

# Roots and Routes

Monthly Newsletter of the Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism

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**GRFDT**

Global Research Forum on  
Diaspora and Transnationalism



**Roots and Routes disseminates the latest information on research and policy developments in Diaspora and transnationalism**

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# Editor's Message



Happy New Year 2014 to all our readers and well wishers! It has been nearly two years of journey for GRFDT. During this period GRFDT reaches out the scholars across the globe working on various diasporas, policy experts, civil society organisations and provided a common platform where a greater engagement of stakeholders possible. Our main purpose was to harness new ideas in the areas of academic and public areas. Many scholars has been interviewed and their views were shared. GRFDT also reaches out to the "living diasporas" where the cases and the point of view of the people in various diasporas share their diasporic experiences in the form of interview and short articles. Our endeavour to provide better a better knowledge platform for different stakeholders only possible with the cooperation from all of you.

This issue covers various aspects of Indian diaspora especially how the civil society organisations at the Global level engage the with the diaspora and host countries in the areas of human rights, economic and development issues. Civil society organisation plays a very crucial role in engaging diaspora and taking the cause of diaspora. The GRFDT seminar series had a talk on the outreach activities of the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) by Mr. Ashook Ramsaran, President of GOPIO International (USA). Mr. Ramsaran highlighted how the organisation evolved and expanded overtime across the globe catering to the needs of both old and new diaspora.

The interview further extends his view on GOPIO's activities and how it engage with the Indian diaspora which is not only a complex phenomenon but also evolving time to time. He highlighted hoe GOPIO is promoting various development work in partnership with Government and Non Government organisations back home.

Besides this, the issue has a book review highlighting the politics of diaspora at home and abroad. The issue also has usual features such as seminar and conference and other news, reports.

Sadananda Sahoo

### GRFDT Seminar

## GOPIO's Outreach Initiatives and Progress in the Indian Diaspora

GRFDT organised a seminar on the theme "GOPIO's Outreach Initiatives and Progress in the Indian Diaspora" on 8th January 2014 at JNU. The seminar was given by Ashook Ramsaran, President, GOPIO International (USA). The talk was chaired by Dr. Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria, Principal Research Fellow, Institute of Ethnic Studies, UKM and Dr. Anisur Rahman, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi.

Mr. Ramsaran highlighted vision and purpose of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) which was established in 1989. With the objective of addressing the concerns and interests of the global Indian community of over 30 million persons of Indian origin living outside of India, GOPIO has made remarkable progress.

Ramsaran said that GOPIO is aggressively continuing its outreach mission to engage and embrace the Indian Diaspora with rapid expansion and growth of its programs, chapters and councils, adapting to the changing dynamic of mobility, migration and second journeys within the Indian Diaspora. GOPIO's organizational effort includes upgrade and revitalization of its website, newsletters, news bulletins and shared information among its membership and general public. GOPIO's outreach includes expansion of its chapters in more countries, including those of the "legacy Diaspora" (more than 2 generations) and countries with rapidly increasing migration such as USA, Canada and Australia. GOPIO has also engaged French-speaking persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) as well PIOs in Africa, accounting for a significant percentage of the Indian Diaspora. In addition, GOPIO has revitalized its councils which are designed to address specific issues to serve the



diverse interests of the global Indian community, namely: Human Rights, Business, Cultural, Academic, Media, Health Services, Youth, Women and Science & Technology. GOPIO is engaging the Indian Diaspora at all levels and in all regions with local, regional, national and international seminars, conferences and symposia on matters beneficial to the Indian Diaspora. GOPIO advances its collaboration with Government of India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and other departments), other governments, agencies, organizations, institutions and associations to better achieve its objectives and goals.

The participants include many delegates of GOPIO who shared their interest in collaborating with GRFDT in research and other fields. Professor Prabhu Guptara who is an authority on the impact of technology on globalization, on strategy, on knowledge management, on corporate social responsibility, on comparative and cross-cultural ethics, and on management and leadership issues also shared his views on various issues on Diaspora and knowledge building.

Participants also discussed about broad range of activities that is needed for diaspora organisations like GOPIO and GRFDT to play greater role on various issues in engaging Indian diaspora. Issues includes: concerns of Old and New Diaspora, Various generations, Knowledge platforms and collaboration etc.



### Indian Diaspora is a dynamic phenomenon with various nuances which must be taken into account as we address the matters of interest of a growing Indian Diaspora: Ashook Ramsaran

Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin, headquarters at New York is a non-partisan, non-sectarian global organization with chapters in several countries, actively promoting the interests of people of Indian origin worldwide. It also provides platform enhancing cooperation and communication between groups of Indians living in various countries. In an interview with **Dr. Sadananda Sahoo**, Editor, Roots and Routes, **Ashook Ramsaran**, President of GOPIO shares the vision of the organisation and challenges it confronts.



