



GRFDT
Global Research Forum on
Diaspora and Transnationalism

Roots and Routes

Monthly Newsletter on the Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism

Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2013



Anadi Mishra



Dr Meena Dhanda

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

CONTENTS

03 GRFDT Activities

- GRFDT Seminar on Dalit Diaspora in Britain
- GRFDT Seminar on The Toxic Narration: Italian policies on Immigration in the last 20 years

06 GRFDT Interview

- Favorable terms on diasporic investments can potentially inject the state economy with renewed vigour

Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan

09 Special Coverage

- Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, Kochi, Kerala
07-09 January 2013

Editorial Information

©GRFDT. Roots and Routes is Printed,
designed & circulated by GRFDT

Editor: Sadananda Sahoo

Editorial Board: Panchanan Dalai, Smita Tiwari, Kshipra Uke, Mahalingam M, Saroj K. Mahananda, Jitendra D. Soni, Vinod Sartape, Monika Bisht, Rakesh Ranjan, Ravinder Singh, Vinod Kr. Choudharyqqq, Suraj Beri

Design and Production: Monika Bisht and Rakesh Ranjan

Email: editor@grfdt.com

Website: www.grfdt.org

Editor's Message



Dear All,

We have completed 2012 very well with all the voluntary helps from researchers working in India and abroad. During the year, GRFDT has conducted nine seminars that includes thirteen research papers in which many scholars from India and abroad participated. Besides, we have had several informal interactions with eminent scholars. The experience is quite enriching and has given us more ideas and directions to march ahead!

The first month of the year is always more freshening and promising. GRFDT able to bring out the Newsletter well in time for January 2013 and we wish to continue this punctual trend so that large number of researchers across the globe can get useful information timely. In the first month of the year, GRFDT has organized two seminars on two very unique themes. The first was on "Dalit Diaspora in Britain" by Dr. Meena Dhanda and the second one was on "Toxic Narration: Twenty years of Italian Immigration Policy" by Mr. Anadi Mishra.

The issue also has an interview with Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan, who is a well known scholar on international migration and diaspora. He shared his views on various policy issues on international migration and also his own project outcomes which are very insightful. We thank him for sharing his valuable time and ideas with our team.

There is a special coverage on Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2013 held in Kochi, Kerala. PBD has been celebrated since 2003 from 7-9 January every year to reconnect and refresh the relation of India with her Diaspora. The three-day celebration not only aimed to engage the Indian diaspora economically but also culturally. The issue has highlighted some of the sessions that might be useful for scholars. I thank all of you for your continuous feedback which enhances the newsletter qualitatively.

Sadananda Sahoo

GRFDT Seminar

Dalit Diaspora in Britain

Though the Dalit diaspora constitutes a major chunk of diasporic population, it has never been a mainstream academic and policy discourse in India as well as abroad. However, the focus seems to be changing in the recent times. One of the main reasons why Dalits have been gaining mainstream attention is partly due to their active political and social engagements both in India and abroad, apart from the rise of Dalit intelligentsia.

In the recently held seminar on the topic "Dalit Diaspora in Britain" organized by GRFDT on 12 January 2013, the speaker Dr. Meena Dhanda, faculty in the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Politics at the University of Wolverhampton highlighted many interesting issues related to the Punjabi Dalits in Britain. Dr. Vivek Kumar, Associate Professor at Centre for Study of Social System chaired the session. Based on the primary ethnographic research in both Wolverhampton (Britain) and Ludhiana (India), she brought out the issues of identity politics, identity conflicts, conflict among Dalit leaderships, as well as intergenerational problems among the Punjabi Dalits.

Dr. Dhanda delineated upon what the Dalits in Britain say about their connections to the members of their own caste groups as well as to the so-called 'upper-castes', particularly at the backdrop of changing professional roles and upward mobility of the second and third generation of migrant-children. Ravidassia, Buddhist and Valmiki places of congregation and worship in Wolverhampton (UK) are considered as examples to illustrate the claim that their allegiance to their respective places of worship is still strong, while their Dalit identity on the other hand remains in a flux.

