

the india diary international centre

Volume XXXI No. 4

July – August 2017

A Living Treasure

COMMEMORATION

Indira Gandhi Gold Plaque of the Asiatic Society, 2016—Presented to Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan by Dr. S.B. Chakrabarti

CHAIR: Dr. Karan Singh

COLLABORATION: The Asiatic Society, Kolkata

7 July

building the reputation of the country in the realm of art and literature. He noted that she had brought out an excellent book on the *Gita Govinda* during her Nehru Fellowship and several seminal studies under the IIC-Asia Project.

In her address, Dr. Vatsyayan recalled the making of the Asiatic Society, and the foresight of Sir William Jones to visualise a Centre for Asian Studies which would include almost everything concerning Man and Nature within the geographical limits of the continent.

Shyam Saran referred to Dr. Vatsyayan's work on cultural links between India and South-East Asia. He concluded with the words: 'Let us celebrate this living treasure of India'.



Commemoration

■ CHANDRA MOHAN

Whither Democracy?

THE STATE OF INDIAN DEMOCRACY

SPEAKER: Dr. Subhash C. Kashyap

WELCOME ADDRESS: Shri. N.N. Vohra

COLLABORATION: Pai Panandikar Trust

21 August

founding fathers of the Indian Constitution took pains to ensure, the legacy of a colonial-style government remains.

Subhash Kashyap's candid thought-provoking view with some sadness was that we as Indians have made our democracy a waste-driven one with a divisive elitism on a scale not seen anywhere. The stigma of untouchability, poverty and illiteracy persists with a general lack of compassion, even negligence, towards the less fortunate, towards women and children who are far worse today than at the time of Independence. Regrettably, despite the initial objectives of the founding fathers, the Indian Constitution is failing to serve the Indian people.

■ MEKHALA SENGUPTA

Vignettes of Portugal

EXHIBITION

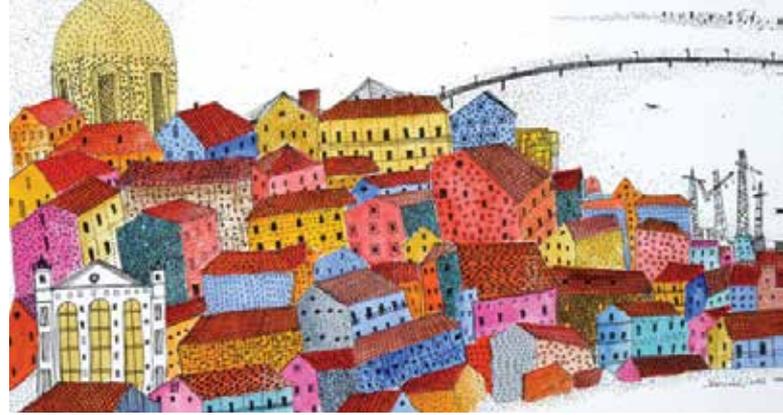
My Journey to Portugal—Prelude

By Deviprasad C. Rao

INAUGURATION by H.E. Mr. Joao da Camara

COLLABORATION: Portuguese Embassy
Cultural Centre

19 to 26 July



Exhibition *My Journey to Portugal*

This was an exhibition of ink and water colours, based on the artist's journey to select historical cities in Portugal which include Lisbon, Sintra, Cascals, Obidos, Porto,

Fatima, Coimbra, Guimaraes, Minho and Braga. The works were a wonderful invitation and temptation to visit the country so lovingly executed.

Deviprasad shows great dexterity with his pen and there are simple yet wondrous textures and colours which magically make these cities come alive. The many forts and walled cities, castles, steeples, old Romanic churches, historical trams coming down the hills, give us a terrific sense of the old architecture of the city.

The higgledy-piggledy of city life is beautifully represented in these drawings. There is atmosphere, there is technique, and yet there is a certain innocence in his watercolours. There is simplicity, yet great intricacy. There is a studied casualness which really looks very charming.

