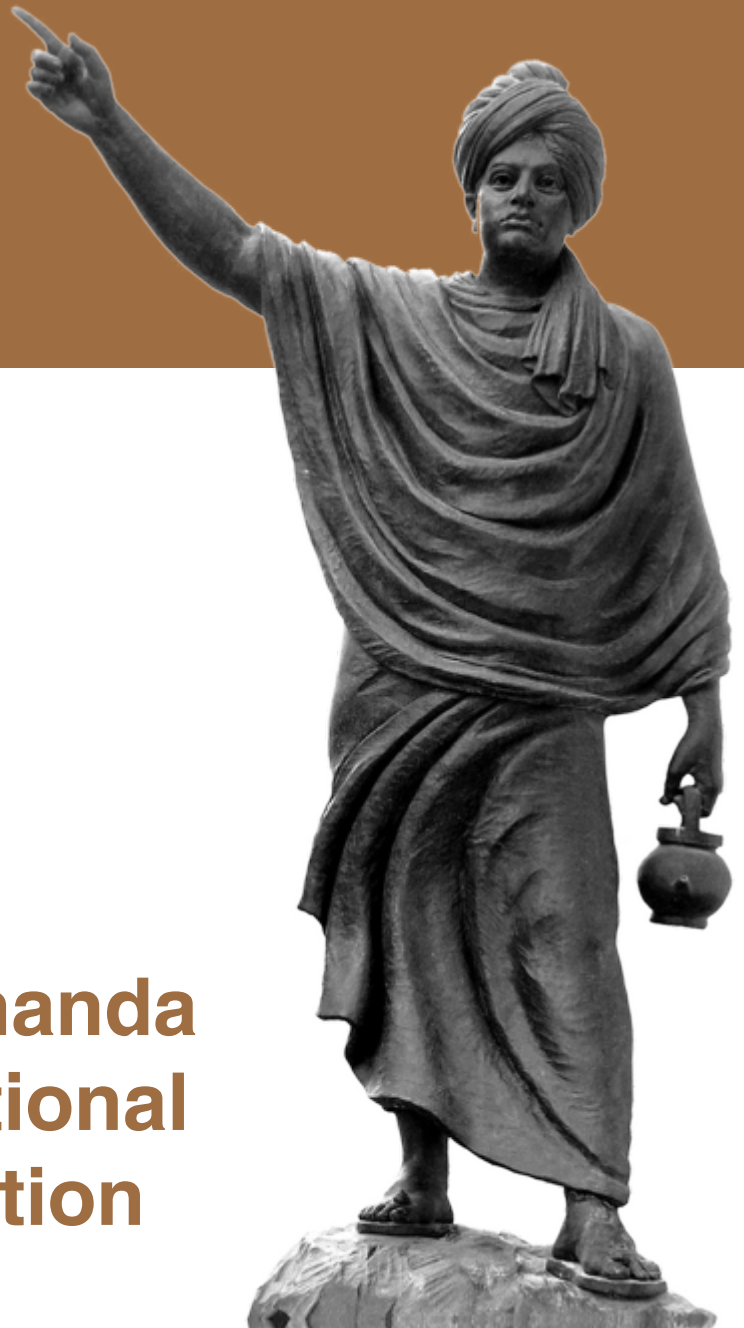


Seeking Harmony in Diversity



**Vivekananda
International
Foundation**

Seeking Harmony in Diversity

Vivekananda International Foundation

Annual Report | 2018-19

ॐ सहनाववतु ।
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु ।
मा विद्विषावहै ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

O Lord! Protect us together,
nurture us together.
May we work together.
May our studies be illuminated.
May we not have discord.
May there be peace, peace and peace.

(Katha Upanishad | Shanti Mantra)

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3, San Martin Marg | Chanakyapuri | New Delhi - 110021
Tel: 011-24121764 | Fax: 011-66173415
E-mail: info@vifindia.org
Website: www.vifindia.org
Follow us on
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Chairman's Foreword



Decennial Year : A Overview and Recall



As Vivekananda International Foundation [VIF] nears the half way point of its decennial year, the VIF team has deemed it fit to look back from this vantage point and revisit the founding mission, aims and goals of VIF and the work it has done thus far, in pursuit of its objectives. The collective wisdom of 'Team VIF' for providing an overview of its activities to the VIF community is manifest in this exercise. The purpose of the exercise is to remind ourselves of the core agenda of the VIF in which philosophy, civilisation and geopolitics converge to identify the strategic ways forward for India and the world.

I. Vivekananda inspires, leads VIF

The emergence of VIF in the Indian strategic thinking space, undoubtedly a landmark event in retrospect, has doubtless brought about a major shift in the character and narrative of strategic and diplomatic discourse in India. And that has also had its due impact in the global arena. The aim and purpose of founding the VIF was to bring about a paradigm shift in the national and global discourse in India, which was constrained by the reservations of contemporary Indian intellectuals with regard to putting forward Indian nationalist and civilisational perspectives, in the national and global strategic domain. The very fact that the charter of the VIF bars foreign donations, bears testimony to how different it wishes to be and how free it wants to be from all exogenous influences, that distort independent national discourse. The underlying philosophy of VIF is explicit, first from the very inclusion of Vivekananda in its name. The Hindu Monk, as Swami Vivekananda was known around the world in his time, emerged as perhaps the most powerful thought giver at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. This was the first original and strategic global effort to initiate a dialogue among religions to seek and establish harmony among them. Vivekananda's concluding plea at the Chicago meet for 'Harmony and Peace' among differing and divergent faiths is manifested in the VIF motto of 'Harmony In Diversity'. The VIF was therefore not conceived to be, and it is rightly not, just another addition to the number of think tanks in India and in this part of the world. That the VIF is unique in its field has been amply demonstrated by the increasing importance it has gained since its inception. Given that the VIF is an endeavour to initiate a paradigm shift in the national and global discourse on strategic and geo-political thinking, it is appropriate, even necessary, to recall, in the decennial year of its birth, its core mission.

Now on to an interesting analysis of where the world stands and what is India's strategic role as the VIF perceives it.

II. End of History? Or Clash of Civilisation?

Since the early 1990s, the world has been torn between two powerful and mutually conflicting ideologies. The first, espouses the growth and homogenisation of the world through democracy and free market -- also known as globalisation -- on which Francis Fukuyama founded his theory of the 'end of history' in 1992. The other is the spectre of violence and conflict, among and along, the fault lines of civilisations and religions that Samuel Huntington diagnosed, and warned against, in his thesis of the clash of civilisations in 1993. Huntington's views on the clash of civilisations surprisingly came the very year after Fukuyama announced, to the joy of the world, the end of conflict. In his end of history exposition, Francis Fukuyama even saw the most unlikely convergence of the Hegelian concept of the perfected state and the Marxian state-free ideal, almost like a

cocktail! But, Huntington's thesis of the conflict of civilisations identified the subterranean and simmering centrifugal civilisational forces underlying the trade and GDP growth numbers that supported Fukuyama's optimism. Huntington's prognosis manifested itself in the stunning terror seen on the TV screens of the world, from time to time since the horrendous 9/11 attack. The emergence of Islamic terror and the wars that inevitably followed, and that are still on, exploded the myth of the end of history of conflicts. While the happenings in the world in early 1990s, offered enough proof for Fukuyama's theory, the happenings since 2001 seemed to testify as much, if not more, to Huntington's thesis and demolished the idealistic assumptions hypothesised by Fukuyama. While Fukuyama wrote his idealistic exposition spurred by the euphoria of the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Huntington founded his thesis on the time-tested historical background of how civilisational and religious forces had worked for centuries and how would they work now in the future. To unravel the totally contrasting and contradicting perspectives of where the world is headed, calls for a deeper look, into what the 20th century world missed out because of the power of contextual ideas, that overshadowed the subterranean and enduring currents of history.