**Q-1- As we know GOPIO is formed on the basis of human rights issues of People of Indian Origin abroad. How do you assess the achievement of GOPIO as an organisation promoting cooperation among Indian people worldwide while addressing it mainly from human rights point of view.**

GOPIO is the premiere global Indian Diaspora advocacy organization addressing issues of human rights, equitable treatment and fairness under law for people of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians (NRIs) living in countries outside of India. GOPIO closely monitors the interests and concerns of PIOs and NRIs and brings human rights issues to the forefront for awareness and discussion, seeking remedy at its source and assistance with the Government of India where appropriate.

Starting in 1989, GOPIO has made many significant advances on behalf of PIOs and NRIs. These GOPIO initiatives include: 1989 and years afterwards in 2000 -Seeking UN intervention on the coup against Government of Mahendra Chaudhry in Fiji; 2006 – Protest at the United Nations against unlawful suspension of PIO Chief Justice Sharma in Trinidad & Tobago; 2007 - Peace march against attacks on Indians in Germany; 2008 – Change in “Trinity Cross” awards in Trinidad & Tobago; 1990’s – Protest against “Dot Busters” in USA; Discrimination against Indians in Malaysia; Attacks against Indian students in Australia; NRI voting rights, NRI property rights, fraudulent NRI marriages and successful protest against unwarranted passport surrender charges against PIOs.

**Q-2- Does GOPIO promote inter community harmony with co-diasporas and host community?**

One of the objectives of GOPIO is to collaborate with other organizations in the interest of PIOs and NRIs consistent with GOPIO’s mission and objectives. Recently, GOPIO has collaborated and participated in programs organized by the Organization of American States (OAS -El Salvador 2012); Commonwealth Diaspora (Birmingham, UK 2012); Indian Jewish Council (USA 2012); National American Association of Colored People (NAACP – USA 2013). I intend to advance this agenda in a more robust manner in 2014-2015 to build solid partnerships and engagement among other diasporas as the number of PIOs and NRIs worldwide continue the increasing trend.

**Q-3- There are issues related to the conflicting interest among Old and New Diasporas. Diasporas are based on religious and regional identities that are prevalent in India. How does GOPIO addresses them. We learnt that GOPIO is not a single organisation rather many with some kind of contradictions.**

There are certainly gaps in knowledge and perceptions among “old and new diasporas” based on difference in places of birth, history, education and exposure to other ethnic culture and groups. While no one has a monopoly of belonging,

interest or feeling of being part of the Indian Diaspora, one must acknowledge the historic, cultural and emotional connections which are strong, unwavering bonds of both "old and new diasporas". GOPIO is a single umbrella with membership among both "old and new diasporas" and actively encourages bridging and connectivity among all on this huge with many branches and deep roots. GOPIO chapters, councils, membership and hierarchy span all segments of both "old and new diasporas".

**Q-4- The diaspora population is growing day by day. There is a projection there will be more addition to the diaspora as the demand for labour will be increasing in many parts of the worlds, especially in the countries with aging population. Does GOPIO have any future plan to address the gigantic diaspora in the making?**

This is an accurate observation: There is a trend of the number of PIOs and NRIs worldwide continuing a rapid growth of emigration from India as well as second journeys from those born and domiciled in countries with significant populations of PIOs and NRIs.

GOPIO's plans include focus on expansion and growth in chapters, councils and membership worldwide to address matters of interest among youth, women, children and inter-generational issues, to focus on smoother processed of assimilation and adaptation – and lessons on peaceful co-existence of Indians in multi-ethnic societies. GOPIO also intends to collaborate with Diaspora academic institutions and organizations to conduct studies and surveys in order to understand the migration growth and expansion, and to take effective steps to coordinate efforts. It must be noted that the growth of the Indian Diaspora is a dynamic phenomenon with various nuances which must be taken into account as we address the matters of interest of a growing Indian Diaspora.

**Q-5- Last one decade GOPIO also initiated many developmental work back in India that are related to healthcare, education, promoting investment etc. How do you think GOPIO achieved success?**

GOPIO has made some strides in encouraging Indian Diaspora investments in healthcare, education and infra-structure in India, in collaboration with Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) and its Office of Investment Facilitation Centre (OICF), MOU partnership with Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), MOU partnership with Indian American Chamber of Commerce – USA (IACC-USA), MOU partnership with Indian Canadian Chamber of Commerce (IACC), and others. These partnerships foster increasing support for NRI and PIO investment in India in the areas noted above.