She mentioned that there is an ambiguity of self-identification as Dalits and an inner tension often overrides their decision-making; for instance whether or not to support the exit options taken by the second and third generation of migrants in choosing to marry out of caste. The factors underlying this dual movement of maintaining difference, whilst remaining ambiguous about identity are various. Of significance is the complex positioning of Dalits apropos the so called 'upper-castes' in the socio-economic sphere in Britain, where some have acquired significant wealth and accomplished status.



Dr. Meena Dhanda

Dr. Meena Dhanda is a Reader in Philosophy and Cultural Politics, University of Wolverhampton.

Considerable energies are spent in checking the spread of fissures caused by intra-organisational politics around the question of separation of Ravidassias from Sikhs. She also mentioned that the recent self-declaration as 'Ravidassia' under 'Any other religion' in the census of 2011 is symbolic of the expression of difference from Sikhs, even as the majority of the congregation seeks to remain connected to the Guru Granth Sahib.

Dr. Dhanda also highlighted the differences of approach between the Ravidassias, Buddhists and Valmikis in their self-identification as Dalits and compared their respective attitudes to Hindus and Sikhs in Britain. For all these three groups, the Jat Sikhs appear as a common 'enemy', highlighting the fact that the upturning of the everyday relations of domination are the key to understanding the position of the Dalits in Britain. Criticisms of Brahmanvad may occur in public speech by Dalits,

alongside worshipful references to Dr Ambedkar's sacrifices for Dalits, especially praising the instituting of reservations, but the driving force for reform in the UK is not an intellectually inspired criticism of casteism so much as a repugnance of the way in which the Jat Sikhs are seen to assert their superiority.

Dr. Vivek Kumar, who chaired the session, mentioned that it is important to identify the context in which the structure of caste is evolved. He mentioned that on the one hand, the structure of caste is prevalent and on the other it is also a process i.e it exists in different levels. In the context of Dalits Sikhs, religion is more important. Sikh religion which talks about egalitarianism still practice caste system. He also mentioned that 'endogamy is the

real the core of caste system. Many of the Indian characteristics became redundant when one go to diaspora.

In the question answer session, Dr. Dhanda further elaborated the difference between caste conflicts between Jat Sikhs and Dalits Sikhs. Jats, rather than hindu upper castes are the immediate challenge of the Dalits in the Britain. She also highlighted about the generational conflicts among the Dalits and the new Dalit migrants from India. She mentioned that the younger generation face caste discrimination only during the marriage.

Finally, the vote of thanks was given by Mr. Vinod Satape. The talk was followed by a group photograph.

GRFDT Seminar

The Toxic Narration

Italian policies on Immigration in the last 20 years

GRFDT organized its second seminar on "The Toxic Narration: Italian policies on Immigration in the last 20 Years" on 19 January 2013 at CSSS II, JNU. The session was chaired by Dr. G. Srinivas, CSSS, JNU. The speaker Mr Anadi Mishra highlighted the immigration policies during the last 20 years, in which Italian politics has been dominated by the neo-Peronist model of the tycoon Silvio Berlusconi, who founded and led a personal political party which was on the spot for a long period. The period is well known in Italy as "Berlusconian Era".

Mr. Mishra mentioned that "in spite of an apparent alternation, for the last twenty years, Italy has been ruled by a personalized model of administration, which involved in a populistic race also the left wing of the Italian parliament". After the political earthquake that occurred in the early 90s – caused by the disrupting trial known as "Mani Pulite (clean hands) that wiped out the old Italian political class - a referendum changed forever the asset of the Italian political prospect, turning the parliamentary body from a proportional model to a majority one. This was the first step of Italy towards a populistic scenario, ridden at once by Berlusconi, who won the 1994 elections mainly through his massive dominance on the mass media.

Mr. Mishra said that the case can be well exemplified by the two Acts regulating immigration in Italy: the Turco-Napolitano Act of 1998, and the amended Bossi Fini Act of 2002. In relation to the latter case, an explanatory table about the articles regarding immigration, contained in the urgent "Security Package" delivered in 2008, will be of help. He analyzed the interaction between Berlusconi's party "Popolo della Libertà" (the Peo-



Mr. Anadi Mishra is a PhD candidate of "La Sapienza University of Rome" in "Societies and Civilization of Asia and Africa – Indian Subcontinent" with a project about "Indian identity in Transition" concerning an interpretation of Indian Diaspora in the Globalization Era, through the lens of Indian novel in English.

ple of Freedom), the nationalist party "Alleanza Nazionale" (Alliance for the Nation) and particularly the Lega Nord (the Northern League), a regional racist and separatist party which granted support to Berlusconi and shared the rule of the country in spite of its scanty electoral weight, using Berlusconi's mass media empire to build up a policy of "fear of the alien" in order to compact a rather straggly political coalition.