III. Religion "central defining characteristic of civilisation", says Samuel Huntington

Significantly, a full century after the Chicago convention ended with Vivekananda's powerful appeal for harmony among faiths, came Samuel Huntington's reverse thesis of the clash of civilisations in the field of strategic studies. The Chicago meet was centred on religion while Huntington focussed on civilisation. The question naturally arises: Why then juxtapose and relate the religious Chicago meet with Huntington's thesis on civilisation. The answer is that the distinction between religion and civilisation, is no difference. In truth, 'civilisations' in Huntington's thesis is only a euphemism for 'religions'. Unveiling his thesis titled, "Is Clash of Civilisations on?" Huntington wrote: Civilisation identity will be increasingly important in the future, and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilisations. These include Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilisation. The most important conflicts of the future will occur along the cultural fault lines separating these civilisations from one another.[1] The geographical references made by Huntington had religious prefixes or suffixes like Western 'Christianity', 'Shinto' Japan in his 1993 paper, as well as in its expansive form in the book, 'Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order', that came out in 1996. Huntington wrote in his book, "Human history is the history of civilisations"[2] and "To a very large degree major civilisations in human history have been closely identified with world's great religions; and people who share ethnicity and language but differ in religion may slaughter each other, as it happened in Lebanon, former Yugoslavia and the Subcontinent." [3] He also quoted Christopher Dawson who said, "Religion is a central defining characteristic of civilisations and the great religions are the foundation on which the great civilisations rest". Huntington further added, "of Weber's five 'world religions', four -- Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Confucianism -- are associated with major civilisations." [4] The dividing line between religion and civilisation, if any, is thus thin, and very thin. The clash of civilisations is actually powered by conflicts among religions as well. Huntington said, "The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural" concluding, "the clash of civilisations will dominate global politics." [5] Though, provocatively termed as "clash", Huntington's idea was not to promote clashes, but to warn the world about inherent propensity of civilisations and religions to clash and to prevent them from clashing. But the idea of a clash gained more traction in the debate that followed because of the coincidental rise of Islamic terrorism which accentuated the latter.

IV. Civilisation narrative missing in pre-Huntington 20th century strategic discourse

The clash of religions and civilisations had been an ongoing phenomenon, since the dawn of history. And there is nothing new about this. Two questions arise at this point. Why do religions clash? And why the world in the 20th century undermined their propensity and potential for clash? Answering the first, religions which claim to be the only true ones do have an inherent propensity to clash. Vivekananda diagnosed the propensity of exclusive religions for conflict and, in the 1893 Chicago meet, he pleaded for an end to bloody clashes that such religions had fomented in the past. In his 1993, paper Huntington foresaw the return of clashes and said that

"tribal wars and ethnic conflicts will occur within civilisations". The whole 20th century had passed, between Vivekananda's time and Huntington's. Did the propensity of faiths, cultures and religions to clash disappear in the 20th century? No. Neither the clash of faiths, nor did their propensity and potential for clash disappear in this period. Yet religious and civilisational concerns disappeared from the global and political domain thanks to the shift from an emphasis on religion to an emphasis on ideology in the 20th century and also due to the momentous developments in industry, trade and commerce that engaged the best human minds in current affairs, overlooking the durable subterranean currents of history.

The 20th century ideas of economic growth, individual liberty, human rights and individualism which shaped contemporary modern western civilisation, were marketed to the rest of the world through western universalism. As Huntington observed in his clash theory, Western universalism itself has become the fault line for the conflict between the West and the Rest.[6] Huntington's theory of the return of civilisation -- read religion -- consciousness also seems to be in alignment with Max Weber's view that the demystification or secularisation of the world brought about by enlightenment and science, is a dialectic process of discovering what is true by considering the opposite theories, and not a linear one. Weber's view is: Science inadequately fills the vacuum left by the diminishment of religion. Science may be able to clarify questions of values and morals, but it is ultimately incapable of answering them. However, a return to old-style religion is also an inferior solution, for that would represent a withdrawal into the obsolete and unfounded beliefs of the past.

The inadequacy of both science and religion creates a fundamental impasse in the modern world. During World War II the philosophers Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno drew on Weber to point out that science's attempts to disenchant the world resulted only in a kind of return of the repressed: the irrationality that had been squelched by enlightened reason returned in the form of violence and barbarism.[7] There seems to be an unstated, yet, noticeable, alignment between what Weber had diagnosed in the early years of the 20th century and that, which Huntington perceived in the final years of the 20th century. The return of the 'clash of civilisation' diagnosed by Huntington really meant that Weber's warning with regard to the inadequacy of science to answer humankind's questions on values and morals, was not heeded by the West. As a result the West and therefore the world which had looked up to the West, for a whole century, lost their appetite for the civilisational menu, thus losing a whole century for re-evaluating and creating a narrative on how to position religions and civilisations in the emerging new world.

V. Privatisation of religion: Collective Civilisational Identity vs Secular Individualist Democracy

The most proximate reason for the lack of religious and civilisational consciousness in the 20th century world establishment was that it had confined and relegated religion to the personal domain, eliminating it from public space and assumed that the job was neatly accomplished by privatisation of religion. The political and intellectual assumption that religion could be confined to the personal domain was based on the intra-Christendom experience, where the Christian secular state had a deal with the organised Christian Church who would have their domain over the worldly public space, in a secular state that was also inherently Christian. The intra-Christian arrangement was fit for a mono-religious society, but not appropriate for multi-religious societies. The intra-Christendom's experience of a secular truce between the Christian state and the Christian church cannot be transplanted into a multi-religious society which requires a distinct philosophical premise and different working model.

In a sense, the western establishment's premise that religion was just a personal affair was partly pretence. Because the West knew that in theological and practical terms Christianity was organised under the Church and was congregational, evangelical, even proselytising other faiths into Christianity, mandated by a text that was inerrant, by a belief system that is unquestioned and by an organisational structure that was powerful. Practically, Abrahamic religions, which are premised on not individual but collective salvation, will lose their collective goal, if they are not allowed to, and do not, collectivise their followers. The secular states merely pretend that their public law prevails over the privatised faiths, that were more organised and least private. Even the most modern secular states have been unable to prevent collectivising the power of religion.

The reason is that while constitutional religious freedom is personal, the practice of it by the adherents of faiths is collective. The individual is an inseparable part of the collective identity. Like religion, civilisation too is a collective idea and identity. And more, the use of the term civilisational, commands actually greater acceptability, even respect, in the public domain than religion in modern times, even though there is very little difference between religion and civilisation. Religion, culture and civilisation are all overlapping collective identities. That is why Huntington premised his work on civilisation with religion as its central defining characteristic.

VI. The dilemma of the contemporary West -- with the presence of immigrants

It follows that contemporary civilisations rooted in traditional religions play a critical role in the lives of billions of people. Anything that constitutes collective power is bound to impact the relations between peoples and nations. That is the very premise of Huntington's thesis. In popular democracies, the state power has to seek the mandate of the people from election to election. Consequently, the collective of religion and civilisation inevitably influence the functioning of the democratic state. Shortly put, while democracy operates on individualism, religion and civilisation rest on collectivism. This did not matter so long as the Western societies were a Christian monogamy. But with the ongoing problems of immigration, the West is now coming face to face with a multi-religious landscape in its own polity where the immigrants, organised on religious and civilisational lines, are asserting their collective identity and rights. So long as the West was mono-religious these problems did not arise. Now western polity faces the dilemma of the contradiction between their hitherto held assumption that religion is personal and the reality that it is not, which is leading to the rise of right wing in the West to protect the Christian civilisation and culture against the collective power of the immigrants. The far-right forces in the West strategically use the terms 'culture' and 'civilisation' which have greater legitimacy in secular public discourse and are politically more correct than the religion in which they are rooted. "Hungary's far-right prime minister, Viktor Orbán, has cited the need to protect his country's "Christian culture" to justify his anti-immigration policies." [8] Hungary is not just an anecdote. It seems to be the emerging model. According to a BBC report dated May 24, 2019 right wing parties are rising in 17 countries in Europe, garnering more than 25 per cent votes in three of them and between 17 and 24 per cent votes in five of them. [9]

The critical dimensions of these collective human propensities need to be studied, understood and integrated with geopolitical and strategic thinking particularly in, and by democracies, which are hugely impacted by mass mobilisations in the name of religion, culture or civilisation. Collective action by any non-state actors need to be studied in depth in the strategic domain. Collectivised faiths, cultures, civilisations impacting on human behaviour have the propensity and potential for peace and conflict and therefore concern national security and geo-politics and economics.

