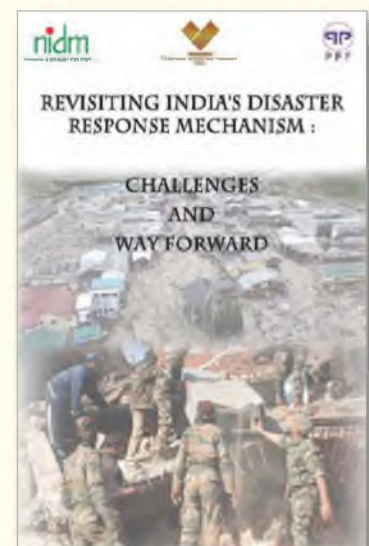
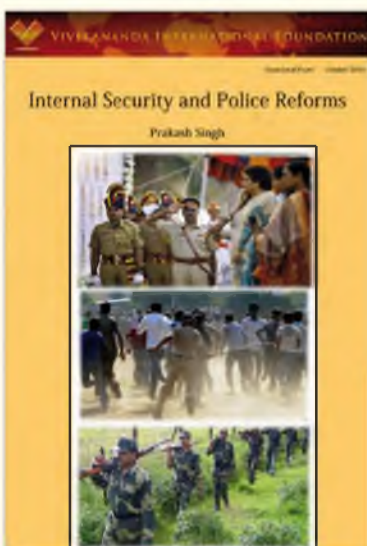
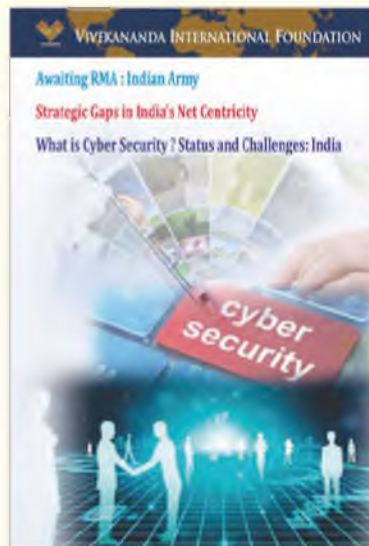
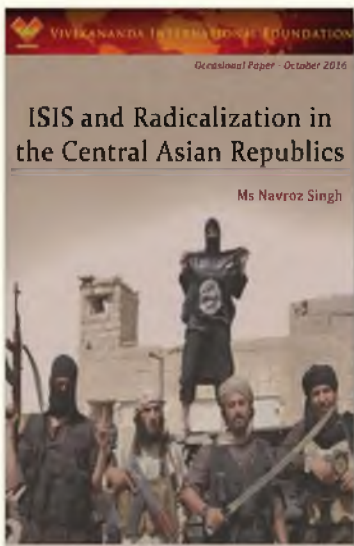
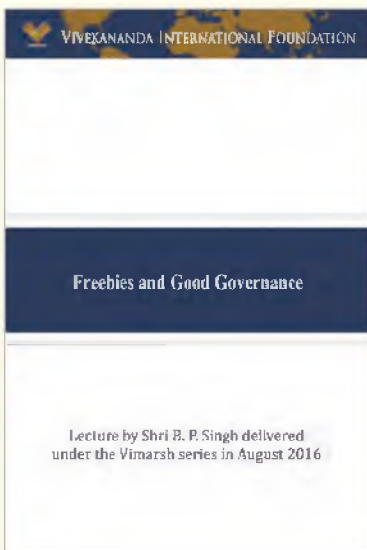
This book is a compilation of twelve essays which have been penned over the past couple of years by VIF scholars under the guidance of leading strategic thinkers. Each of these essays is representative of one facet of terrorism or the other and accordingly picked to be compiled as one book. The purpose is to dispense, in one volume, various facets of understanding that would play a vital role in gaining control of the phenomenon of terrorism.