Explaining on Why "Toxic Narration"?, Mr. Mishra mentioned that data and statistics clearly show how Italy's development and wealth depend to a considerable degree on the work of immigrants. Nevertheless, the right wing propaganda of the last twenty years has been hammering on the danger of immigration, linking it with the theme of security, and even with the defense of the cultural values of the country. During all his years in power, Berlusconi has been holding the political power without leaving the control of his media and communication empire. Even when the left wing was in charge during the XIII (1996-2001) and XV (2006-2008) legislatures, this paramount issue was not discussed.

Mr. Mishra mentioned that while the Italian democracy was being "Cathodyzed" in this way, the public opinion was gradually shaped by the fear of the alien, keeping the citizens in an almost complete ignorance about the effective role played by foreigners in the Italian social texture. As a result, in Italy there exists a sizeable society, which works, grows, gains and spawns, with a degree of social protection considerably lower than the one granted to the natives. On the other hand, Italian citizens lived for a long time in a sort of water-proof reality, quite detached from the world outside, while other European countries were involved in an important social reshaping, carried on by an intercultural integration process directed by the sovereign governments (France, 2005 and Germany, 2008). Consequently, the quality of immigration in Italy is generally low-profiled, and the country has been chosen by a high percentage of migrants as a temporary destination.

The speaker also observed that this deceptive veil of maya dissolved when the nation had to face the global financial crisis. Following the debt emergency and the decrease of exchanges, Italy discovered its enormous gap with the rest of the world, cumulated in years of "Cathodyc Lethargy" during which the people were television-fed with fears and worries about foreign criminality, mainly fabricated by a political system engaged to save its position of dominance and the outrageous private interests of its components. He also mentioned that "now, at the eve of the trickiest elections of post-war Italy, the public discussion about the theme of immigration seems to have disappeared from the political agenda. A single year of the emergency government led by Mario Monti - called on to fix the public debt - pushed out of the political debate the theme of immigration in Italy, giving full attention to the urgency of the economic juncture".

Keywords like "Security", "Integration", "National Integrity" have been commuted into "balance of payments", "Spread", "Crisis". Actually, the issue about the attribution of citizenship to the Italian born residents will have to be handled by the next government, but the media system appears to be focused on other cogent problems like growth, fiscal pressure and unemployment, although the issues are strictly linked with the immigration processes and the enlargement of the electoral roll granted by the Ius Soli, "the right of the land born".

The session was followed by a question answer session. Question related to various issues such as economic recession and working conditions of migrants, multiculturalism, media propaganda etc. were discussed. Finally, the vote of thanks was given by Dr. M. Mahalingam.

Global call for youths to participate in UN World Youth Report

Harnessing the youth potential is one of the key challenges for the development in 21st century public policy not only at the national level but also at the global level. In recent years UN has taken keen interest on youths and how to engage them in the development process. The United Nations Organisation is preparing World Youth Report (WYR) 2013 on "Experiences of youth when preparing to migration". WYR will offer a multidimensional account and/or perspective of the life experiences of young migrants and young people affected by migration. The report will be prepared with the inputs collected from youths across the globe through interactive media- social media, blogs and migrant networks. It will commence from 23rd January 2013 for a period of four weeks.

The Population Division of DESA estimated that there are 27 million international migrants aged 15 to 24, constituting about one-eighth of the global migrant stock of 214 million in mid 2010. "We need to listen to what youth have to say about their migration experiences or how migration affects their human development. The World Youth Report which is expected to be launched on International Youth Day, 12 August 2013, will offer youth, youth-led organizations, policymakers and the general public, youthful perspectives that could influence the development potential of migration for young people while mitigating risks. The report will highlight the "voices of youth" on the opportunities and challenges migration presents in origin, transit, and destination countries under various types of migration – regular, involuntary and undocumented.," said Daniela Bas, Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). His statement assume importance given the size of the youth population and the development challenges across the globe. For the first time so much measures are taken to engage youth themselves in the policy making process. The e-consultation and online surveys are employed to take the inputs from youths especially youths aged 15-35 years. Those who do not have access to internet facilities can be made to participate through migrant network and other convenient platforms.