VII. Late 20th Century Transition from a World defined by ideology to a World defined by Civilisation

The geopolitical reason for the absence of civilisational consciousness through the 20th century was the domination of ideologies that emerged in the 19th century and dominated the 20th century. World War II destroyed facism and Nazism but communism as an ideology survived till the end of the Cold War. An important element of Huntington's thesis is that the 20th century marks a transition from a world defined by ideology, to a world defined by civilisation and religion. Huntington expounded and explained his thesis of transition in practical terms on the ground thus: "With the Cold War over, cultural commonalities increasingly overcame ideological differences" [10] "the end of ideologically defined states, states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union permits traditional ethnic identifies and animosities to come to the fore"; the fault lines between civilisations are replacing the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War as flashpoints for crisis and bloodshed." [11] The Ideological disposition and over drive of the Western world had driven religion and civilisational consciousness underground for a whole century, only for the underground forces to emerge over ground and re-manifest a century later.

VIII. Huntington's Clash Theory shook the world to Civilisation as Reality

The net output of Huntington's work was that the clash theory shook the world out of its slumber and forced intense debate on a subject that it had almost forgotten for a century. On the 20th anniversary of Huntington's article the *Foreign Affairs* magazine wrote: "A good way to measure the power of a theory is to look at the scale and intensity and quality of the debate it provokes; on those grounds, "Clash" is one of the most powerful theoretical contributions in recent generations".[12] Without doubt, the Huntington thesis generated a huge debate that reinstated the civilisational narrative, lost in the global geo-political and strategic discourse throughout the 20th century and all over the world, except India. 'Except India' is important and that needs to be, and is explained later. Significantly, the global debate on Huntington's thesis, while dealing with the centrifugal idea of clash of civilisations and religions did not at all reference the World Parliament of Religions as a strategic dialogue for resolving divisions among religions and civilisations. In a global clash of civilisation and religion, the omission of a far-reaching and momentous global event, for conflict avoidance is really a surprising intellectual failure.

IX. Vivekananda's call in 1893, Huntington's prognosis in 1993

Despite their respective expositions being separated by a whole century Vivekananda's call against bigotry in 1893 has a clear relevance to Huntington's prognosis of the clash in 1993, the cause of which again, is bigotry. Huntington recalled the past clashes and merely warned against their replay. But in his presentation at the Chicago meet and in his later expositions throughout his tour of the US and the West, Vivekananda, who expounded the non-conflicting Hinduism, not only recalled the clashes but unveiled a conflict avoidance mechanism that India had incubated and practised for millennia. Recalling the barbaric violence in the history of religions in his final speech at the meet on September 27, 1893 Vivekananda told the august gathering of enlightened men:

Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation, and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal. [13]

If this was what Vivekananda said in 1893 of a world that had suffered religious hate for the past many millennia; a century later, in 1993 Huntington prognosticated in almost the same words, the return of the very centrifugal forces of violence, which Vivekananda had pleaded that all religions should work to bury, and warned the world against. Huntington wrote:

Fault line wars are off-again-on-again wars that can flame into massive violence and then sputter down into low intensity warfare or sullen hostility only to flame up once again. The fires of communal identity and hatred are rarely totally extinguished except through genocide. As a result of their protracted character, fault line wars, like other communal wars, tend to produce large number of deaths and refugees.[14]

They also tend to be vicious and bloody, since fundamental issues of identity are at stake... Decisive military victory by onside in an identity civil war, on the other hand, increases the likelihood of genocide".[15]

Huntington feared that the bloody wars of the past that Vivekananda had spoken of, would re-manifest and return in future. But Vivekananda turned the World Parliament of Religions and his numerous addresses to the West into an effort to avoid the clashes, Huntington prognosticated a full hundred years later. Vivekananda suggested solutions to the problem of massive violence that Huntington saw re-manifesting. The world today

undoubtedly faces what Huntington had warned against. And it needs to debate the solution suggested by Vivekananda as strategic conflict avoidance model to save the world.

X. Hans Kung revives in 1991 what Vivekananda had said in 1893 -- dialogue and criticism

Vivekananda's views at the World Parliament of Religions have become relevant because he turned the Chicago meet into a platform for a mutual exchange and a critique of religions which is the ancient Hindu-Buddhist way to handle religious differences. The ancient Indian way was to avoid conflicts, before they arise and not attempt to resolve them after allowing them to manifest and entrench. The Indian conflict avoidance model was dialogue with the opposite view, and not physically battle with it. The Indian dialogue model with the opposite view was known as 'Purva Paksha' in the ancient Indian *Tarka Sastra*. 'Purva Paksha' postulates three steps to dialogue. First, each side studies the other's view and critiques it. Next, they argue it out to find any scope for agreement and agree. Three, if there is no scope for agreement, then they agree to disagree.

Vivekananda employed the 'Purva Paksha' logic when he indirectly criticised (at the Chicago meet and directly in his addresses to the West) the Abrahamic faiths which claimed exclusive validity, denying validity to other faiths. The 'Purva Paksha' model was traditionally employed to defeat and demolish the opposing view point, but Swami Vivekananda used it to critique the opposing view point to bring home the need for accommodation and understanding. Vivekananda concluding the speech at the World Parliament of Religions implied his accommodative 'Purva Paksha' approach:

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if anyone here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of the religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, 'Brother, yours is an impossible hope....If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension'.[16]

But, in his public lectures in America, Vivekananda was more open and vehement in his criticism of the theology and methods of the Abrahamic faiths bringing to the fore the Indian idea of 'Purva Paksha' concept of criticism and counter criticism. The 'Purva Paksha' logic was common model for Hindu-Buddhist dialogue in India.[17]

Significantly, a century after Vivekananda's Chicago address and a couple of years before Huntington expounded his frightening thesis, a highly regarded Catholic Christian theologian Hans Kung virtually revived the debate that Vivekananda had pleaded for in 1893. This was a powerful development from within the Catholic Church, which went practically unnoticed in the strategic domain, much like how Vivekananda's strategic plea for harmony among faiths in 1893 too was not noticed. Hans Kung put forward a realistic formulation for conflict avoidance, similar to the Indian model of 'Purva Paksha', though in different words. Kung formulated, brilliantly:

No peace among the nations without peace among the religions.

No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions.

No dialogue between the religions without research into the foundations of the religions.[18]

Hans Kung's suggestion was founded on two premises. One, the propensity of religions to clash, calls for a dialogue among religions to ensure peace among them. Two, the necessity for a dialogue among religions, with research into their fundamentals. The last part of Kung's formulation incorporates the ancient Indian idea of 'Purva Paksha'. Kung's formulation comes close to Vivekananda's view. The extremism in the foundations or fundamentals of faiths which Vivekananda saw, and protested against in 1893, is precisely what Hans Kung says

should be researched. In recommending that the fundamentals of all faiths must be researched, Hans Kung has actually started from where Vivekananda had left off in 1893 by calling for the examining of the fundamental of all faiths, as part of dialogue among faiths. Without referring to the Chicago meet or Vivekananda, Hans Kung, who theorised and postulated peace among religions as a precondition for peace among nations, has reinstated Vivekananda's appeal for peace among religions, to avoid the violent conflicts Huntington has warned against. If what a high theologian like Hans Kung says is any indication, there is urgent need for inter-religion dialogue.

XI. The Chicago Fundamentalism Project – a major initiative ahead of Hans Kung

The critical part of Hans Kung's formulation is that there should be a study of the foundations of the religions i.e. research into the fundamentals of religions. It is the unstudied and unquestioned religious fundamentalism that is the cause of intolerance and violence. In the late 1980s, a few years before Hans Kung unveiled his formulation, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences had instituted "The Fundamentalism Project" to research and study the phenomenon of religious fundamentalism -- precisely the kind of work that Hans Kung advocated. The Project manned by scholars from all world religions, lasted from 1987 to 1995, and yielded five volumes running into over 3500 pages. That is to date the only substantial study on religious fundamentalism. Martin E Marty, an Ordained Lutheran Pastor and a well-known Christian theologian and R Scott Appleby, an acknowledged Christian scholar, headed the Project as Project Editors. In their concluding essay in the very first of the five volumes titled "Fundamentalism Observed", Martin Marty and Scott Appleby wrote:

Some traits of fundamentalism examined here are more accurately attributable to the "People of the Book", Jews, Christians, and Muslims, than to their first, or distant cousins in the fundamentalist family: Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Confucians.[19]

Why are the fundamentalist traits of the Abrahamic religions absent in Eastern faiths? The Fundamentalism Project itself answers this query thus:

Sacred texts do not play the same constitutive role in South Asian and Far Eastern traditions as they do in Abrahamic faiths.....both to intensify missionary efforts and to justify extremism.[20]

The Fundamentalism Project makes a hitherto undebated and critical distinction between Abrahamic faiths which, because of their texts, believed to be inerrant, have fundamentalist propensities and potential while, Eastern Faiths [with no such text] do not have such propensities and potential. This distinction is essential to unravel and understand the difference between them. While all religions have the same goal of human salvation, all Abrahamic faiths believe that salvation can only be attained through its prescriptions. Therefore, the methods of Abrahamic faiths are drastically different from that of Eastern faiths. The Fundamentalism Project finds that Abrahamic Texts play a constitutive role in their faiths which enable them to intensify missionary efforts and also to justify extremism. It is this fundamentalism driven extremism that Vivekananda criticised in Chicago and now Hans Kung wants examined and debated.