The fact that the artist is from Goa makes the drawings even more special. They have a Goa state of mind to them! Or then, maybe, I'm just biased!

■ POONAM SAHI

Mexican Amates

EXHIBITION

Mexican Amate: Expressions of Art

INAUGURATION: Min. Eduardo Martinez

COLLABORATION: Embassy of Mexico

7 to 17 July



Exhibition *Mexican Amate*

A traditional art form from Mexico demonstrates colourful drawings done on a type of bark paper, which dates back to pre-historic Hispanic times.

In current times, it is the Otomi people who manufacture the paper and the Nahua people who decorate it. The paper has a fibrous textural quality, and a lovely brown colour, as well as a deep natural shade.

The Nahua people were by tradition ceramic painters; the indigenous people of Guerrero. However with the advent of Amate paper, they started painting on this paper with vibrant colours—bright pink, green, deep blues, yellow and orange. While the colours may not exactly appear to be harmonious, there is a 'folk' quality to it.

Most of the brightly coloured paintings depict a rural life, while some describe a religious lifestyle. Several of the painters have tried to contemporise some of the art, while using a sort of monotone in blues and oranges, but there is no doubt that the vibrancy of pinks, reds and greens captures the true essence of the original art style. Mexican rural life comes alive through the art of Amate.

■ LOLITA DUTTA

Gandhi's Vision

EXHIBITION

Gandhi's Vision: Freedom and Beyond

CURATOR: Dr. Aparna Basu

COLLABORATION: National Gandhi Museum

11 to 21 August



Kasturba, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

thought and action—our own history re-told at its most momentous.

In its exhibition quality, the post-independence section of posters depicting Gandhi's dream of free India—removal of poverty and untouchability, communal harmony, equality of women, a new system of education, etc.—could not, however, match up to the magnitude of the first section.

■ ARUNA BHOWMICK

Varsha Ritu

FESTIVAL

Varsha Ritu: A Festival of Dance

July 20

Indian classical dance has the unique ability to transcend barriers of language, culture and region. Odissi and Kuchipudi originate from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, respectively, and are contrasting styles of classical dance, one being languid and sensuous (Odissi) and the other more vigorous and rhythmic. Yet, when dancers use *abhinaya* (expression) and *nritya* (pure dance) to weave a tale, it no longer matters whether the accompanying music is in Oriya, Telugu, Sanskrit or Hindi.

So, when Radha is pining for Krishna, whether her longing and love is expressed through Odissi or Kuchipudi, it connects and resonates with the audience. Dancers Arnaaz Zaman, who presented Odissi, and Ranjini Nair and Moutushi Majumdar, who performed Kuchipudi, showed that classical dance remains enduring and similar despite the inherent differences of the styles.

The festival is a good platform for upcoming dancers as it gives them the opportunity to showcase their talent. Zaman, Nair and Majumdar are promising dancers. The timeless pieces choreographed by gurus of yore can be kept alive only when shared with newer generations of aspiring dancers.

■ SWAPNA MAJUMDAR



Varsha Ritu

Celebrating India's Independence

ANNUAL FLAG HOISTING

15 August 2017

Each year, the Centre honours India's Independence. This year has special significance as our country celebrates 70 years of freedom. Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, Life Trustee of the Centre, unfurled the flag with the national anthem playing in the background. Several members who were enjoying a quiet day at the Centre joined in.



The Fresh Lens

FILM FESTIVAL

The Fresh Lens: New Cinematic Voices from Northeast India

CURATOR: Utpal Borpujari

COLLABORATION: North East Media Forum

18 & 19 August



Still from Aaba

The Fresh Lens Festival looked at re-evaluating how we see the northeastern region. A land that is often viewed through conventionally defined attributes that have been regurgitated in different forms, the films examined normative themes from the contemporary perspective of the filmmakers.

The filmmakers were some of the brightest from the younger generation, evident not only from the storylines and dialogues, but through the cinematography itself, which made for an aesthetically pleasing viewing. It can be earmarked as an event that brought together films that put forth portrayals that were shrewd, and some methods that can be considered unorthodox.