**Q-6- Do you have a research wing in GOPIO? Is there any plan to promote research on the activities you intend to do or doing? I mean research is part of many global level organisations who intend to do sustainable work in large scale.**

GOPIO does not have a research arm or wing although it has become more evident and necessary that the need exists and will become more of a necessity. As stated above, GOPIO intends to collaborate with Diaspora academic institutions and organizations to conduct studies and surveys in order to understand the migration growth and expansion, and to take effective steps to coordinate efforts in meaningful ways.

**Q-7- Softpower is one of the most important instruments for many activities. It is also a very natural means to promote cooperation among the Indians. Indian cultures have been quite popular in West and many other parts of the globe. What role does GOPIO play in promoting Indian culture as promoting cooperation among People of Indian Origin is one of your trust area?**

GOPIO's presence in the many countries with PIOs and NRIs help promote Indian culture and cooperation among PIOs and NRIs in those countries. While practicing Indian cultural and traditions sustains Indianness even in remote areas and in countries with small populations of NRIs and PIOs, it nurtures and cultivates more widespread practice among PIOs and NRIs as well as more acceptances among non-Indian segments of such populations.

**Thank you!**

**Sheffer, Gabriel. (2003). *Diaspora politics: At Home Abroad*, Cambridge: Cambridge University press. Pages -290, ISBN no. -0521811376**

Diasporas have become important actors of global affairs, especially because of their trait of linking domestic sphere with the international sphere, notably in the aftermath of cold war. These transnational ties can either be constructive or destructive, depending on the orientation and interests of diaspora groups. It is this quality of diasporas that is increasingly considered to be impacting and mobilising international politics. Sheffer, is one of the earliest authors who worked on the role in diaspora in international relations.

This book is divided into 10 chapters. Along with the introduction, Sheffer has devoted first two chapters in defining problem, identifying causes, building hypotheses and describing important concepts related to the field. The author's style of writing is both descriptive as well as analytical, which aids in developing his main ideas in a logical order.

Sheffer analyses the genesis 'ethno-national diasporas' and their incessant struggle to establish their identity through cultural, social, economic and political involvement. "Ethno-national diasporas" according to him are "a social-political formation, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno national origin and who permanently reside in host countries, having contacts with their homeland" (page no. 9). Throughout the book, Sheffer unpacks the underlying perceptions regarding the ethno-national diasporas. Before moving to his main debate around politics of ethno-national diasporas, he explains important concepts, like diasporic, diasporism, difference between migrants and diasporas and between diasporas generally and ethno-national diasporas specifically.

After defining these terms, Sheffer describes how diasporas, once being considered as irrelevant to both home as well as host countries, gradually comes to the forefront of global politics towards 1990's. The advent of processes like globalisation, regionalisation and democratisation had an impact on diasporas in three contradicting ways. Firstly, there have been returns of diasporas to homeland. Secondly, these trends led to a greater tolerance of host countries towards ethnic diversities. Thirdly, ethno national diasporas increasingly became involved in cultural,

economic and political affairs of home as well as host country. Sheffer further argues that diaspora groups have used various strategies and formed organisations to actively participate on political matters on one hand, and negotiate their interests on the other, with both home as well as host country.

This argument is quite logical seeing that with the increasing trends of globalisation and liberalisation, diaspora groups across the globe are forming organisations for different purposes including protecting their rights, lobbying for important issues in homeland as well as host land, for instance, GOPIO (global organisation of people of Indian origin) was formed to fight human rights violation of people of Indian origin. Lately, it also started lobbying on important economic and political issues like Indo-US nuclear deal 2008. Similar cases can be found among the other diasporas.

While dealing with the question whether ethnic diasporism is a recent phenomenon or does it have roots in history, Sheffer analyses four theoretical debates: namely, primordialists, instrumentalists, psychological approach and constructionist approach. After finding them insufficient, he concludes that there is a need for a synthesis approach including multiple social, cultural and economic factors. He further gives the example of Jewish, Armenian, Greek, Chinese and Gypsy diasporas, stating how these were formed in antiquity or during middle ages but are still surviving. With more and more global migrations, there is emergence of new diasporas, what he calls 'modern diasporas'. He then reaches on a conclusion that diaspora is a historical phenomenon, but addition of new diasporas certainly adds to the dynamics of diaspora politics. This argument of Sheffer stands to be true, as we have observed that old Indian diaspora in USA being politically inactive though, has helped in keeping the culture and customs of India intact. Thereby contributing to the dynamics of diaspora.