XII. Vivekananda as answer to the contrasting dualism of Fukuyama and Huntington

The dualistic tussle between the contrasting ideas of peace and harmony through prosperity, expounded by Francis Fukuyama and the conflicts and wars of civilisations theorised by Samuel Huntington, needs to be understood in detail. Human beings are prone to conflict in the material domain and that is why they need spiritual or religious training to avoid and resolve their conflicts. On the material plane, greater economic power can be as much a source of conflict as it can also be a cause for peace depending on the balance maintained by a thought system between the conflicting dualistic ideas of materialism and spiritualism. Indian philosophy has an answer to this perplexing dualism, because it has achieved a balance between spiritualism and materialism. India had a strong economy and a peaceful society. India was the world's economic leader for the first 17 centuries in the CE with over a share of quarter of world's GDP.[21] Moreover this prosperous India was also equally peaceful. An in-depth study by Prof RJ Rummel of Hawaii University in *Democide* finds that till the 13th century [when India became the target of Islamic invaders] there were virtually no mass killings in India.[22] This

testifies to the fact that India was not only a successful economy but an equally peaceful society. It is only an enduring civilisation such as India, which has seen numerous ups and downs and yet survived and revived, that can supply solutions for a world torn between Fukuyama's world view and that of Huntington's.

There has never been a one-sided pull or movement in history in the philosophic perspective and practical experience of a successful and peaceful India. The world, in Indian understanding, runs on contrarian dualistic pulls. Applying the Indian philosophical prescription to the current dualistic world, neither Fukuyama, nor Huntington can be entirely right. The conclusion is self-evident. Both the Fukuyama world and the Huntington world will co-exist. Therefore, Huntington's understanding that identities of civilisation and religion will be key for handling the future world, cannot be ignored by trusting the Fukuyama view of a peaceful world with end of all conflicts. Nor can it be the other way round.

With religion and civilisation thus becoming integral to strategic discourse, the main object and thrust of the VIF has been to include the critical civilisational national narrative into the understanding and the dialogue on strategic, diplomatic and security issues, and from that perspective to find answers for the many vexed issues that tax and torment India, its neighbourhood and the world. Soft India's willingness to pursue hard power since 1998, its human resources attracting global attention for their brain power as manifest in their technological performance, its economy continuously posting higher and higher growth, and its continued efforts to acquire comprehensive national power -- all cumulatively testify to India emerging as a global power. It was in this context that the VIF emerged as a nation-centric think tank with an alternative national and global paradigm, philosophy and action.

The founding premise of VIF can be traced back to Vivekananda's appeal to the world to avoid conflict. It seeks to suggest that the world should look at the non-conflict Indian model of not just tolerating, but accepting diversity as the very law of nature, to find answers to the history of the ongoing bloody conflicts, which, as Huntington has prognosticated, will not cease, but on the contrary, would intensify. The VIF therefore sees and seeks in Vivekananda's philosophy, answers to the conflict syndrome built by Huntington, transcending the view of Fukuyama that democracy and economic growth would end all conflicts. But that requires a re-assertion of civilisation-consciousness in the Indian public and strategic discourse and that is where the challenge lies - as also the opportunity.

While Huntington largely devoted himself to the cause and consequences of the 'clash' he did not really focus on how to avoid the 'clash'. In fact any avoidance of a transparent dialogue on religious differences as per the Hans Kung model only leads to clashes, and the lack of peace among religions, and therefore nations. To re-phrase Hans Kung in simple terms, if religions do not debate their differences in public, their followers will settle them in the streets. Inter-religious dialogue is essentially a Hindu-Buddhist civilisational virtue and not a highly preferred attribute of the Abrahamic faiths. And that is where Hans Kung broke new ground in the Church, in the time tested old way of ancient India. The VIF initiative of *Samvad* [See Para XXI infra], i.e. dialogue, is founded on this premise.

XIII. Indian strategic thinking lacks a civilisational narrative, even after Huntington, Hans Kung and Fundamentalism Project – Why?

The advent of VIF proved particularly timely as India began moving from the sidelines to the high table of global institutions, a shift that was overdue for over half a century. India, home to a sixth of humanity, has for long after it attained freedom, needlessly reduced itself to being the receiver and consumer of exogenous ideas that originated or were generated from the outside. This loss of original thinking was a result of the absence of intellectual effort to draw from its own reservoir of great thoughts and contribute its original perspective of 'harmony in diversity' to a world that had been compulsorily driven by, the now out-dated homogenisation agenda for centuries. If any philosophy has encompassed the whole of humanity, ignoring and transcending all differences and divides, accepting all faiths and ways of life without disturbing them and without being judgemental about them, it is the ancient Hindu philosophy. Yet it is the very non-conflicting civilisational

element of India so necessary for world peace and harmony, that has been kept under the strategic thought radar of India and therefore the world. The stunning proof of how it happened is given below.

The Hindu religious and civilisational stream stood excluded from the knowledge gathering mission undertaken by Samuel Huntington, after he shook the world with his paper in 1993. In the preface to his book the *Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order* in 1996 Samuel Huntington said that in his follow up travels after his 1993 paper he:

...became involved in innumerable seminars and meetings focused on "the clash" with academic, government, business, and other groups across the United States. In addition, I was fortunate to be able to participate in discussions of the article and its thesis in many other countries, including Argentina, Belgium, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Korea, Japan, Luxembourg, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Taiwan. These discussions exposed me to all the major civilisations except Hinduism, and I benefitted immensely from the insights and perspectives of the participants in these discussions... [23]

One can't miss the words 'except Hinduism' in Huntington's preface. It exposes the hard fact that the only country he did not travel to was India and the only religion and civilisation, Hinduism, which could have introduced him to a conflict avoidance paradigm in living form he remained unaware of. Obviously he could not and would not acquire any understanding or experience of Hinduism from any other country. The result: Huntington remained unaware of the non-conflicting character of Hindu civilisation which might have made him understand that there is indeed a thought system which accepts all other faiths and, in fundamentals, is totally non-conflicting with any thought system. In his discourse in his 1993 paper and his 1996 book, Huntington reveals a total lack of any awareness of the Hindu religion or civilisation which accepts all faiths and way of life as legitimate. He founded his thesis only on the basis of religions and civilisations which do not accept others as legitimate and placed Hinduism in the same category.

XIV. No attempt at a civilisational narrative for India, even post Huntington

The absence of a civilisational narrative in the Indian strategic discourse within and outside continued even after the civilisational stimulus in global affairs as the world entered the third millennium -- when Huntington happened to visit India to give lectures on his thesis of clashes, but not to understand Hinduism. Every significant nation with rising global stature, except India, has gone back to its civilisational roots to identify, build and present its civilisational narrative to the world. As China rose, Chinese rebranded and enthroned Confucius. Confucius was dethroned in early 20th century as China was forced to open its doors to the outside world.[24] But as China began rising, it unveiled neo Confucianism in 2005 as its civilisational identity and the future path of China's strategic intellectualism.[25] China gradually returned to and massified neo Confucianism into a global movement and by 2017, had established a total of 516 Confucius Institutes and 1,076 Confucius Classrooms in 142 countries and regions, according to the Confucius Institute Headquarters.[26] China is reinstating neo Confucian institutes as symbols of Chinese soft power and a civilisational platform, for the world to understand China and for China to deal with the world through the philosophy of its ancient thought giver.