Favorable terms on diasporic investments can potentially inject the state economy with renewed vigour: Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan

A policy agenda attentive to diaspora and return emigrant needs will enable skilled and resourceful Indians to employ their entrepreneurial talents within the country, says Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan, an internationally acclaimed scholar on migration and Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) to **Dr. Smita Tiwari** of GRFDT in an interview



Dr. Smita Tiwari: Congratulation Prof. Rajan for launching a new journal on Migration and Development. This is a long overdue for an institution like CDS which is engaged on the issue for several decades. What are the major thrusts of this new journal? What is the vision behind launching this journal and who are the readers it is catering to?

Prof. Rajan: Thank you. You are right. I joined CDS in 1987 and many professors like late Professor T N Krishan and I S Gulati made significant contributions towards advancing the importance of migration issues and recognizing the impact of remittances on the state economy. Migration studies at CDS took off in a big way, when Zachariah and myself initiated the first Kerala Migration Survey in 1998, the first ever large scale survey conducted in any state in India. The 1998 survey was very well received and it marked a turning point, not only in our careers but also established CDS as an institution in India where rich research on international migration is also conducted.

When I took the position as Chair Professor of the Research Unit on International Migration, I envisioned taking the RUIM beyond its label as a think tank on migration for Government of India but also as a key player in research circles in the global arena. In this context, I had two dreams. The first was to initiate the 'India Migration Report' annually and I am happy to inform you that the IMR annual series has been going strong since 2010 and the fourth one, IMR 2013 focussing on social cost of migration was released in the 11th Pravasi Bharati Divas in Cochin by Mr Vayalar Ravi, Union Minister, MOIA and I am working on the fifth one with on the theme, Diaspora and Development.

Migration has been a historically important livelihood strategy for people across the world. The nexus of migration and development necessitates further inquiry and examination to strengthen the transformational potential of migration.

My second dream was to start a global journal called, Migration and Development to disseminate new and high-impact migration scholarship. This dream has also come to fruition when we launched the new journal in 2012. The readership is global and it has been beneficial to students, researchers and policy makers alike.

Migration has been a historically important livelihood strategy for people across the world. The nexus of migration and development necessitates further inquiry and examination to strengthen the transformational potential of migration. The aim of the journal is to examine, critique and analyse various facets of internal and international migration beyond the conventional lines such as borderless migration, refugees, social costs, return migration, labour laws, policy changes and the implications of all of them for both the sending and receiving countries.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: You have been working on migration and development issues and contributed a lot to the scholarships. As we know migration is a natural feature of any known human civilization since ages, however, the characteristics have been changing since 1990s with the new communication and technological development. The globe is now more interconnected and time and space does not make much difference. In this background, how do you think international migration (diaspora) will impact on the development of a home country in next 20 years? Specifically how it will influence the developing countries? What policy measures are most warranted keeping in view the development of ICT?

Prof. Rajan: India is a global village and Indians are spread across the globe. As it stands, they contribute more to their host country than their country of origin. Today, we are witnessing higher levels of socio-economic integration and political mainstreaming of overseas Indians in destination countries. You raised a pertinent issue regarding the importance and potential of overseas workforce and diaspora engagement for the home country. We have Indian workers who leave their families, in particular, their wives, children and elderly parents, just to improve their economic conditions at home. For instance, about 90 per cent of Kerala migrants work in the Gulf and there exists no citizenship and they continue to work as contractual workers and at the end of their working life, they return home. Kerala is home to about one million return emigrants as per the fifth KMS carried out in 2011. Do we have any policy to utilize this vast and experienced human resources? Absolutely no.

India is a global village and Indians are spread across the globe. As it stands, they contribute more to their host country than their country of origin. Today, we are witnessing higher levels of socio-economic integration and political mainstreaming of overseas Indians in destination countries.