After categorising historical and modern diaspora, Sheffer further classifies diasporas into state linked and stateless diasporas. Former share a notion of physically and politically identified homeland, whereas latter doesn't identify a unified tangible and political space as their homeland. Sheffer completely grabs the attention of the reader when he discloses six strategies which diasporas use to amalgamate themselves in host country politics. These

are : the assimilationist strategy, the integrationist strategy, the communalist and corporatist strategies, the autonomous strategy, the irredentist strategy and the separatist strategy. The last two are mostly employed by stateless diasporas. He further asserts that both kinds of diasporas employ different strategies to maintain trans-state networks. He concludes by stating that all the categories of diaspora that he has explained, being different from each other, have extensively contributed to the development of diaspora politics.

After having analysed different categories of diaspora and their respective channels of networking, Sheffer puts forward the main argument of the book, that is increase in number of diasporas, their use of what he calls 'new media', their organisations, strategies and assertiveness has transformed diasporas into important cultural, social and most importantly political actors in both homeland and host land. He further asserts that although diasporas doesn't present a dangerous image to either home or host country, their intricate loyalty towards one is sometimes portrayed as a potential threat to the other. Furthermore, Sheffer argues that more than being a threat, diasporas serve as facilitators to intra-state as well as inter-state conflicts.

But, we see that dynamics within diasporas include both kinds of diasporas: peace makers and peace breakers. For example, various communities of Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora supported and aided LTTE (a militant organisation) in their demand of a separate state. On the other hand, Sudanese diaspora in Sweden have contributed to democratisation and reconstruction of Sudan.

Sheffer ends his argument by commenting on the nature

of diasporas as "these are neither imagined nor invented communities, but are a combination of primordial, symbolic and instrumental elements" (p. 257) and how they are continuously engaged in a struggle to feel at home in the host country, consequently influencing global politics.

The title of the book is straightforward, yet multifaceted. I am calling the heading multifaceted because Sheffer, through this book has not just tried to understand politics around diasporas but has also dealt with the whole gamut of international politics by including host country as well as homelands. He thoroughly highlights the role of historical, modern, incipient, stateless and state linked diasporas in forming groundwork for contemporary diaspora politics. Sheffer has not just dealt with political but has also dealt with the social and cultural underpinnings of ethno national diasporas.

However, some arguments seems repetitive in the book, for instance, Sheffer has at many places explained the term ethno-national diasporas and also that these are historical phenomenon and not a new one. Nevertheless, his work is brilliant as he thoroughly peels away the pretenses by showing that diaspora is a historical phenomenon and not a new one. Although less in number, historical diasporas still survive and influence global politics against the backdrop of trans-state networks.

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

### 9th Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asia Studies

Date : **25 - 27 June 2014**  
Venue : **Faculty of Law, Block B, Level 4, 469 Bukit Timah Rd, National University of Singapore @ Bukit Timah Campus**  
Website: [http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events\\_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1504](http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/events_categorydetails.asp?categoryid=6&eventid=1504)

The Asia Research Institute (ARI) of the National University of Singapore (NUS) invites applications from post-graduate students who are engaged in research on Southeast Asia to attend the 9th Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asian Studies on 25 – 27 June 2014.

#### SUBMISSION OF PAPER PROPOSAL

Graduate students should submit a 300-400 words abstract of their proposed paper using the attached form to

Mr Jonathan Lee at [jonathan.lee@nus.edu.sg](mailto:jonathan.lee@nus.edu.sg) no later than 28 February 2014. Click here for the Application Form.

The abstract should clarify the substantive issues which your paper will address and be firmly grounded in your own research project. Please include information on objectives, methods, and findings, as well as explain the original contribution the research makes to the field of study.

One confidential letter of recommendation from a supervisor should also be forwarded along with your form by the same date. Successful applicants will be notified by 14 April 2014.

Those selected will have to submit full-length papers, of around 4,000-5,000 words in length, by 12 May 2014.

## Punjab NRI Sammelan to strengthen Diaspora ties, Investment and Punjabiyyat

Since 2003, the Ministry of Overseas Indian (MOIA) Affairs has been organizing the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PDB) on every 7th-9th January to celebrate diasporic lives and capitalize from knowledge, expertise, skill and investment from the worldwide Indian diaspora, while at the same time it provides a common platform to interact with fellow diasporas. In the same way State Governments are also looking forward to attract their (State) diasporas. States like Gujarat, Kerala, Rajasthan and Punjab are among other few states that are celebrating the diaspora's achievements and providing platforms for diaspora engagement

NRI Sammelan organized by the Punjab government at Anandpur Sahib recently on 10th and 11th January is one of the occasion to show case the state in front of Punjabi diaspora and vice versa. Anandpur Sahib, popularly known as The Holy City of Bliss has its unique place in Sikhism as it was founded by the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur in 1665. Once a Punjabi NRI enters to India, he/she surely thinks of visiting the Golden Temple & the Anandpur Sahib, even though his first destination is Chandigarh. The Sammelan had focused on following major areas where the state government looking forward to have diaspora engagement.