One does not need a seer to get an answer as to why any such, or similar development, did not occur in Indian strategic discourse. Despite the explosive concept of the clash of civilisations being intensely discussed all over the world, the debate was totally, yes totally, absent in India, even as Huntington who promoted the global debate was blatantly ignorant of what lay at the core of Hindu civilisation. Despite Indians being civilisationally, culturally and religiously highly conscious, no Indian think tank, university or any other body thought of entering into a dialogue or discussion on this civilisational paradigm, or on the clash among religions and civilisations. Therefore no one in India thought of inviting Samuel Huntington who was on a knowledge-gathering mission, after he wrote this 1993 article and before writing his book, when every other country, including even an irreligious country like China and an Islamic fundamentalist like Saudi Arabia, had invited him and presented their civilisational and religious perspectives to him. It is shocking and utter failure in the history of Indian strategic discourse. The result was that at the most important and critical juncture in global strategic thinking that

advocated a civilisational focus in the global polity, the civilisation of one-sixth of humanity did not find any place at all.

Why was it that the intense and explosive debate that Huntington's thesis generated all over the world, including Asian countries like China, Japan and Taiwan did not find an echo in India? Firstly, because the elements of Indic faiths, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism and their culture and civilisation have been absent in Indian strategic thinking space itself. Second an institution like VIF was not around at that time. Had it been so, the living Indian civilisational perspective would have found its due place in contemporary strategic civilisational discourse in full measure. That would also have made Huntington aware of the living Indian civilisation which has conflict avoidance as its core message in a world in which Huntington saw only a propensity for bloody conflicts. The *raison d'être* of VIF therefore is to expound the civilisational narrative missing in the Indian strategic domain, and its civilisation identity both within and outside. In more than one sense the VIF is the first and only institutional initiative that has recalled and introduced the Indian civilisational element in the Indian strategic discourse. VIF is the answer to the question why Samuel Huntington, who identified China and Japan as civilisation states, left India undescribed and in a way, even unnoticed, on the civilisational platform of the world.

XV. India and China Civilisation Nation-States

There is a civilisational link and identity for all ancient nations and people. Speaking of nation states and civilisation, Samuel Huntington says, 'At one extreme a civilisation and a political entity may coincide. China, Lucian Pye has commented, is "a civilisation pretending to be a state" Japan is a civilisation state. Most civilisations have more than one political entity." Since Huntington admittedly did not study the Hindu civilisation, he did not or could not, comment on the civilisational disposition of the Indian nation or state, even though the size of India could not have been missed by him. But in a seminal essay on the 25th anniversary of Huntington's clash theory, on the "Civilisational Perspectives in International Relations and Contemporary China-India Relations" [which is also the title of the author's PhD thesis] Ravi Dutt Bajpai says:

China and India: 'Civilisation-States'

The process of modern nation-state formation in the Westphalian order ignored various pre-modern and non-European models of the state and the existence of dynamic societies like China and India. A 'civilisation-state' can be considered a political configuration similar to a 'nation state'; however, while civilisations may be considered 'imagined communities' they are not represented by governments and additionally they do not have formal representatives (Bettiza 2014, 14). Civilisations are made up of ethnic groups who share a common geographic locus and a common set of values with a shared history, shared culture, and shared socio-political institutions. A civilisation may be seen as a conglomeration of a variety of peoples or ethnic groups, continuation from ancient periods, social and cultural practices and also vast spaces (Wei 2012). In such a formulation, civilisation can be interpreted as an enlarged 'nation-state'. As a comparative example, Europe with an assortment of cultures, religions, ethnic groups, languages and vernacular diversity, can be considered one civilisation, and in this context both modern India and modern China can be perceived as civilisation-states (Jacques 2012).[27]

Why India should also be regarded as a civilisation-state like China, is a huge story that draws upon a spiritual and cultural tradition dating back to where history dares not easily pierce. But it needs to be captured here in brief and understood. India is civilisationally more cohesive, harmonious and continuous and founded on harmony in diversity and therefore has had very few civilisational clashes within unlike China.

XVI. A civilisational nationalist narrative for India -- testimony from ancient literature for the Indian civilisation state

The Indian civilisation as a state identity is more firmly established than that of even Japan and China. The Indian civilisation-state identity has evolved because of the people and not the state. If the term 'Rashtra'

[nation] figures in any ancient text it is in the *Rg Veda* which is at least 5000 years old. 'Rashtra' also figures in the *Atharvaveda*: the earth is termed the Mother and invoked to impart strength and energy to the 'Rashtra'. The *Agnipurana* holds that the 'Rashtra' is the most important of all the elements that make up a state.[28]

If there is any defined geography with cultural, civilisational religious links across millennia which continues to exist even today, it is India, which was known more than three millennia ago as *Bharatvarsha*. The *Mahabharata* [which dates back to C8-9 BCE] speaks of Bharat as *Bharatvarsha*. If there is any living country which has been physically and demographically described in detail in any ancient literature going back 3000 years, it is India, that is, Bharat. It has been identified as Bharat or *Bharatvarsha*, its boundaries specified and its people described as Bharatiyas. For example:

- Vishnu Purana [C7 BCE to C9 CE] describes Bharatvarsha:

उत्तरं यत्समुद्रस्यः हिमाद्रेश्चैव दक्षिणम् । वर्षं तद् भारतं नामः भारती यत्र संततिः ॥

The country (varṣam) that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bhāratam; there dwell the descendants of Bharata.[29]

- Barhaspatya Sutras from the final centuries of BCE describes Bharat thus:

हिमालयं समारभ्यः यावत् इंदु सरोवरं । तं देवनिर्मितं देशं हिंदुस्थानं प्रचक्षते॥

Starting from Himalayas and extending upto the Indian Ocean is the nation built by Gods, Hindusthan. [30]

- In the Bhoomiparva part of Bhishma Parva of the *Mahabharata*, which dates back to 8-9 BCE [31], addresses King Dhritrashtra, as the one belonging to the Bharata dynasty, referring to the geographical area called Bhaaratavarsha.[32]
- Likewise the *Garuda Purana* [BCE 1C], *Markandeya Purana* [250 BCE-550CE] *Skanda Purana* [800CE] *Vayu Purana* [1100CE] *Brimmānda Purana* [400CE] *Linga Purana* [500CE] *Shiva Purana* [10-11C CE] *Kurma Purana* [800BCE] *Bhavishya Purana* [5C CE] *Padma Purana* [5-15C CE] *Narada Purana* [16-17C CE] describe the geography, people, rivers and mountains of *Bharatvarsha*.[33]
- The *Brahmānda Purana* captures not only the cultural unity but also the political unity of *Bharatvarsha*. It describes not only *Bharatvarsha* but also the continents and sub-continents of the world. In Chapter 15 it describes the geography of the earth as well as *Jamudvipa*. The *Brahmānda Purana* is specific about even the size of the subcontinent [of Bharat(a)] as extending a thousand Yojana (1 yojana = 12 km) north-south, from the source of the river Ganga to Cape Comorin [Kanyakumari]. The obliquely (i.e. the breadth) northern part is nine thousand Yojanas and, "All around in the bordering regions the subcontinent is colonised by Mlecchas (barbarous tribes)". It further adds that the , "Kiratas live on the Eastern border lands and the Yavanas in the Western border lands" Describing the people of *Bharatvarsha*, in chapter 16, it says: This is a mysterious subcontinent in the middle of the universe where the fruits of Karma are enjoyed whether auspicious or inauspicious. This subcontinent that is to the north of the ocean and to the south of Himavan [Himalayas] is called Bharata and its subjects are Bharati [pertaining to Bharat]...The Purana says that the subcontinent is divided into 9 divisions. The ninth division is an island surrounded by seas, which the Purana says, is oblique in shape [description fits Sri Lanka]. The Purana says that he who conquers it completely is termed *Samrat* or *Chakravartin* [Emperor][34] A king who conquers the ninth division mentioned in *Brahmānda Purana*, becomes known as an emperor or *Samrat*. This is perhaps why Ashoka was called the *Samrat* as he had conquered Sri Lanka. The concept of *Samrat* or *Chakravartin* testifies to the conceptual political unity of India. The concept of state was dynamic, as it depended on the expanse of the empire being co-terminus with the emperor. If there was no *Samrat* the members of the federation would become autonomous units within *Bharatvarsh*. When a *Samrat* or *Chakravartin* emerges the affiliates become part of the federal structure of *Bharatvarsh*. The *Samrat* or *Chakravartin* is the federal head or

constituted the federate Bharatvarsha. All Puranas, particularly the *Brahmanda Purana* dated 400 CE clearly define India as a civilisational state. What emerges from the testimonies of ancient Indian literature is that India has been a civilisation state for millennia.