Whilst the films looked at topics that have been recycled in different forms, what stands out is how the stories have been told. From the role of women and how they aid in the institution of patriarchy to understanding trauma and being disenfranchised in your own land. Their outlook, which is often cast in the shadow of screenings, help paint a more inclusive picture, one that gives the viewer a more conclusive understanding of societies in the frontier regions.

The tales of the deprived echoed through the screen, telling their unfiltered stories in the fringes of Lutyen's Delhi, shaking the conscience of those seated in front of the display. An embracing of the vistas and the screenplays, coupled with outspoken narratives, it made for viewings that were gripping, enthralling and pedagogic.

■ **DABORMAIAN JUDE**

Artistic Dialogues

ART MATTERS

T.M. Krishna in conversation with Ananya Vajpeyi

COLLABORATION: The Raza Foundation

8 August

Realising he was in an aural trap, Krishna 'shifted his intention' and every belief system got dislodged. This launched an exploration of the essence of music and what was dispensable 'scaffolding'. Climbing mountains synced with his inner explorations. High altitude climbing further transformed him. Hours before sunrise, when the deep mountain darkness grew lighter, spontaneously he would sing.

He pays attention to tuning the tanpura, how and where he sits, creating a space of being open to the possibility of true sharing to occur during his concerts. 'I feel sympathy', he explained, 'empathy happens'. Earlier, it was a matter of chance that 'empathy happened'. Now he consciously creates music where 'silence is the most active component'.

In an age of fracture between art and religion, Krishna is aware of the violence inherent in creation. He uses subversion to introduce vulnerabilities in himself and an audience exhausted by political circumstance. He provokes by using semantics to change literal meaning: dialects to express 'high concepts', or pristine ragas to sing about trash.

By sharing his inner work, Krishna affirmed the tremendous promise in every human life.

■ BHARATI MIRCHANDANI

The Dissent Debate

DISCUSSION

India Dissents: 3000 Years of Difference, Doubt and Argument. A discussion on the recent book, India Dissents (Speaking Tiger, New Delhi: 2017)

SPEAKERS: Keki Daruwalla, Githa Hariharan, Purushottam Agrawal, Madhavi Menon, and Siddhartha Varadarajan

CHAIR: Ashok Vajpeyi

COLLABORATION: Speaking Tiger

10 August

Ashok Vajpeyi initiated the discussion by giving a brief description of the book and also shared his experience of writing about 'dissent'. While discussing the book, he said 'dissent is a part of the Indian Corpus', as one can find its presence in the *Rig Veda*. He explained that the notion of raising a voice against authority is observed as a crime. However, 'dissent has its own space and it is heard.'

The discourse on dissent and its presence in India was further explained by Keki Daruwalla. He mentioned the example of Arundhati Roy who was charged with obscenity under Sections 153A and 295A. However, people accused of mob lynching were not charged under IPC Section 124A.

Geetha Hariharan discussed the 'multiplicity of dissent' and said that the subtitle of the book—'Difference, Doubt and Argument'—initiates dissent. She also said that dissenters often dissent with each other.

Purushottam Agrawal said that 'if a nation refuses to engage with dissenting voices, then it is destroying itself.' He concluded by interrogating the role of dissenters. Madavi Menon further raised questions on the identity and role of a dissenter. Not agreeing with the views of other speakers, she explained that dissent can also be viewed as a failure. She said that dissent is not about maintaining 'a status quo', but it is an idea of being a 'failure'. Siddhartha Varadarajan concluded by describing dissent as an act of interrogating. He also mentioned that the act of questioning should be kept alive by the media so that the voice of dissent reaches the authorities.