Earlier, International Migration marked a separation from one's home country, but with the advent of technological innovations, this has evolved to Transnational migration processes where people maintain relationships with their home communities throughout their migratory journey. Diasporas, people of Indian origin and overseas citizens of India have the potential to be significant players in the Indian growth story. In 2006, India became one of the few countries to create a cabinet level Ministry for Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA). The successful and seamless integration of diasporas into India's development requires further inter-ministerial collaboration. Due to the recent the global crisis, India witnessed "brain-gain" in the form of return of high skilled professionals in several sectors to the Indian economy. Policy makers have to make every attempt to optimize these return labour flows to take advantage of knowledge and experiential value additions.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: What is your opinion on the role of Malayali diaspora in Kerala? What visible changes they have made to the Kerala and what potential they have to contribute which hitherto not being tapped?

Prof. Rajan: In my opinion, we have not yet utilised the Malayali diasporas in its full potential. Kerala has a vibrant diasporic presence in several countries. They could have made vital contributions to Kerala's development but their resources and skills have not been properly channelized. Nevertheless, remittance transfers from overseas workers have boosted the economy. Of course, if someone travels from Thiruvananthapuram to Kasargode by road, we can see the visible changes in its landscape thanks to the Malayalis abroad. Today, Kerala has about 2 million migrants and they remit about Rs.60000 crores which is equivalent to 31 per cent of the state domestic product. The deep potential that the Kerala diaspora offers for state development cannot be ignored, because of their size, as well as economic and political status in host countries. The diaspora, if channeled productively, can be game changers in Kerala's development path. Already we see return migrants as M.L.A.'s, ensuring that Non resident keralite concerns are also given equal consideration in the state policy agenda. NORKA has made seminal contributions towards analysing and utilising the NRK potential.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: One of the most important factors affecting the policy on diaspora, international migration or engaging the professional diaspora is related to the data sources. Availability of database is very important for research as well as policy formulation. Being a coordinator of several major migration surveys, what is your experience in terms of difficulties in conducting research on international migration? What suggestion you would like to give regarding the preparation of data sources?

Prof. Rajan: Migration is a critical aspect of India's economic emergence. Nevertheless, research and databases on dynamics of migration is not readily available. To fill this gap, CDS initiated the Kerala Migration Survey as early as 1998 and we have also extended it to Goa, Punjab, and Gujarat. We are in the process of initiating state-wise surveys in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and the most populous state Uttar Pradesh.

The most apparent barrier to generating such surveys is the extensive capital required to cover large sample groups. Unlike fertility, mortality, marriage and other social indicators, migration is not such a common occurrence. Therefore the number of households under survey needs to be increased.

However, I would be very happy to coordinate a comprehensive India Migration Survey under the umbrella of the RUIM with the special support of the MOIA, respective state governments and the possible financial support of international institutions like the ILO, IOM, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, WHO, UNDP and IRDC. I dream of an extensive nation-wide survey on migration that will consider all aspects of Indian migration.

The social costs associated with international migration necessitate greater attention in upcoming years. A human rights framework to migration policies is required to extend national protection to valuable overseas workforce. Social effects include changes in family structure, composition and gender roles in the origin communities.

As long as we receive upwards of 60 Billion in remittances, the Indian government is obliged to take care of concerns of the overseas Indians. What better way to give back to them than by understanding them better!

Dr. Smita Tiwari: India has been the largest receiver of remittances in the world. But unfortunately, there is not much effort by any government and non-government agencies to utilise these financial capital for the development. Kerala, of course much better as compared to other states of India, but is no exception when we consider overall potential. Countries like Philippines, South Asian countries such as Bangladesh often considered achieving better results than India. Do you think this staggering \$ 60 billion that India receives can be better planned for more long term development?

Prof. Rajan: Kerala is leading the way in recognising the importance of its overseas workforce and unleashing the potential of remittances for development. While there is a long way to go, I believe Kerala has been making strides in progressive and productive utilisation of remittance receipts. The first Kerala Migration survey conducted in 1998 unearthed socio-economic and demographic consequences of migration. We repeated the KMS in 2003, after five years of the first KMS followed by annual migration surveys in 2007, 2008 and 2010. The next round of the survey has been slated for 2013. Remittances sent by international migrants were as much as a third (31 percent) of Kerala's Net State Domestic Product. Over the past decade remittances coming to Kerala have increased by upto 254%. In light of this extraordinary contribution, institutional efforts to increase engagement with overseas Keralities must be strengthened.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: Being a Chair Professor in the MOIA (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), how would you evaluate India's diaspora policy? What are the most important contributions made by the public policy institutions in engaging the diaspora? What are the areas India needs to focus in the future?