**Investment Opportunities:** Apart from the taste of live culture and delicious cuisines, govt. of Punjab offers a number of investment options to the NRI. Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal states that if the remittances come to households only, then it would not serve the larger goal of overall development of the state. Therefore he announced a number of options to NRIs. Some of them are:

- 1) Single Window Clearance for NRIs Projects in the state. He said Punjab is one of the first State in the country with citizen charter & simplified documentations.
- 2) 100% rebate in stamp duty if they buy land for the investment or for projects.
- 3) 100% rebate in property tax for 10 years.
- 4) 50-100% rebate on paver duty.
- 5) Simplified NOC Procedure.
- 6) Firm basic infrastructure including Roads, Airports, 24x7 power supply etc.
- 7) 10% reservation in Industrial & residential plots.

From the diaspora side there was matching reciprocity. Influential Diaspora players have assured the following:

1. Tim Uppal, minister in Canada government assures that within two years Canada will try to increase business upto \$ 15 Billion. He said from 2010 onward the rate of increase is remarkable (25%) and he sees indefinite opportunities in India's energy & education sector. Majority of NRIs in Canada are from Punjab, therefore Punjab will be the biggest beneficiary of that business.

2. Bal Gasal, Sports Minister of Canada said that NRI believes in open market where all players can enjoy their economic and political interests without unnecessary hassles and favours. He said clean and bias less governance is the requirement of the time and hoped that the Punjab Government would work hard to ensure that. At the same time, he emphasized on game diplomacy where youth of both countries would feel connected. He said India and Canada should work hard to include Kabaddi in Olympic.

3. Lord Daljit Rana, British politician and member of the House of Lords said that today's demand is knowledge. India has 65% young population and if we invest in knowledge industry than it will not only create jobs for youth but will provide a firm base too.

4. Harinder Takhar, politician & former Legislature from Ontario, Canada said Govt. of Punjab met all our demands that were raised by us in the previous sammee-lans and now no issue is left. So it's our humble duty to invest in our homeland and develop it in every aspect.

5. Peter Sandu, another politician from Canada raised another important issue that the Govt. of Punjab & the Govt. of India must work hard to scrap minor cases against NRI's so that they can come to India and Invest freely.

6. Sachin Gupta, Mayor, Hounslow, London said if all NRIs from Punjab take oath to develop their motherland than Punjab will not surpass only Gujarat but soon it will be comparable with developed world. He assures all possible help to Punjab in every aspect.

7. Canada's another Legislature Darshan Singh Kang suggests that Punjab must promote tourism. When our

second & third generation will come here then they will bring the business for sure.

8. Kamaljit Bakshi, MP (Shift back) from Newzealand who signed an MOU with the Technical Education of Dept. of Punjab said that Technical Education would bring prosperity to the State in many ways. At the same time, she suggested the Punjab govt. that issues referred from other countries to Punjab must be addressed as soon as possible and that exercise would bring good name and trust to the State from international community.

While the NRIs from developed world were taking on the issues related to industrial development, investment, tourism, cultural capital and promotion of Punjabiyaat in coming generations, the Pakin's Legislator Ashok Arora was worried on the security related issues of minorities in Pakistan. He described that only after Prime Minister Nawaj Sharif govt. minorities are feeling a bit safe. Now the closest neighbors and business partners should focus on peace, visa simplification and promotion of business.

Apart from all these discussions, the Deputy CM Sukhbir Badal said that 'our farmers did miracles to feed our country and now we are coming up with another revolution without losing our momentum in Agriculture'. He described that Punjab is growing as an Industrial state and performing well in all levels of Human Development Index (HDI). Further he clarified that Punjabi society is getting richer and sophisticated while at the same time it's submissive to our guests & Diaspora.

Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal raised the issue of terrorism. He appealed to the NRIs not to support rebellious peoples either ideologically or economically. He remembered the days of the Khalisthan movement while addressing the forth NRI conference at "Virasat-e-Khalsa" complex at Anandpur Sahib. That was a very emotional moment for Mr. Badal when he recalled that thousands of Punjabis lost their lives and property during this rebellious

movement which in turn pushed Punjab 100 years back. We cannot compensate that time but now we can thrive for a developed peaceful State, he said. Mr. Badal said that today Punjab is the ideal state for communal harmony and peace. In the mean time he also brought in a filmy humour into the gathering by saying that as the movie Bhag Milkha Bhag shows, in Punjab we say- Bhag Punjabi Bhag.