■ AASTHA DUTTA

Inferno of Memories

DISCUSSION

Conflicts, Post Conflicts and People's Memory

SERIES COORDINATOR: Professor Vibha Maurya

SPEAKERS: Dr. Margit Koves; Dr. Tarun Saint; and Durba Banerji

COLLABORATION: Department of Germanic and Romance Studies, University of Delhi

17 August

of memorials and the Hungarian stance, German discussions on the holocaust, and the manifestation of memories in photography and graphic narratives. Referring to the works of Manto, Joginder Paul and Vishwajyoti Ghosh, Dr. Saint elucidated the difficulty in representing the unfathomable exodus of India's partition. Banerji's multimedia presentation exposed the painful Spanish Civil War with its appalling aftermath and how the new generation, starting with Javier Cercas, is understanding the need to divulge muffled memories through movies and literature.

The uninhibited environment encouraged questions on other dire situations as well, like the Tibetan conflict and refugees' memories. In the end, the audience left with a new understanding and a long list of works for further discernment.

■ TRISHA MEHRA

Kashi Lyre

TALK: INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology of Varanasi

SPEAKER: Professor Vidula Jayaswal

CHAIR: Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

10 July

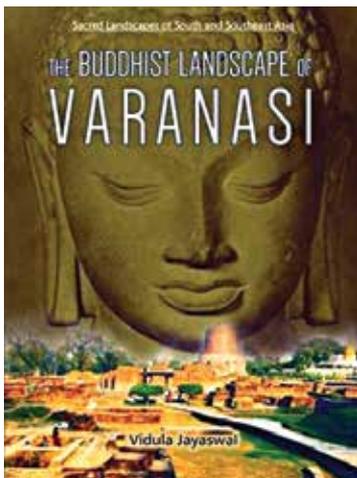
Blending the sensation of intellectual dignity to enchanting effect, Jayaswal dovetailed. Few modern archaeologists can be credited with the invention of a genre—Vidula Jayaswal's uniquely resonant and remarkable erudition of the world's oldest, continuously inhabited archetypical city did precisely that—it created a gnomic Benaras monomyth period piece.

Bristling with trenchant ideas, sparky asides, swathes of labyrinthine meanderings and deeply original insights, the presentation adeptly posited us to think beyond the standard binaries between history and memory.

Mindful of what remains vibrant in the past and imperative for the future, Varanasi's antiquity, fleshed from archaeological discoveries and excavations at Sarnath (pilgrimage settlement), Rajghat (early capital city), Aktha (hermitage), Saraswati Udyan (Pukka Mahal-nucleus of later city), Kotwa, Asapur, Ramnagar (craft villages) and Shooltankeshwar (port settlement) was emphatically argued with understandable impulse to correct its uninterrupted progression and trace its earliest occupation between 1800 and 1450 BCE instead of the accustomed 800 BCE.

Unearthed in 1994, Aktha—one of the earliest iron using settlements, boasting contacts with the iron smelters of Kaimur range, as also pottery identical to Malhar; Ramnagar—'a centre of deluxe pottery', with its kiln of NBPW and debris of bead chiselling; the discovery of a doorjamb with Ganga figurines from Pukka Mahal—all richly textured, gratuitously with knowledge; a pitch perfect ode to Kashi.

■ BEEBA SOBTI



Recalibrating our Moral Compass

TALK

DURGABAI DESHMUKH MEMORIAL LECTURE 2017: The Moral Economy of the Elite and why they can't Confront the Inequality that is our Greatest Crisis

SPEAKER: P. Sainath

CHAIR: Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

COLLABORATION: Council for Social Development

15 July

Notwithstanding the few who have the temerity to speak out, there is a deafening silence from the elite and the media. Demonisation of unions has left journalists vulnerable, while paid news and media ownership patterns hardly encourage integrity. Sainath highlighted the urban bias of newspapers and the stranglehold of think tanks with dubious interests that influence the agenda. He underscored the ominous coalition between the socio-religious and market fundamentalists, and the lack of moral fibre of the privileged to critically speak about the crises of water, agriculture, demonitisation or cow slaughter.

Sainath ended by lauding the efforts of the few who stood against the tide while exhorting the audience to speak, while there was yet time to speak.