Prof. Rajan: India's diaspora policy, I would say, is still in the nascent stage. While efforts have been made to tap the potential of overseas Indians, a lot remains to be done. State and regional efforts have to be strengthened along with a cohesive national policy on diaspora.

Some recent milestones in the recognition of migrant contributions to the Indian economy and society are as follows: (a) Constituting a High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora to review the status of persons of Indian Origin (POI) and Non-Resident Indians (NRI) on 18 August 2000. (b) Organizing annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas since 2003 to bring Global Indians to one platform and (c) Establishment of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in 2004 by the Government of India. MOIA serves as the nodal point for diaspora engagement, investment, business partnerships, academic exchanges, heritage exploration, and philanthropy between India and its diaspora.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: One of the major issues of developing countries is related to entrepreneurship development. India still has to go a long way to create an environment for entrepreneurship as the political, social and economic factors hinders these to a great extent. Many prospective entrepreneurs who could have played greater role post liberalisation rather find enormous difficulties at home and flourish when they migrate abroad. Do you think the diaspora policy can address this issue?

Prof. Rajan: Yes. As of now, bureaucratic and operational bottlenecks discourage Indians from doing business in their homeland. A policy agenda attentive to diaspora and return emigrant needs will enable skilled and resourceful Indians to employ their entrepreneurial talents within the country. Furthermore, favorable terms on diasporic investments can potentially inject the state economy with renewed vigour.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: Any other important issue you would like to highlight?

Prof. Rajan: The social costs associated with international migration necessitate greater attention in upcoming years. A human rights framework to migration policies is required to extend national protection to valuable overseas workforce. Social effects include changes in family structure, composition and gender roles in the origin communities. The migration of a family member has implications on the health and education outcomes of family left behind, as well as on the relationship with spouse, children and elderly. Health risks and vulnerabilities are also exacerbated with international migration. This 'human dimension' of migration is a vital future direction for policy-relevant research.

Dr. Smita Tiwari: Thank you Prof. Rajan for contributing brilliant ideas and giving your precious time.

Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan is an internationally acclaimed scholar on migration. Presently he is Chair Professor, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), Research Unit on International Migration at the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He has published extensively in national and international journals on social, economic and demographic implications on international migration. He had projects on international migration with European Commission, International Labour Organization, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, International Organization of Migration, United Nations Fund for Population Activities, Migrant Forum in Asia and Rockefeller Foundation. He is also member of the National Migration Policy drafting group appointed by the MOIA. He is editor of the Annual Series India Migration Report brought out by Routledge. He is also editor-in-Chief of the Routledge Journal, Migration and Development launched in 2012.

Call for Papers

India and its Diaspora: A Comparative Perspective
29–30 March 2013, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

In order to shed light on many of these issues, the Centre for African Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University in collaboration with the Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives, New Delhi is organising an international seminar on India and its Diaspora: A Comparative Perspective, to be held on 29–30 March 2013 at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

The seminar will highlight different dimensions of the Indian diaspora, India's policy responses and the linkages between persons of Indian origin abroad and in India. In addition, comparisons between Indians and other diaspora experiences are welcome to further the understanding of possibilities and shortcomings. The seminar will revolve around the following six sub-themes:

Abstracts for papers should be submitted by 1st February 2013. The decision on paper acceptance will be communicated by the organizing committee by 5th of February 2013.

There will be no registration fee. Free boarding during the conference will be provided to all presenters.

There is limited university guest house accommodation facility available for those participants whose full papers are sent by 1st of March 2013. There is no travel support available for participants.