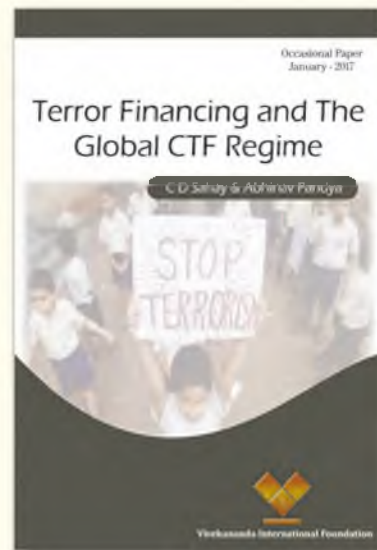
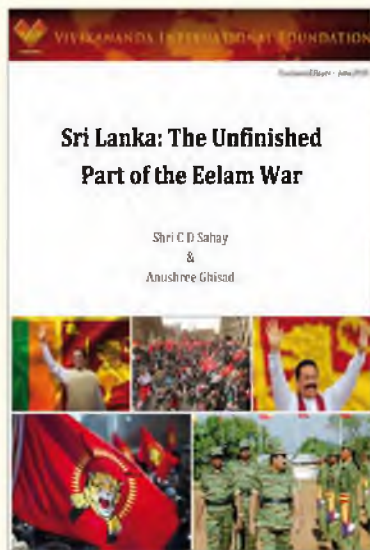
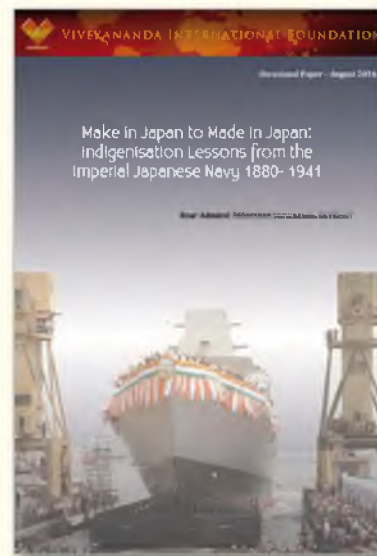
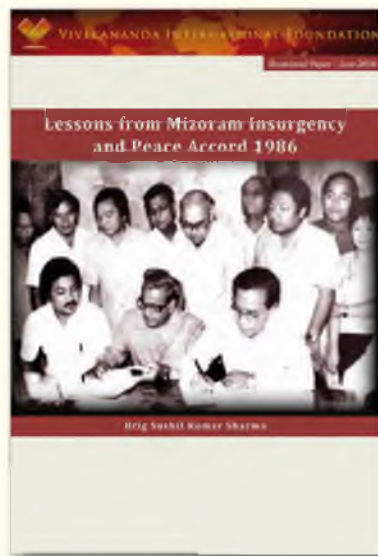
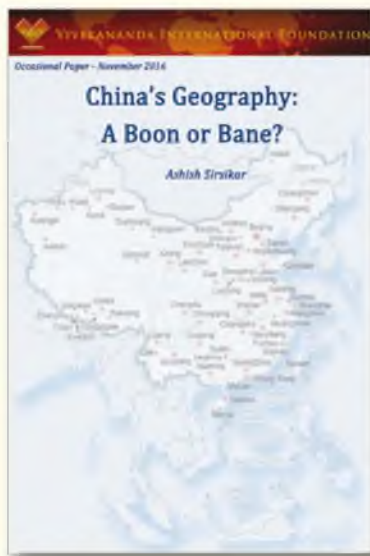


This book is an attempt to study the PLA and its posture in Tibet. Even though intimate knowledge of the PLA is hard to acquire, the author has managed to build up some detail over long years of regular study and monitoring of its activities. By application of such accumulated knowledge to professional peer group discussion, understanding and appreciation, it has become possible to peep behind the 'red curtain'.











VIF Website

The website, www.vifindia.org, is VIF's gateway to the world. The website has been given a new and a vibrant look during 2016-17. It has been our endeavour to make the website more user-friendly, pictorial, and informative with easy and quick navigational facilities. The website automatically gets updated with the VIF tweets. The Hindi Section now hosts new and translated articles on a regular basis.