■ AJAY JAISINGHANI

Beyond Boundaries

TALK

Ancient Assam—Looking Back, Looking Forward

By Professor Nayanjyot Lahiri

INTRODUCTION: Dr. Monica Banerjee

MODERATOR: Kishalay Bhattacharjee

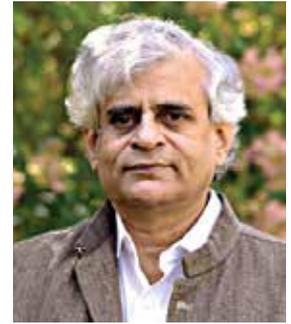
COLLABORATION: National Foundation for India

17 July

inauthentic, she implored us to look at history as a dynamic reconstruction of our past. Colonial, national and regional discourses have to be taken into account to understand how the 'perspective of the present' shapes our views of the past. She concluded her lecture with a sense of urgency to study this region more extensively, particularly its relationship with the hills which has remained outside of the study of civilisations. It was an outstanding lecture in which the speaker conveyed the historical context of the region, as also its relationship with the discipline of history and archaeology.

■ LEKI THUNGON

Did you know that 1 per cent of India's population owns 58 per cent of national wealth? While we have 101 dollar billionaires, the fourth highest, our HDI rank is 131. In 2014, our Parliament had 82 per cent *crorepatis*, who represent 90 per cent of the rural population that makes less than 10,000 rupees a month. These mind-boggling statistics were reeled out by acclaimed journalist P. Sainath.



P. Sainath

Juxtaposing these figures with the current state of social regression and apathy, coupled with the connivance and collaboration of the elite for self-aggrandisement, has left the oppressed to fend for themselves. Sainath contrasts this to a world during the Emergency that raised its voice against injustice and railed against fear and intimidation.

Unqualified Doctors

DISCUSSION

Unqualified Medical Practice—The Legal, Medical and Social Dimension of their Practice

INTRODUCTION by Shailaja Chandra

PANELLISTS: Dr. Ramanan Laxminarayan;
Dr. Amit Shovan Ray; and Dr. Anand Krishnan

CHAIR: Dr. Dipankar Gupta

COLLABORATION: Shiv Nadar University

24 July

that so-called 'Quacks' played in the healthcare of people in the absence of doctors. Some of the unqualified practices were simple shifts in living in more hygienic and cleaner environments. In her study, these 'quack' doctors confirmed that they do prescribe antibiotics, saline injections, but for simpler ailments they only advise. The drug companies are also partners in promoting the continued presence of unqualified 'doctors', and thus, perhaps 'unethical practices'. The discussion was lively, revolving largely on what the report had documented in terms of socio-legal dimensions, raising the question: 'Can India's healthcare be sustained by unqualified practitioners?'

■ ASHA SINGH

The Coloniser and the Colonised

MEET THE AUTHOR

An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India
by Shashi Tharoor (New Delhi : Aleph, 2016)

PANELLISTS: Professor Syed Irfan Habib; and
Ashok Malik

CHAIR: Pavan K. Varma

26 July

meticulously the political and economic influences of colonisation on the colonised country but left out the effect on the psyche of the colonised. He was worried that the revisionist spin on portraying our history is keeping Indians from learning the truth about our history. So, instead of asking for symbolic atonement and reparation, we should place on record what colonial rule did to India. Historian Irfan Habib wished Tharoor had analysed India's colonisability and answered the question : 'Why were we colonised ? What were our weaknesses ?'

According to Tharoor, revisionism by British historians only started after 1857 to mask their actual views. In the 1920s, the British Home Secretary said to their Lower House, 'There is talk of our ruling India for the benefit of the Indians. This is utter hypocrisy. We seized India by the sword, we hold them by the yardstick and we should continue to do so for British benefit.'

Tharoor claimed he was not seeking revenge upon history ; because history is its own revenge.

■ SWATI DASGUPTA

In India, it is common for unqualified doctors to run clinics in low income clusters. This captured the attention of Shailaja Chandra while she was in civil service. She undertook extensive research, studying the functions that such doctors served in the communities and how they continued to do so despite being on fragile ground in terms of legal and medical issues.