Never in the history of any nation, geography and people of the pre-nation state disposition of world have there been people whose geography, beliefs and lifestyle has been so continuously and accurately expounded in ancient Indian literature, as the people of the Indian sub-continent. The concept of present-day modern nation-states developed as late as the 18th century, not before. [35] While, in a contemporary sense India as a nation state came into existence later, undoubtedly India has been a civilisational state in continuum for millennia. But it is neither regarded as one, nor does it claim to be one. It is an intriguing story of self-inflicted intellectual confusion, if not utter intellectual failure

XVII. World does not recognise Indian civilisational identity, because India itself did not own its civilisational identity

In the international relations discourse, post Huntington clash period, India is not regarded as a civilisational state because, and only because, Huntington who was not exposed to Hinduism [36], did not discuss India, as a civilisation state, as he discussed China or Japan. Had Huntington got the opportunity to learn about the civilisational narrative of India he would have also positioned India as a civilisation state and the world would have ipso facto regarded India as thus. That India should be regarded as civilisation state has been emphasised by Ravi Dutt Bajpai in his paper:[37]

Although India has not been classified as a 'civilisation-state' in IR discourses, the case for India to be considered a 'civilisation-state' is equally strong based on the attributes such as an uninterrupted history, the size of the geographical area and population, diversity of the demographics and above all the continuity of traditional cultural systems. India was shown as a landmass of hundreds of small to medium princely states rather than one political unit at the advent of the British Empire. On the other hand, it can be claimed that despite the lack of political unity, the cultural similarities among these states made them a part of one broad civilisational collective (Desai 2009).[38]

Why does India not assert its civilisational identity. Ravi Dutt Bajpai again comes up with the answer, which is otherwise most obvious. He says:[39]

Although India's ancient civilisational legacy originates from its Hindu-Buddhist religious beliefs, the constitutional secularism in the Indian polity makes it difficult for the state to flaunt a religious identity. While Indian political leaders have refrained from a public display of its civilisational heritage there has always been a palpable sense of this heritage in the Indian public and policy circles. References to India's ancient civilisational heritage are often made by the ruling elite both for national and international audiences (Michael 2013).[40] Prime Minister Modi's recent policy announcements and speeches are appropriate examples of how he often draws from ancient thinkers and traditions that define 'Indianness'. While India may be reticent to display its civilisational heritage in the international arena, India has never been taciturn about invoking its historically civilisational associations with China.

Because of the distorted and perverted understanding of secularism that called for the rejection of India's past, contemporary India is reluctant about referring to its heritage to assert its civilisational identity. The VIF is an endeavour to overcome the intellectual hiccup that prevents the Indian establishment from owning up to its civilisational past and make conscious efforts to incorporate the Indian civilisational narrative, in the strategic domain.

XVIII. Even Islamic Pakistan owns up its Pre Islamic civilisational identity

Surprisingly despite being formally Islamic, Pakistan's official civilisational narrative has not prevented it from recalling its pre-Islamic cultural and civilisational and even religious past. The official version of the "Cultural Heritage of Pakistan", flaunts its non-Islamic -- in some sense even anti-Islamic -- civilisational past.[41] Even

though it implicitly dilutes Pakistan's claim to Islamic nationhood, the Pakistan government website accepts Takshak a Hindu ancestor, as Pakistan's ancestor and the Mauryas, Guptas, Kushanas, Harshavardhana, Panini and Chanakya as their forefathers. It traces Pakistan's origin to the Indus Valley, the Gandhara, Aryan, and Buddhist culture and traditions; co-opts the Indus Civilisation as "Pakistan's pride", and claims the "bullock-harnessed plough system (that) still prevails in Pakistan" as its legacy asserts that the Indus Valley "urban populace" had a developed "sense of moral honesty, discipline, cleanliness and above all social stratification in which the priests and the mercantile class dominated the society." It holds that Mohanjodaro was "the first planned city in the world", with drainage systems to "separate the clean from polluted water, for the first time seen in the world"; even accepts that the discipline of Mohanjodaro "is derived from the strict practice of meditation (yoga) that was practiced by the elite of the city. It proudly declares that the Gandhara culture [again pre-Islamic, non-Islamic] as "the high water achievement for the people of Pakistan," talks about the Aryans, who, it says, built and lived in villages, and believed in nature gods and says "Aryan conquerors developed their own religion of the Vedas, practiced animal sacrifice and gradually built up tribal kingdoms all over the Indus Valley", states "the most prominent" kingdom built by the Aryans was "that of Gandhara with capitals at Pushkalavati (modern Charsadda) and Taxila, the last being the older capital of Takshaka, the king of serpent worshippers", adding that, "Takshasila (a Sanskrit word, literally translated into Persian as Mari-Qila) survives as "modern Margala". It says that Taxila "became the stronghold of the Aryans, whose great epic book Mahabharata was for the first time recited here"; points out that at "that time Takshasila or Taxila lying on the western side of Margala remained the capital of the Indus land, which was called Sapta-Sindhu (the land of seven rivers) by the Aryans"; mentions "the Aryan village at Hatial mound lying above the pre-Aryan bronze age capital of Takshakas (Serpent worshippers)" and goes on to say the "oldest University of the world was founded at Taxila", where, "the great grammarian Panini, born at the modern village of Lahur in Sawabi District of the Frontier Province" taught his linguistics and grammar, adds that it was on the basis of Panini's "grammar that modern linguistics has been developed"; says that it is from Taxila university that Chandragupta Maurya got his education, who later founded the first sub-continental empire in South Asia."; points out that Chandragupta ; "developed the Mauryan city at Bhir mound in Taxila, where ruled his grandson, Ashoka, twice as governor"; says Ashoka "introduced Buddhism in Gandhara and built the first Buddhist monastery, called Dharmarajika Vihara, at Taxila" and notes, "Ashoka has left behind his rock edicts at two places, one at Mansehra and another at Shahbazgari", written in local language.

The Pakistan government's official version of the cultural heritage of Pakistan could as well be the cultural and civilisational narrative of India.

XIX. Contemporary relevance of Ancient Indian philosophy of harmony in diversity as the Western prescription of One Size Fit All socio-cultural-economic model fails

While Huntington's clash theory only spoke of clashes not solutions for avoiding them, at the Chicago meet on religions and in his subsequent lectures in the US and the West, Vivekananda set out his conflict avoidance formula for religions of the world, which has high contemporary relevance as a conflict avoidance strategy. The huge rise of Asia and its powerful trajectory will make the world civilisationally more sensitive - certainly more than it was at the start of its post war journey. Given that the West is also becoming aware of rising civilisational impulses, all countries will tend to go back to their roots which will make the world truly and legitimately civilisationally diverse. This was the thrust of the three-day long discussion in the United Nations General Assembly in 2013. Surprisingly the representatives of most nations at the UNGA advocated discarding the one-size-fits-all homogenous development model sans national culture and recommended national culture as the core driver of the development model itself. [42] This was a huge U-turn from the homogenising one-size-fits-all agenda based on the western anthropological modernity advocated by the UN itself in 1951.[43] Two world economic bodies -- the G20 and the World Bank -- which had always batted for this model, also agreed with this and said each nation must work out its own development model. The G20 nations said so in 2005 [44] and the World Bank in 2008.[45]

Undoubtedly a 'civilisationally' conscious world is emerging and different civilisations need to co-exist and learn to co-exist. The world does not need legislation and regulation but requires normative standards and role models, for peaceful coexistence. From where will the world learn the norms of co-existence. These can only come from a civilisation that has established norms for coexistence and practiced them in its ancient past, and still does. And that is where the Indian civilisation with its continuity with change over thousands of years, has a lot to offer to the world, the like of which no other country can. The sheer diversity of its bewildering faiths beliefs and cultures, make India more diverse than the rest of the world put together. The more diverse India was within, the more it accepted the diversity from outside.