The website continues to host Op-eds, Peer-reviewed Articles, Issue Briefs, Occasional Papers and Monographs on a wide range of national and international issues written by eminent

experts. Event reports of the various activities and programmes are also regularly uploaded. Featured Columns like fortnightly 'Director's Pick', 'Fortnightly Research and Analyses' (FRA) of different regions of the world, weekly columns on 'Policies and Perspectives' and 'Vibrant India' have been added during the last year.

The website continues to remain a reference point for policy makers, strategists, scholars and people at large across the world. During 2016-17, on an average the website received approximately 1.2 million hits per month.



Director

Gen NC Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM
(Former Chief of the Army Staff and
Founder Vice Chairman,
National Disaster Management Authority)



Deans

- **Amb Satish Chandra**, Dean, Centre for National Security and Strategic Studies (Former Deputy National Security Advisor)



- **CD Sahay**, Dean, Centre for Neighbourhood Studies & Internal Security studies (Former Secretary, Research & Analysis Wing, Cabinet Secretariat)



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- **Amb Kanwal Sibal**, Dean, Centre for International Relations and Diplomacy (Former Foreign Secretary)



- **Dr VK Saraswat**, Dean, Centre for Scientific & Technological Studies (Member NITI Aayog & Former DG, DRDO & Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister)



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- **Amb TCA Rangachari** (Former Ambassador to France & Germany)



- **Amb Rajiv Sikri** (Former Secretary Ministry of External Affairs)



- **Vice Adm Raman Puri**, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Former C-in-C, Eastern Naval Command & Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to Chairman COSC)



- **Dr A Surya Prakash** (Chairman Prasar Bharti & Author and Scholar of Contemporary Studies)





- **Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee**, PVSM, AVSM, YSM Editor (Former Chief of Staff, Central Command)



- **Amb Ashok K Kantha** (Former Indian Ambassador to China)



- **Amb Dinkar P Srivastava** (Former Indian Ambassador to Iran)



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- **Dr Makkhan Lal** (Professor & Founder Director of Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management)



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- **RNP Singh** (Bhutan & Nepal)



- **Sushant Sareen** (Afghanistan & Pakistan)



- **PK Mishra** (Left Wing Extremism)



- **K G Suresh** (Director General, Indian Institute of Mass Communication)



- **Dr Harinder Sekhon** (USA & Europe)



- **Commodore Gopal Suri** (Indian Ocean & Asia Pacific Region)



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- **Dr Sudhir S Bloeria** (Former Chief Secretary Jammu and Kashmir & Vice Chancellor Central University of Jammu & Kashmir)



- **Vice Admiral Anup Singh**, PVSM, AVSM, NM (Former C-in-C Eastern Naval Command)



- **Lt Gen SA Hasnain**, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM (Bar), VSM (Bar) (Former GOC 15 Corps & Military Secretary)



- **Lt Gen JP Singh**, PVSM, AVSM (Former Deputy Chief of Army Staff & Advisor to DRDO)



- **Lt Gen Davinder Kumar**, PVSM, VSM (Bar) (Former SO-in-C) (Cyber Security)



- **Lt Gen VK Saxena**, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Former DG, Air Defence, Indian Army) (Higher Defence Analyst)



- **Ravi Venketesan** (Former Chairman of Microsoft India and on the boards of Rockefeller Foundation, Co-Chairman, Infosys and Strand Life sciences)



- **Brig Gurmeet Kanwal** (Adjunct Fellow, Wadhvani Chair in US India Policy Studies, CSIS)



- **DP Singh** (Legal Expert)



- **Dr V Anantha Nageswaran** (Economist)



- **Deven Verma** (Industrialist – Technology)



- **Nitin A Gokhale** (Defence Analyst)



Senior Research Associates

- **Dr Madhumita Srivastava** (Bangladesh)



- **Dr Teshu Singh** (China & Taiwan)



- **Alvite Singh Ningthoujam** (Iran & West Asia)



- **Ramanand Garge** (East Asia)



Research Associates

- **Anushree Ghisad** (Sri Lanka & Maldives)



- **Dr Rashmini Koparkar** (Central Asia)



- **Neha Sinha** (Africa)



- **Prerna Gandhi** (Japan & ASEAN)



- **Manpreet Sohanpal** (West Asia including Gulf)