Her research raises questions regarding India's health care system and the lack of availability of doctors for low income groups. She described the methodology of her research and the support and guidance from both JNU and AIIMS and innumerable discussions on the subject with health personnel at different levels. The secretary of the Ministry of Health was also present to take cognisance of what is termed as Unqualified Medical Practice and the popular support received by the community. All the speakers cited research that documented the importance

In *An Era of Darkness*, Shashi Tharoor analyses how the British came to India, one of the richest countries of the world, and reduced it to one of the poorest: GDP of 27 per cent in 1700 going down as low as 2 per cent in 1947.

The first part of his book is mainly narrative and describes the drain theory and British actions which have had a lasting impression, such as the Divide and Rule policy.

The second half lists the varied defences that have been made of the British Empire. But Tharoor takes each one of the measures to show how they were introduced to enhance British profit and not to benefit India.

Pavan Varma was of the opinion that Tharoor examined

The China Challenge

IIC-ICS LECTURES

Is a China-centric World Order Inevitable

SPEAKER: Shri Shyam Saran

CHAIR: Ashok Kantha

COLLABORATION: Institute of Chinese Studies

20 July

put forward to seek legitimacy, which also finds acceptance in western and Indian discourses.

China's contemporary rise is indeed remarkable but does not entitle it to claim a fictitious centrality bestowed upon it by history. Despite many achievements to its credit, China remained insular throughout the centuries and never developed a cosmopolitan spirit which India had. Today, China owes its prosperity to a dense interconnected global market which has little to do with its economic history where trade played a minor role in the economy. We are still not in a China-centric Asia, let alone a China-centric world as the Chinese want us to believe in.

Nevertheless, there is a need to counter the challenges from China with carefully crafted diplomacy and the most significant challenge comes from its attempts to narrow India's strategic space by penetrating its neighbourhood. India must overcome these immediate challenges if it aspires to play the larger game of countervailing China. In the larger scenario, India must resist attempts by any power to establish dominance in Asia or the world, for which it may need coalitions with other like-minded powers to support a multi-power architecture.

■ PRATEEK JOSHI

Health 2030

ROSALIND WILSON MEMORIAL LECTURE 2017

Achieving the Health 2030 Goals: What Will It Take?

SPEAKER: Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

CHAIR: Shri Soli J. Sorabjee

28 July



Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

Managing the China challenge requires an understanding of the Chinese civilisation, its culture and its people's worldviews, yet we must desist from mechanically applying these historical patterns to the present day situation. Chinese strategic thinking today, is not only influenced by ancient thinkers like Sun Tzu but also by modern era geostrategists like Halford Mackinder and Admiral Mahan and the One Belt One Road comes across as a combination of their imagination. Therefore, deconstructing the Chinese narrative of power may help us decode its international behaviour and manage the challenge posed by its spectacular rise. What seems today is an imagined history of Chinese supremacy being

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan's research contributions have been in the areas of nutrition, pharmacokinetics and pharmacogenetics of anti-TB and anti-HIV drugs in the Indian population. Many of these findings have had translational value in the national programme. Taking contemporary health education and health literacy communication strategies into the 21st century is a major challenge in India.

Health literacy represents the cognitive and social skills which determine the motivation and ability of individuals to gain access to, understand and use information to promote and maintain good health. It is a relatively new concept and

is more than being able to read pamphlets and successfully make appointments. By improving people's access to health information and their capacity to use it effectively, health literacy is critical to empowerment and achieving health goals. Campaigns to promote maternal and child health, to prevent communicable disease, and to promote immunisation and other preventive health services must be linked with educational programmes to address social and economic determinants of health.