This was why India consistently accepted people who came from outside as refugees, rejected by violent forces in their own lands. Vivekananda proudly told the world in his opening address at the Chicago meet on September 11, 1893:

I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation.[46]

How could the Indian people accept Jews and Parsis and offer them nurture and protection against physical or religious molestation, with their culture intact. For understanding this unique chapter in world history, one has to understand the ancient civilisational philosophy of the Indian nation and people, with regard to the position and treatment of strangers coming into their society. The Indian civilisation proclaimed that the entire world was one family. That is why it could accept and treat utter strangers -- strange in every aspect -- from language, to religion, to food, to dress along with other aspects of culture -- with respect and compassion.

XX. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam -- world as a family – VIF's strategic civilisational effort

Over several millennia Indian people have professed and practiced the ancient Indian concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, that is, "the world is one family". *Vasudhaiva kutumbakam* is rooted in one of the most ancient texts of India, where modern history dares not peep with any certainty -- the *Maha Upanishad* in the Samaveda dates back to 1500 BCE. The *Maha Upanishad* says:

अयं बन्धुरयंनेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

"The distinction that this person is mine, and this one is not" is made only by the narrow-minded (i.e. the ignorant who are in duality). For those of noble conduct (i.e. who know the Supreme Truth) the whole world is one family (one Unit) [47]

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam was just no high ideal which remained just that, in this ancient country as was proved by the treatment of Jews and Parsis. It worked on the ground through the practice of the high principle of *Atithi Devo Bhava* [revering strangers as Divine] celebrated by *Taittiriya Upanishad* [dated BCE 6th century [48] meaning that strangers who come to a home are like Gods, like one's own parents and teachers. This tradition is prevalent to this day in large parts of India. That is what makes Indian society internally liberal and also weak. Unless a society is internally liberal, it cannot be liberal outside -- definitely not to strangers. That is why contemporary studies on the refugee problem have noted:

India has had an age-old tradition of according humanitarian protection to refugees and asylum seekers. India is a country having a long historical tradition of welcoming refugees from all over the world. Throughout our five thousand year old known history we have always welcomed refugees with open arms and given them a place of honour and dignity in our society. [49]

When every nation has had stringent refugee policies, Indian society has been liberal towards refugees to a fault -- its societal liberalism of welcoming strangers has indeed upset the demography of several border districts of Assam and Bengal, because of infiltration from Bangladesh and has created national security issues.

Because of the security threat faced by Indian society, a real conflict has arisen between its traditional virtues of welcoming strangers and the contemporary reality of infiltrators coming in as refugees. Thanks to this tussle the left and liberals in India are trying to portray the current reservation against accepting refugees as illiberal -- something which is totally wrong. This is where the VIF has stepped in to correct the wrong impression created through a Seminar held in January this year on the theme of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: the relevance of India's ancient thinking to contemporary strategic reality". The seminar while discussing the liberal tradition of India towards outsiders and particularly the diplomatic community, as an element of the soft power of India, also highlighted how this liberal societal virtue has been working against it, both in the past and in contemporary times.

Even as India should be proud of the spiritual and cultural foundations of its humanitarian refugee policy that went so far as to accommodate refugees from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Africa and elsewhere, there is a caveat: there has to be strategic review of India's generous and empathetic refugee treatment culture in the larger interest of national security and defence, as infiltrators masquerading as refugees from Bangladesh, Myanmar and other countries with ideologies that conflict with the liberal Indian civilisation, have been entering the country in large numbers, and with impunity. While our liberal civilisational treatment of refugees should continue, the threats to national security, implicit in the massive acceptance of refugees, with its consequent impact on the demography of a particular geography in India, should be avoided. This calls for a strategic reorientation of our refugee policy. VIF being a strategic think tank ought to present this soft aspect of Indian civilisation with the caveat, that the absence of the "them v us" approach with regard to outsiders has also created huge national security issues in India. The softness became a weakness of the Indian nation and began to pose a national security risk. There is, thus, a clear need to balance the risks to national security with the civilisational virtues of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

XXI. "Samvad" -- the non-conflicting Hindu-Buddhist civilisational alliance -- yet another VIF strategic civilisational approach for relations

Another major strategic civilisational move by the VIF is "Samvad" that brings together two ancient non-conflicting and non-aggressive forces -- the Hindu-Buddhist civilisations -- for the common goals of conflict avoidance and environmental consciousness. This people-to-people initiative is an annual event hosted by the VIF and the Japan Foundation along with other institutions. It focuses on the Hindu-Buddhist philosophical tradition of dialogue as a means of preventing and resolving differences and clashes; adopting "also" in place of "only" and; "conversation" in place of "conversion". [50] This is a major conflict avoidance initiative which prevents conflicts from manifesting, instead of resolving them after they manifest. "Samvad" has been held once in India, twice in Japan and once in Myanmar. "Samvad" has the infinite potential to build a positive civilisational alliance to promote the Asian philosophic concept for conflict avoidance and environmental protection, by leveraging the civilisational values embedded in Hindu- Buddhist thought.

These two initiatives are highlighted among the many others that the VIF has organised, only to highlight the point that the VIF is addressing the absence of civilisational content in strategic thinking, particularly in India, and how a philosophic civilisational approach to strategic issues can become a path breaking idea for a world, ever in search of how to move forward. Another civilisation agenda of the VIF is the "History of Ancient India" project, which will create a proper historical narrative for India.

XXII. The World in search of durable thoughts transcending contextual ideas -- Indian civilisation as the enduring alternative

World history over the past 200 years has shown that the shelf life of different and successive ideologies, which at one time seemed eternal, is becoming progressively shorter. Colonialism lasted for 200 years. Capitalism for 100 years. Communism for 50 years. They have all vanished like ripples on the face of waters after enjoying a few moments of exultant and exuberant dominance and living a wicked national life, as Vivekananda said about the great empires of the world which have vanished off the face of the earth. Now, the foundations

of globalisation which Francis Fukuyama had hailed as having the potential of accomplishing a perfect state have begun to shake within 25 years of their existence. These ideologies, regarded as modern, have been as intolerant as the old civilisational and religious thought systems, from which they emanated. They have overshadowed and even decimated the philosophies, particularly of the peoples and of the geographies in Asia and America, that they exploited and dominated. The world is now searching for a more enduring system that will survive the contextual rise and fall of ideas, that have an increasingly shorter and shorter life.

The Asian, particularly Indian, ideas that were more enduring -- even eternal -- constituted the biggest challenge to the ideas with increasingly shorter lifespans emanating from the West, and ruled the world for centuries, but did not leave a durable mark. The rise of Asia is now posing a challenge to the intellectual domination of the rest by the West. For example China was dominated by the full blooded and violent western communism, that sought to destroy all of China's past, through the Cultural Revolution. Confucianism was at its nadir during the Maoist era. Although Confucianism had already receded into the background, Mao was bent on consigning it to the dustbin of history. In his final years, Mao launched the so-called, "Anti-Lin Biao and Anti-Confucius Campaign. Although the hostility to Confucianism did not altogether end with the death of Mao, Confucianism survived to outlive Maoism. Deng reintroduced the civil service examination, a traditional Confucian concept." [51] Confucian China not only survived communist China, which proved to be just a contextual chapter in China's civilisation, but re-emerged from the shadows and is now being adopted and proclaimed as the civilisational identity of China! This shows that Confucianism is the enduring thought that informs the Chinese psyche, and constitutes the soul of China. The same appears to be the case with India. Many of India's cultural and civilisational ideas that colonialism or the earlier invaders of India or the socialist or perverted secular institutions had thought they had buried, are still intact and their rise, within India and outside, is seen in diverse ways. The rise of India with its well-appreciated soft power, backed by the rise of its hard power and by its efforts to enhance its comprehensive national power, is a great opportunity for Indian thought institutions to contribute to world peace and harmony. The intellectual, moral and spiritual foundation for this agenda was laid by Vivekananda over a century and quarter ago.

XXIII. Builders of VIF

The Decennial year is also a great occasion to recall how the VIF was built and the contribution of those who have made it what it is today.

The VIF would have been a mere brick and concrete structure as many institutions in Delhi are, but for the idealism, national commitment with a global mission of the great men who built up its strategic, diplomatic, defence, security and intellectual expertise, by virtue of their outstanding domain knowledge and integrity.