Research Intern

- **Navroz Singh** (Russia & Central Asia, Terrorism)





Administration

Manash Bhattacharya

Assistant Secretary



Anuttama Ganguly

Head of Administration & Finances



Administration Team

- **Ramphal Vashisth,**
Personal Assistant



- **Dinesh Singh,**
Maintenance Assistant



- **Alka Sahasrabudhey,**
Front Office Assistant



- **Vijay Kumar,**
Maintenance Assistant



- **Krishan Redhu,**
IT Assistant



- **Christopher,**
Office Assistant



- **Abhinandan Rai,**
Administrative Assistant



- **Naresh Kumar,**
Office Assistant



- **Kamal Singh,**
Executive Assistant



- **Naresh Singh,**
Office Assistant



Resource Research Centre and Library

- **Sanjay Kumar,**
Librarian



- **Manisha Bhadula,**
Library Assistant



- **Abhijit Biswas,**
Library Assistant



Advisory Board



- **Gen V N Sharma**, PVSM, AVSM (*Former Chief of the Army Staff*)
- **Gen Shankar Roychowdhury**, PVSM, AVSM (*Former Chief of the Army Staff*)
- **Air Chief Marshal S Krishanaswamy**, PVSM, AVSM, VM & Bar (*Former Chief of the Air Staff*)
- **S Gurumurthy** (Author and Financial Expert, Editor – Tughlak)
- **Amb Kanwal Sibal** (*Former Foreign Secretary*)
- **Prof R Vaidyanathan** (*Former Professor of Finance, IIM Bangalore*)
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- **Arif Mohammad Khan** (*Former Union Minister*)
- **Prabhat Kumar**, IAS (*Former Cabinet Secretary*)
- **BP Singh** (*Former Governor of Sikkim & Home Secretary*)





Executive Council

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- **Amb Satish Chandra**, (*Former Deputy National Security Advisor*)
- **Anil Baijal** (*Lieutenant Governor of Delhi & Former Home Secretary*)
- **CD Sahay** (*Former Secretary (R&AW)*)
- **Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney**, PVSM, AVSM (*Former DGMI & Former Deputy Chief of Army Staff*)
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- **Amb TCA Rangachari** (*Former Ambassador to France & Germany*)
- **Amb Rajiv Sikri** (*Former Secretary Ministry of External Affairs*)
- **KM Singh** (*Former Member NDMA and DG CISF*)
- **Dhirendra Singh** (*Former Home Secretary*)
- **Dr A Surya Prakash** (*Chairman Prasar Bharti & Author and Scholar of Contemporary Studies*)
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- **Rajiv Mathur** (*Former Director Intelligence Bureau and former Chief Information Commissioner*)
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- **Air Marshal SG Inamdar**, PVSM, VSM (*Former Vice Chief of Air Staff*)
- **Dhanendra Kumar**, IAS (*Former Secretary, Govt of India*)



Vivekananda International Foundation, created under the aegis of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, was registered as a Trust on March 25, 2010 at New Delhi. The Trust holds its meetings periodically. The Annual Audited Accounts for the financial year 2016-17 is presented here as Annexures I & II.

Statutory Auditors: M/S Purohit & Purohit, Chartered Accountants, New Delhi

VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION
3, Institutional Area, San Martin Marg,
Chanakvapuri, New Delhi - 110 021

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH, 2017.

PARTICULARS	SCHEDULE	CURRENT YEAR'S FIGURES : INR'000	PREVIOUS YEAR'S FIGURES : INR'000
SOURCES OF FUNDS			
Capital Fund	"A"		
- VIF Corpus Fund		15,097	10,012
TOTAL ::		₹ 15,097	₹ 10,012
APPLICATION OF FUNDS			
Fixed Assets	"B"	5,933	2,675
Investment	"C"	2,000.00	-
Current Assets	"D"		
- Advances, Deposits & Receivables		111.00	303.00
- Cash & Bank Balances		10,060.00	8,841.00
		<u>10,171.00</u>	<u>9,144.00</u>
Less: Current Liabilities	"E"		
- Advances & Deposits		-	126.00
- Sundry Creditors		22.00	166.00
- Other Liabilities		2,985.00	1,515.00
		<u>3,007.00</u>	<u>1,807.00</u>
		7,164.00	7,337.00
TOTAL ::		₹ 15,097.00	₹ 10,012.00
Notes on Accounts and Significant Accounting Policies	"F"		