Mention was made of the reduced role of health education and health literacy and its impact in contemporary health promotion. These may have led to significant underestimation of the role of health education to social determinants of health

■ MEKHALA SENGUPTA

Energy Security

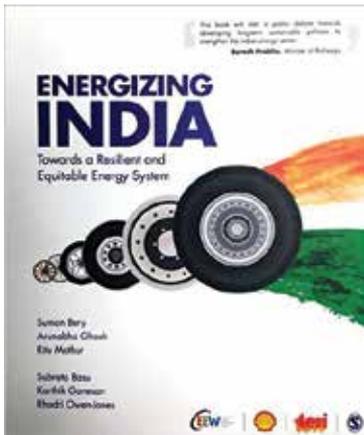
DISCUSSION

Energizing India: Towards a Resilient and Equitable Energy System by Suman Bery (Et al.) (New Delhi: Sage, 2017)

PANELLISTS: Montek Singh Ahluwalia; Ashok Bhattacharyya; and Vikram Singh Mehta

CHAIR: Shri Shyam Saran

9 August



Vikram Mehta critiqued the recommendations in the book and said that the linear approach to policy process is not enough and there is a need to ask fundamental questions which are disruptive in nature that are missing in the document.

Ashok Bhattacharyya commended the holistic and comprehensive approach used in the book. But he felt that the book underestimates the sharp shifts taking place in the global technology space and should have given better policy options in this area. However, Montek Singh Ahluwalia found the book rational and powerful and gave an insight into the various governance and institutional issues that arise in making a draft document into a policy document. He concluded on a positive note; 'if the changes are incorporated, financing will not be a problem'.

■ SHAHID SIDDIQUI

Social Media: More than Social

DISCUSSION

Political Mobilisation Through Social Media.

PANELLISTS: Dhruv Arora; Parag Mohanty; Bhanu Joshi; Anshul Tewari; Apar Gupta; Tamseel Hussain

MODERATOR: Richa Bansal

3 August

Each of the six panellists demystified a particular aspect of social media and how it works as a tool in political discourse. Opening the discussion, Dhruv Arora set the context with how social media technology propagates binaries and drives political discourse. He also mentioned how fake news stories and videos, with their sheer virality, reach a larger mass than reports debunking the fraud which typically comes 12 to 13 hours later.

Political consultant Parag Mohanty, speaking on how political parties in India collect and use digital data for campaigning, explained the method employed by parties to categorise users, prospective voters in this case, and approach them with customised reports on the basis of their interests and general behavioural trends. Bhanu Joshi, who has done a good amount of fieldwork in the recent state elections, shared his experiences and concluded that social media could complement a party's campaign but still remained a small part of the overall pre-election push. Anshul Tewari also dwelt on the issue of fake news, along with recent instances, and how they stoked hate online as well as offline. Apar Gupta looked at what the government needs to do to regulate social media. Tamseel Hussain, a public engagement and communications consultant, discussed the new trend of mainstream media houses tilting increasingly from created to curated content, and from specialist to citizen journalism.

■ REETESH ANAND

A Scientific Mindset

THE FIRST PROFESSOR MGK MENON MEMORIAL LECTURE

Creating a Scientific Problem-solving Mindset Among Young Indians

SPEAKER: Dr. N.R. Narayana Murthy

CHAIR: Shri N.N. Vohra

28 August



Dr. N.R. Narayana Murthy

think independently to find scientific and technological solutions to our problems, make our bureaucracy more responsive, and make schooling and college systems autonomous.

Focusing on the foremost problem of orienting education towards problem solving, Mr. Murthy lamented that our current system focused on youngsters acquiring knowledge and passing examinations rather than acquiring skills and an independent mindset that facilitates the recognition of problems on a proactive basis and the resolution of such problems. He went on to detail the changes that must be made in the way teachers are trained; the methodology of teaching with classrooms becoming more oriented towards discussion; the nature of school examinations; competitions where children endeavour to find solutions to problems that confront us. A major requirement for changing the teaching method, Mr. Murthy

stressed, is the availability of critical thinking textbooks in the vernacular languages to improve access for children without knowledge of English

■ **SUNANDA GHOSH**

Notice

There is a serious issue concerning the use of mobile phones by members in the Library's reading rooms. In order to maintain zero tolerance to the use of mobile phones, the Library Committee had seriously deliberated again and has framed rules for such violation. Hence, members are requested to avoid the use of mobile phones in the library premises and put the same in vibration/silent mode before they enter the Library.