For paper submissions and any further information regarding the seminar please contact Prof. Ajay Dubey at atoffice@diasporastudies.in or chair_cas@mail.jnu.ac.in

For details visit:

<http://www.grfdt.com/EventDetails.aspx?Type=Conferences&TabId=39>

Fellowship

German Marshall Fund of the United States Doctoral Fellowship in the field of migration and integration

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) is offering a three to six-month doctoral fellowship in the field of migration and integration at GMF's headquarters in Washington, DC. The application deadline is February 28, 2013. See details at:

<http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/>

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2013



Source: PIB

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) has been celebrated since 2003 from 7-9 January every year to reconnect and refresh the relation of India with her Diaspora. The three day celebration not only tries to engage the Indian diaspora economically but also culturally. Various business groups often make use of the platform to explore new opportunity for investment or often lobby for their country interest. The event also provides a forum for discussing key issues concerning the Indian Diaspora women issues, land rights, citizenship etc. Many of these forums are also tries to connect with the second and third generation diasporas who have not much access to connect with India. The event also honours Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award to individuals of exceptional merit within the diapora to appreciate their role in India's growth. The President and Prime Minister of India also address the gathering. Here are few highlights of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) during 7-9 January 2013 organised at Kochi, Kerala.

PBD 2013 was conducted in partnership with the Government of Kerala. Kerala has been chosen as the host for the Convention since Keralites constitute one of the largest expatriate communities of India. The purpose of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was to have a meaningful interaction with overseas Indians that would address their issues and concerns.

The diasporas are perceived as people who build bridges between their present homeland and the land of their ancestors. The convention had pre-PBD seminars related to development issues such as skill development, pure sciences, tourism, youth and NRIs in the Gulf and plenary sessions on India's growth: greater opportunities, Overseas Indians: safe environment, Engaging young overseas Indians, and Investment opportunities in States. Eminent scholars, policy experts, political leaders, community leaders were invited to share their ideas and views.

Prime Minister of India emphasises on deepening Diaspora Relations

In the second day of three day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas from 7-9 January 2013 at Kochi, Kerala, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India emphasized the need for deeper relation with diaspora and how the government is keen to promote such relations. He lauded the contribution of diaspora towards Indians development interms of independence movement, democracy and economic growth. "Over the ages, the relationship between Pravasis and Bharat has taken many forms. One of its most glorious manifestations has been their contribution to India's independence movement. Nearly a hundred years ago, almost to this day, Mahatma Gandhi returned to lead a nation's march to freedom. This year, we are celebrating the centenary of the Gadar Movement, which was a luminous spark of support in distant California for the struggle for independence being waged at home in our country", he mentioned. Dr. Singh also

emphasized the continuing links between India and her diaspora especially with the second and third generation diaspora. "Regardless of whether they are successful professionals, traders and entrepreneurs, or second generation Indians, comfortably reconciling their two identities, or workers toiling hard to build a future for their families, they are at all times a most effective window for the world to India's heritage and its progress".

Over the years the Government of India has taken several initiatives towards diaspora. Dr. Singh mentioned that the mother country India has not only taken steps to ensure physical safety but also tries her best for social and emotional well-being of our overseas brethren. In this regards he mentioned that "We have therefore launched an insurance scheme for workers, established welfare funds in our embassies for distressed Indians, and created mechanisms to help vulnerable women abroad. This protection and promotion of the rights and interests of Indian businesses, professionals and workers abroad is also a key task for our Missions in various countries. Our Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements and Social Security Agreements with a number of countries play an important role in this regard" he added. Dr Singh also highlighted the larger issues of the governance and challenges faced by Indian today. He sought diasporas cooperation in overcoming many hurdles.

The youths in India and Indian diaspora should come together to bring social change and justice; Ms. Ruby Dhalla

The second day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas had a Plenary session on "Engaging Young Overseas Indians". The session brought together young achievers from various fields who shared their ideas and strategies on how to create platforms to engage the young achievers in India with 'Pravasi' youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Ruby Dhalla, a Canadian politician, who is considered the first Indian diaspora woman to be elected as a parliamentarian in western world, said that "Indians have succeeded in every corner in the world". Indians have succeeded in the field of politics, business, entertainment and varied other areas, she mentioned.

Quoting Dr. Manmohan Singh, Ms Dhalla said "the greatest capital that the India has is human capital". She said that the future of India is going to be very big as it has a huge young population below 35 years. However, the real challenge is related to provide social justice. She mentioned that the social justice is at stake as there are problems like illiteracy, rapes etc. She called for the collaboration between youths in diaspora and India to bring social change and promote social justice.

She lauded the initiatives taken by the Prime Minister in constituting "Global Advisory Council" which will help the young achievers to contribute better. India Government also successfully initiated "Know India Programme" (KIP) to engage the youths in the diaspora.