#### Punjabiyaat

Mr. Badal also asserted that we are not only interested not only in investment and developmental issues but also in building the network of Punjabiyaat. He considered the Punjabis as a strong ethnic group and Punjabiyaat as a cultural movement around the world. He said we want strong socio-cultural web between all Punjabis present in every corner of the world. He urged all the NRIs to re-visit and relearn their roots and "Virsa" (Heritage). He again came up with a humour by jokingly advising the NRIs to ask their children to visit Punjab and if possible marry here. He dreamt of a golden Punjab when the second and third generation of NRIs would come back to Punjab & settle down here for better future.

Mera Pind Meri Scheme: Mr. Badal also assured the NRIs of all level supports in case they want to develop their own village. Panchayat will support in their project and they can handle their investment as per their desire. Under this scheme many NRIs are working in their respective villages. Some are providing free biogas to their whole village; some others are working on clean water, irrigation, medical assistance, computer education etc.

On the whole, the exercise was very important and meaningful to both the NRIs and Punjab at large.

A Report by **Vinod Kumar**, Asst. Professor, Department of Sociology, Panjab University, Chandigarh. He can be contacted at: vinodchoudhary09@gmail.com

### Call for Papers

#### International Conference on Demography and Economic Development

The Department of Economics and Development Studies of Covenant University holds her International Conference on Demography and Sustainable Development between July 14 and 16, 2014. The theme of the conference is: Demographic Change and Sustainable Development. The Venue is African Leadership Development Centre (ALDC), Covenant University, Canaanland, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Authors should send complete papers of not more than 15 pages of A4 paper or one page poster (including tables, figures and references and abstract limited to 250 words only). Important Dates: Submission commences December 15, 2013, Closing Date for Submission: March 15, 2014.

Please submit to: deco@covenantuniveristy.edu.ng  
[http://www.grfdt.com/Upload/Event/79\\_Conference%20Program%202014.pdf](http://www.grfdt.com/Upload/Event/79_Conference%20Program%202014.pdf)

## Mr K.L Jhaveri advocate of Asian African harmony died

Mr K.L Jhaveri died on 27th January 2014 early in the morning at 5 pm in the presence of his wife Urmila Zha-veri at the ripe old age of 92+, having left a distinguished record of public service in Tanzania. A few years ago, he wrote 'Marching with Nyerere: Africanisation of Asians', in which he recounted how he joined the struggle for Tanganyika's independence by aligning himself with Julius Nyerere and became a political activist and social reformer.

He was born in India, and after his studies at Bombay University, came to Tanzania in 1948, where he practiced as a respected advocate. He first became a member of Tanganyika's Legco in 1959 and then served as an elected MP for Dar es Salaam from 1960 to 1965, and twice served as President of Tanganyika Law Society. He served as its President for fifteen years. It was clear that he had within a very short time earned the respect and admiration of all those who came into contact with him.

Mr. Jhaveri was not only an eminent jurist but also an honest participant in the process of national construction in Tanganyika. He was a pride of the Asians. His thoughts were inspiring. His simplicity was exemplary. Mr. Jhaveri was the president of the Asian Association of Tanganyika, a former Member of Parliament and President of Tanganyika Law Society. He also served with distinction as Member of Judicial Commission and Judge of the High Court,



7. Welcoming President Nyerere at Law Society Dinner

Tanganyika and has contributed several articles on law in the national newspapers/ journals of Tanganyika. One of his notable book is "Marching with Nyerere: Africanisation of Asians" (1999) which deals with the contribution of Asians in the independent struggle of Tanganyika and particularly the part played by the Asian Association in conjunction with the Tanganyika African National Union which were formulated as a result of the policy of the British Government and the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations and gives full account of Nyerere's Criminal trial, First Election, Mutiny, Africanisation and union of Tanganyika with Zanzibar.

## Diaspora Scholar J.C. Sharma is no more

A well known diplomat and diaspora scholar Ambassador Jagdish Chandra Sharma (03.07.1944 — 31.01.2014 ) passed away today morning. He is known as a pioneer in the India's diaspora policy especially his role as a member secretary of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora 2001. Mr. Sharma was also the Member Secretary of the Organizing Committee for the 1st and 2nd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Indian Diaspora Day) celebrations which paved the way for the formation of the New Ministry called Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. Besides this Ambassador Sharma has outstanding achievements as soldier, writer and public speaker on international affairs, Hinduism etc. He is a regular panelist on T.V. programmes on Foreign and Security Affairs and diasporic issues.