Obituary

L-0294 Prof. Yash Pal

A-1491 Smt Shanti Varma

A-1724 Shri Jagan Nath Sharma

A-3929 Shri Nirupam Sen

AT-511 Shri Prem Kumar Chadha

M-1971 Shri Vishvjit Prithvijit Singh

M-1945 Shri Anand Sarup

M-2014 Shri Naresh Chandra

M-2455 Dr. P.M. Bhargava

M-2652 Shri H.K. Yadav

M-3178 Ms Shanta Serbjeet Singh

M-3230 Justice (Retd.) S.L. Saraf

M-3547 Dr. Mehmood-Ur- Rahman



Message from the Director

Dear Members,

The first Professor M.G.K. Menon Memorial Lecture was delivered by Shri N.R. Narayana Murthy on 28 August 2017. The lecture on the topic 'Creating a Scientific Problem-solving Mindset among Young Indians' was chaired by Shri N.N. Vohra, President, IIC. Shri Murthy recalled hearing the Late Prof. Menon often repeat Albert Einstein's words—that the objective of science education is to raise new questions, imagine new possibilities, and to re-examine old problems from a new angle; in essence, to understand the reality. The lecture was a befitting tribute to the Late Prof. Menon who remains a role model to millions of youth, not just because of his stellar scholarship, but also because he used it effectively to steer India's advancement in Science and Technology.

The 'IIC Experience 2017'—our annual festival of the arts—is scheduled from 7 to 11 October 2017, and will be inaugurated by Shri N.N. Vohra, President, IIC at 6.30 pm on 7 October 2017. This much awaited annual festival is a window to the core essence of the Centre. The wide spectrum of presentations during the festival, which include dance, music, theatre, films, exhibitions and special cuisine, makes it a kaleidoscope of all the elements that are associated with the cultural face of the Centre. All the events unfold in the serene spaces that are part of the Centre's reflective ambience.

Unmissable films, exhibitions and performances have been planned during the five-day festival.

The exhibitions include *The Russian State and India: Imperial Encounters to Contemporary Collaboration; Carrying Roots Around: Contemporary Art, a display by several artists; Rumbles in the Playpen: Contemporary Sculpture and Installations by Upcoming Artists*—this exhibition will also include performances. A collaboration with the Italian Embassy Cultural Centre Cine Club, the films are a cinematic journey through Italy. Performances include a Bharatnatyam ensemble on the opening day; a Carnatic violin duet; Hindustani classical in tribute to Kishori Amonkar; *Mohan se Mahatma*, a play to mark the centenary of the Champaran Satyagraha; a concert by the Cremona Quartet; and a performance by a Cambodian dance troupe. As members are aware, there is a culinary treat which awaits the connoisseurs at the end of each performance.

I am sure the members are looking forward to attending the festival, while we look forward to welcoming your family and friends in large numbers. Please feel free to spread the word to the cognoscenti and art lovers. Our fountain lawn is large enough to accommodate them.

Many members have queries about GST and service charges. Presently, Service Charge is levied on the bills at the rate of 10% from the members. This amount is distributed amongst staff members and also used on staff welfare activities as per an agreement with the IIC Staff Union. The present agreement is valid up to 30 June 2020.

The Government has recently levied 18% GST on the Service Charge. Some members have expressed reservations on the Service Charge and the levying of GST on this amount. While the Centre has to abide by the financial regulations of the GOI in regard to the GST, the Service Charge would continue in view of the agreement with the Union. However, as Service Charge is levied, the members are not required to pay any tips to the staff.

The Executive Committee, House Committee and Library Committee have held their meetings. Many constructive points have been put up by the elected and nominated members, for all-round improvement of the Centre in all its spheres of activities.

Best wishes for the festive season ahead.

Air Marshal Naresh Verma (Retd.)