Signed in terms of our Report of even date.
For PUROHIT & PUROHIT (FRN:003282N)
Chartered Accountants

For VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

sd/-

sd/-

sd/-

CA. K.K. Purohit, B.Com(Hons), LL.B, FCA, MBF, ISA
Partner
Membership No.054763

General(Retd.) N C Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM
Director

A. Balakrishnan
Trustee

sd/-
(Kishor Tokekar)
Secretary

New Delhi, Wednesday, The 24th day of May, 2017

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 2017

PARTICULARS	CURRENT YEAR'S FIGURES : INR'000	PREVIOUS YEAR'S FIGURES : INR'000
{A} INCOME		
Donations	35,015	52,945
Bank Interest	560	1,001
Other Receipts - History Project	72	210
TOTAL ::	₹ 35,647.00	₹ 54,156.00
{B} EXPENDITURE		
Advertisement for Recruitment	32	-
Audit Fees	42	38
Bank Commission & Charges	11	8
Books, Journals, Papers & Periodicals	15	14
Conferences, Seminars, Vimarsha & Other Activities	5,125	2,183
Depreciation	1,138	542
Gardening Expenses	490	332
General up-keep and Cleaning Expenses	1,501	908
History Project Expenses	637	456
Honorarium, Salaries, Fees & Stipend	15,688	11,290
Hospitality Expenses	23	16
Initiative on Conflict Avoidance & Environment Conciousness-HBC	689	18,459
Insurance Charges	1	2
Legal & Professional Fees	53	80
Library Expenses	855	886
Office Expenses	464	433
Postage & Courier Charges	59	10
Power, Fuel Charges & Expenses	1,972	2,714
Printing & Stationery	308	185
Publication Expenses	686	382
Outreach to Universities	25	25
Repairing & Maintenance Expenses	1,182	2,908
Security Services Expenses	607	357
Telephone, Mobile & Internet Expenses	188	159
Travelling & Conveyance Exp.	372	220
Water Charges	176	110
Website Design, Development & Maintenance Charges	223	17
World Climate Change Summit - Musical Album	-	6,840
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year	3,085	4,582.00
TOTAL ::	₹ 35,647.00	₹ 54,156.00
Notes on Accounts and Significant Accounting Policies "E"		

Signed in terms of our Report of even date.
For PUROHIT & PUROHIT (FRN:003282N)
Chartered Accountants

For VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

sd/-

sd/-

sd/-

CA. K.K. Purohit, B.Com(Hons), LL.B, FCA, MBF, ISA
Partner
Membership No.054763

General(Retd.) N C Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM
Director

A. Balakrishnan
Trustee

sd/-
(Kishor Tokekar)
Secretary

New Delhi, Wednesday, The 24th day of May, 2017



Chairman

- Vice Adm KK Nayyar, PVSM, AVSM

Members

- Shri P Parameswaran
- Shri S Gurumurthy
- Shri Ajit Doval, KC *
- Shri A Balakrishnan
- Shri Vijai Kapoor
- Ku B Nivedita
- Shri D Bhanudas
- Ku Rekha Dave
- Shri M Hanumanth Rao
- Shri Pravin Dabholkar
- Shri S Kishore
- Shri Puneet Dalmia
- Shri Kishore Tokekar, Secretary

*On Long Leave

VIF Executive Committee

Vice Adm KK Nayyar, PVSM, AVSM (Former Vice Chief of Naval Staff), *Chairman VIF*

S Gurumurthy (Author and Financial Expert, Editor – Tughlak), Trustee and Advisory Board Member, VIF

Amb Satish Chandra (Former Deputy National Security Advisor), Executive Council Member and Dean – Centre for National Security & Strategic Studies, VIF

Gen NC Vij, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM (Former Chief of the Army Staff and Founder Vice Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority), *Director VIF*











Vivekananda International Foundation

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