Mr. Sharma joined the elite Indian Foreign Service in 1972 and has served as First Secretary (Consular & Political) and First Secretary (Commercial) in the Indian Embassies in Tokyo and Jakarta respectively. He also served



as  
In-

dia's Consul General in Vancouver (1984-88) when it was the nerve center of activities in support of terrorist movement in Punjab state of India. In fact it is during his Vancouver posting where he developed a deep interest in

studying the impact of Diaspora on India's external relation and economic development. Afterwards he took other assignment where he interacted with Indian diaspora in many places i.e he was Joint Secretary (Gulf) where he studied the issues and problems related to the Gulf migrants

Mr. Sharma has been providing his expertise in issues related to diaspora policy in other countries too. He was

invited by the Govt. of Ethiopia as UNDP Consultant to advise in formulation of its diaspora policy in 2008. Afterwards he was deputed as Consultant by International Organisation on Migration (IOM) to Ethiopia to finalise the report on diaspora policy in 2009. Mr. Sharma is also a visiting faculty of the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs.

Mr. Sharma left behind his wife Dr. Kavita Sharma, who is also a scholar on diaspora, son and daughter.

## Global Update

### GOPIO's 25th Anniversary in Trinidad & Tobago to coincide 169th Anniversary of Indian Arrival Day on 27th May

GOPIO's 25th Anniversary in Trinidad & Tobago to coincide 169th Anniversary of Indian Arrival Day on 27th May. The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) International Trinidad and Tobago Chapter plans on hosting the GOPIO's 25th (Jubilee) Anniversary to be celebrated in Port of Spain on 27th May to 29th May, 2014 preceding the annual Indian Arrival Day commemoration.

The event will bring together delegates from world wide. This proposed event would be the first GOPIO International Convention to be held in the Caribbean region, and we take enormous pride in showcasing Trinidad & Tobago, the Caribbean region, people of Indian origin of the Caribbean and the rich, diverse culture of the region.

The strong relationship between GOPIO and Trinidad & Tobago began in 1989 with the formation of GOPIO with high level representation of several prominent persons from Trinidad & Tobago. This relationship blossomed to continuing participation in GOPIO at the highest levels at GOPIO's major events and many GOPIO official visits to Trinidad & Tobago over the years. In addition, the International Trinidad & Tobago Chapter is among the most active and vibrant of GOPIO's many chapters globally, addressing current and critical community issues such

spousal abuse, alcoholism, education, children, women and health concerns. GOPIO is proud to have hosted Her Excellency Hon. PM Kamla Persad Bissessar on 12th January, 2012 at special reception/dinner in Kolkata during the visit to the Kolkata Memorial and the special guest to Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2012.

GOPIO in the Caribbean is very strong and active with many chapters in the region: Trinidad & Tobago; Guyana; Suriname; St Vincent; Belize; Guadeloupe; Martinique and Jamaica, with others in formation in St Lucia, Grenada and Barbados. Recently, GOPIO has held and collaborated on several major conferences in the Caribbean region: 2011 - Trinidad & Tobago; 2012 - St Vincent; 2013 - Suriname; 2013 - Guyana's 175th Indian Arrival Day Commemoration; 2014 - Belize. GOPIO International Trinidad & Tobago Chapter has acquired a high level of expertise in successfully organizing major events and is fully capable of hosting the GOPIO's 25th (Jubilee) Anniversary in Trinidad & Tobago in an exemplary manner with support from all segments of country and region.

The proposed GOPIO's 25th (Jubilee) Anniversary program would be coincident with 169th Anniversary of Indian Arrival Day in which is celebrated as a significant day in the history of Trinidad & Tobago

### Festschrift release in honour of Prof. Ravindra K.Jain

A book release event was organised in honour of Prof. Ravindra.K. Jain, a renowned Social Anthropologist and Diaspora scholar on 27 January 2014 at JNU. The event was organised by Dr. Renuka Singh the editor of the book "Dual Identity: Indian Diaspora and Other Essays". Prof., Maitreyi Choudhury, Chairperson of the Centre for the Study of Social System formally introduced about the event and highlighted the works of Prof. R.K. Jain, especially Jain's work on Plantation workers in Malaysia. Prof. S.K. Sopory, VC of JNU graced the occasion with his remark on the importance of the diaspora across the globe. Eminent scholars such as Prof. T. K. Oomen, Prof. K.L. Sharma, Prof. Vinod Khadria, Prof. Anand Kumar, Prof. Vivek Kumar participated in the panel discussion and highlighted the importance of diaspora in the globalised

world and its impact on culture, politics, economy and development of nations.