She said that the diaspora youths should come to the small towns and rural India for two weeks and contribute and help their people in India. She also explored how social media can be used for mentorship and transferring talents and skills to the young Indians. "Imagine the the future of India that can be changed in a big way with the skills and talents of the young India people below 35 years". "The time has come now to bring the young Indians in India and Diaspora together" she mentioned.

Institutionalisation of Diaspora efforts is necessary for sustainable development of South Asia; Ambassador Gopinath Pillai

Speaking in the plenary session on "Heritage and Diaspora" in the 11th PBD celebration at Kochin, Mr. Gopinath Pillai, Ambassador-at-Large, Singapore mentioned that there is an urgent need for institutionalisation in order to harness the best from the diaspora for the development of South Asia. Mr. Pillai mentioned that there are several scattered efforts by the diasporas but many of them becomes meaningless overtime as there is no continuity.

He mentioned that Indian diaspora today is the largest provider of labour to the entire globe. However, he lamented that most of them do not earn proper income as they have low level of skills and do menial jobs. He said there is a need for

better training for enhancing skills so that many of them can earn better income and contribute better.

He highlighted the need for better cooperation among South Asian diaspora to share knowledge so that they can bring economic integration in South Asian countries and provide peace and harmony in the region. The suspicious, lack of trust and non-cooperation among South Asian countries are biggest challenge today. Diasporas from South Asia do not have such problem. They interact freely and share commonality. Diaspora can integrate them and bring capital, technology and human resources which bring positive changes in the region.

He mentioned that India and PBD can play a greater role in this regards. He also shared that Singapore is going to host a diaspora convention soon and bring together diasporas across the globe to share the possibilities.

Indian and Nigerian Diasporas can learn from each other; Abike D. Erewa

The second day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas had a plenary session on Heritage and Diaspora chaired by Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Government of India in which the speakers shared their ideas on how heritage, the legacy of culture and civilisation binds people of Indian origin across various geographies. There was comparative perspectives on how different diasporas can learn from each other. The session explored diverse elements of Indian heritage and values, including traditional knowledge, and their cultural relevance.

Speaking on the theme Ms. Abike D. Erewa, Chairperson of the Nigerian House of Representatives Committee mentioned that through their diaspora, countries can galvanise better relation with countries they reside. This can happen through forging collaborations and cooperation. This is the second time she attended the PBD and she mentioned that there is a lot more to learn from Indian diaspora. Diasporas also can learn best practices from each other.

She mentioned that India and Nigeria are facing problems like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy in which diaspora can play crucial role. Diaspora cannot forget its source and there is always scope for diaspora to constructively engage with the home country. She mentioned that both Indian and Nigerian diaspora need to collaborate to create a knowledge platform where they can play a better role globally as well as in the home country.

President of India urged NRIs to invest in India

In the concluding day of three day 11th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas organized by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs at Kochi, Kerala, the President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee highlighted the economic potentials of India and urged NRIs to invest. He said that India is the third largest economy in the world on the basis of Purchasing Power Parity basis. It too is the second fastest growing economy after China. He highlighted the contribution of Indian diaspora in economic and social development.

Shri. Mukherjee mentioned about India's response towards diaspora. India has set up a friendly regime to enable Indians abroad to remit money to the country. NRIs can deposit money in the country under the Non Resident External Rupee account scheme, Non Resident Ordinary Rupee account scheme and Foreign Currency Non Resident account Banks scheme. He said that these schemes have been positively responded by the Diaspora resulting in sending remittance of about US\$ 67 billion at the end of October 2012. He said that these figures bear testimony to the fact that Indians abroad find it both emotionally and financially fulfilling to invest in India especially in view of the sound economic fundamentals of the country.

Talking about Kerala diaspora, he said that Non Resident Keralites have been important agents in the State's promotion of sustainable development and socio-economic transformation. Quoting a study by the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, in 2011, he said approximately Rs. 49, 695 crore was remitted by emigrants from Kerala.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards to thirteen eminent overseas Indians from different walks of life and two overseas Indian Societies were given by the President.

We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit Stories, Reviews, Articles, Working papers and other academic notes 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

Note: The list of information about Conferences/Seminars/Call for Papers in this newsletter are compiled from the web-sources and researchers are requested to contact the organizers and cross check the details before sending the abstract/paper and most importantly before registering.