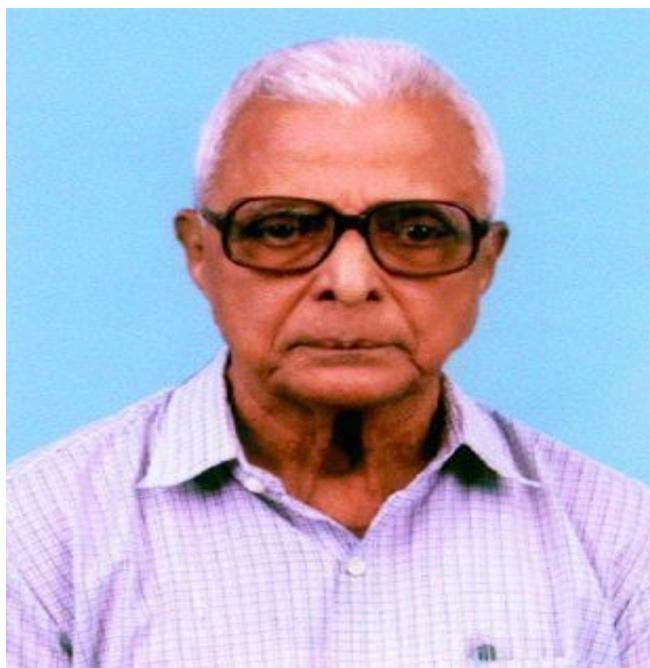
The book which was released formally in the occasion is a collection of essays written by eminent scholars drawn from various disciplines. It focuses on different dimensions of Indian Diaspora and reflects on concept of Diaspora, nature of migration, ethnic divides and tensions, linkages with the homeland. The book is replete with case studies from different parts of the globe to explain the phenomenon called Diaspora. It carries discussion on how 'site' becomes 'space' in the Diasporic cultural sphere, process with in Dalit Diaspora and so on and so forth.

## Connecting Diaspora: A single script to cover all the Indian languages

There are millions of people of Indian origin who have settled in the West and in other places abroad. The original settlers could carry their cultural and linguistic baggage comfortably and maintain their identity because they did not lose touch with their root. The problem arose only for the second and later generations. In course of time they began to drift away from their cultural and linguistic moorings. At present they are more in sync with the local population. True, they observe periodically the cultural customs which their parent generation passed on; but language seems to be a problem. They might have a smattering of knowledge of their mother tongue but their link with it is loosening. There are lots of kids who do not have any link with the language of their origin.

There are attempts to correct the problem and bring back this generation into the fold but the problems are varied. Being dispersed over a wide geographical area teachers cannot be brought from India. Text books cannot be utilized; who would teach the correct articulations of the sounds? If there is a medium through which knowledge could be imparted it would help to a great extent by printing text books which the learners could use as a "self-help" measure. Even the computer could be used for the purpose.

It was towards this end that the new Roman font "Indian-in-Roman" was devised. The 'pravasi' could easily follow the lessons which are given in Roman font with which they are familiar. He need not toil for months to master the unfamiliar 'original' script which consists of more than a hundred characters; the Roman font has only sixty char-



acters (all in Roman letters-with and without diacritical marks). Learning/teaching would be more comfortable. The added advantage is that he could learn any other language because he does not have to struggle with each font every time. The pc/laptop would be handy because the new font is computer friendly.

Fuller details of the scheme can be viewed in our blog "[www.indianinroman.com](http://www.indianinroman.com)"

## Call for Papers

### Spaces and Flows: Fifth International Conference on Urban and ExtraUrban Studies

7th to 8th November 2014  
Bangkok, Thailand

This conference aims to critically engage the contemporary and ongoing spatial, social, ideological, and political transformations in a transnational, global, and neoliberal world. In a process-oriented world of flows and movement, we posit, the global north and global south now simultaneously converge and diverge in a dialectic that shapes and transforms cities, suburbs, and rural areas. This conference addresses the mapping of, the nature of, and the forces that propel these processural changes.

Space and Flows is a yearly, interdisciplinary conference addressing pressing socio-spatial questions. We are inviting proposals for papers, workshops, and other sessions.

Accepted proposals can be submitted for possible publication. Organized by: Spaces & Flows / Common Ground Publishing.

Deadline for abstracts/proposals: 7th November 2014

Check the event website for more details.

Website: <http://spacesandflows.com/the-conference-2014>

**We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit a small write up of their achievements and awards to the editor. It will provide the scholars a platform to connect with peer groups working on themes related to Diaspora and Transnationalism. Information related to seminar/conferences/events can be sent to the Editor at: [editor@grfdt.com](mailto:editor@grfdt.com)**