Mr Ajit Doval, who has become legend in his times, built and led the core group of experts when the VIF was virtually existing hand to mouth. As the founder of VIF and its first director, he led the team from the front, during the most challenging times for India and VIF, and made the institution a credible think tank from where defence, strategic, intelligence, diplomatic institutions of India could access ideas and persons, for the national good. In his time the VIF became the second stop of any strategic, diplomatic or defence official visiting India from abroad. After five years as director of VIF, Doval had to leave for a higher national calling as the National Security Adviser.

His successor General N C Vij, a highly decorated military man, further consolidated the growth and gains made by his predecessor. During his time the VIF developed important global associations. General Vij also expanded the horizons of VIF by organising multiple events, seminars, workshops and exchanges with various foreign nations.

In 2018 at the end of his extended term, General Vij handed over charge to the present director, Dr Arvind Gupta, who has been building and strengthening the most critical dimension of the VIF, its research capability. He is also keenly promoting the civilisation driven strategic thinking, which is the founding concept of VIF. The VIF has a large body of young research scholars today engaged in diverse areas of study.

Vice Admiral KK Nayyar, who has been chairman of the board of trustees of VIF since its inception and a towering personality in the strategic thinking community and in the national capital, left us last year after six decades of yeoman service to the nation and providing sterling leadership to the VIF team. Known for being intensely nationalistic and for his forthright views, he was an omniscient presence in the VIF, guiding and mentoring his colleagues. His loss left a void that is difficult to fill.

This account would be hardly complete without acknowledging the inspirational role played by the Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari [VKK]. The VKK's founder Eknath Ranade's dream of an institution like the VIF was actualised by the present leadership who were *jeevanvratīs*, and whose lives were dedicated to the Indian nation. They have made possible the beautiful building from which the VIF functions now. The VKK whose office bearers are on VIF Board of Trustees play a most significantly positive, moral, and promotional role in the VIF. The VIF team and the VIF community are eternally grateful to them.

The VIF would not have attained its present stature but for the fact that its team consists of a judicious blend of the most talented, committed, and patriotic group of seasoned practitioners from diverse disciplines. Their names appear as part of the Advisory Council. They have all worked in unison and with determination to build this great institution from scratch. We are grateful to each of them for their sterling contribution towards building the capability and brand of VIF.

XXIV. Director's report

The report on the activities of VIF for the year by the Director Arvind Gupta comprehensively deals with the different and diverse aspects of its activities. The several workshops, seminars, lectures and interactions organised by the VIF and the books and papers published have been enumerated in detail. The progress of VIF under Dr Gupta has been phenomenal, with the enhanced and much needed focus on research. There is no need to repeat or add to the contents of the report.

XXV. Charaiveti..Charaiveti..

And finally, there is a verse in the Aitareya Upanishad which says:

The honey bee, by its motion, collects honey, and birds enjoy tasty fruits by constant movement. The sun is revered, by virtue of its constant shining movement; therefore, one should be constantly in motion. Keep moving, keep moving on. [52]

The verse ends with the exhortation *Charaiveti, Charaiveti* – meaning, Move on, Move on. This was one of the favourite aphorisms of DP Mukherji, a Marxist scholar and author who in his short paper "A word to Indian Marxists," expounded the view that Indian thought which was wrongly branded by Marxist thinkers as static, was essentially dynamic. [53]

This is our message for the VIF community -- keep moving, keep moving as we keep doing our duty for the good of the world and for this ancient nation.

*Charaiveti..Charaiveti....*Let us move on, move on.



S. Gurumurthy
Chairman, VIF

June 2019

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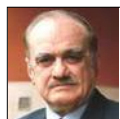


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Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life - think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced.

Others are mere talking machines.

Swami Vivekananda

Director's Preface





The Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), according to its charter, strives to help build a strong and self-reliance India through research, scholarship and dialogue. Guided by Swami Vivekananda's message on harmony in diversity, and self-belief, the VIF seeks to reach out to the youth and public to generate awareness about India's civilisational and cultural heritage, its current problems and future prospects.

Sadly, Vice Admiral KK Nayyar (retd), the founder Chairman of the Vivekananda International Foundation, passed away unexpectedly in September 2018. His guidance has been invaluable for the growth of the VIF as a think tank of substance and repute. We pay homage to the departed soul and condole with the members of his family. The void created by him cannot be filled.

Shri S Gurumurthy, the Vice Chairman of the VIF, took over as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the VIF. He has repeatedly emphasised that the VIF should create an Indian paradigm while thinking about global, regional and national issues.

During the year, the VIF further consolidated its position as a platform for dialogue, conflict resolution and quality research on issues confronting the nation.

The VIF seeks to build an Indian narrative based on India's own culture, heritage and experience; set up interaction with foreign think tanks to build mutual understanding; make an outreach to the public, particularly the youth; and adopt sound research methodology in its work. The VIF lays stress on nationalism, discipline and frugality.

Strategic landscape

During the year the VIF focused intensely on the emerging global, regional and domestic trends. It is becoming increasingly clear that the established international order is under stress and multipolarity is beginning to take shape. A new balance of power is emerging. Technology underpins global economy and security. Information domain is emerging as an arena of information warfare. During the year the eruption of full-blown US-China trade war was a reflection of the deepening strategic rivalry between the two countries. It was also a reflection of the stresses and strains being experienced by the existing international order. As expected, President Trump lived up to his reputation for being unorthodox and unpredictable. He withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), imposed a sanction on Iran and Russia and reached out to the North Korean leader Kim Un Jong despite two failed summits. Britain's exit from Europe, the Brexit, turned out to be a painful and tortuous process with no happy ending in sight. Russia-US relations continued their downward slide despite a Trump-Putin summit meeting. PM Modi clarified India's position on the Indo-Pacific even as QUAD countries remained hesitant in formulating their meeting.

While President Trump remained deeply embroiled in the domestic probe on whether Russia interfered in 2016 Presidential election, the US decided to unilaterally withdraw from the INF treaty with Russia, which had

provided a measure of stability to Europe. Russia enhanced its influence in the Middle East, particularly in Syria where the ISIS was militarily defeated with Russian help. In Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohd Bin Salman emerged as the undisputed leader. A reform-oriented leader, some of his policies were controversial. His efforts were directed at reducing the influence of Iran.

From the Indian perspective, President Trump's decision to launch direct negotiation with the Taliban was a momentous decision which would shape the South Asian landscape significantly, heralding the return of the Taliban to Afghanistan.

The challenge before India is to navigate the turbulent world, emerge as a major power, remain on the growth path and safeguard its national interests. Terrorism continues to pose a threat to India's security.

The regional environment in South Asia remained uncertain. India faced a major security crisis as India-Pak tensions flared up following the terror attack on a CRPF convoy in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir. The attack was claimed by Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed, whose leader Masood Azhar lives in Pakistan. Exercising the right of self-defence, the Indian Air Force launched air strikes on a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist camp in Balakot in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. In response, Pakistan's fighter jets launched an unsuccessful attack on some Indian military establishments.

By launching air strikes against terror camp on Pakistani soil, India heralded a new security doctrine sending out a clear and unambiguous signal that it would not hesitate to target terrorists and terrorist camps in Pakistan to prevent cross-border terror attacks. The international community expressed support and sympathy to the Indian action, while at the same time urged to exercise restraint and not to escalate tension. The FATF decided to keep Pakistan in the grey list of countries for their inability to erect systems to curb terror financing and money laundering.

In India's neighbourhood, elections were held in Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Bangladesh. A political crisis occurred in Sri Lanka where the President dismissed the Wickremasinghe Government. The President's action was deemed unconstitutional by the Sri Lankan Supreme Court. The dismissed government was restored. Elections in the Maldives brought a new government which restored political stability in the country. With the exception of Pakistan, India's relations with the neighbouring countries improved. Meanwhile, China's influence in the neighbourhood continued to increase.

At the time of the writing, India was headed towards general elections. Election season was in full swing with all political parties chalking out their electoral strategies. The ruling party suffered set back in state assembly elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Prime Minister Modi in his numerous speeches outlined the achievements of his government while the opposition parties sought to corner the ruling party on the Rafael Jet fighter deal despite a clean chit by the Supreme Court. Quite often the debate on national issues became contentious with media playing its own role in highlighting the differences. The opposition parties sought to form an alliance against the ruling party. During the Pulwama crisis, all the opposition parties showed solidarity with the government but the unity broke down within a short period. Jobs, GST, demonetisation, autonomy of institutes, Triple Talaq, Sabarimala temple, loan waivers, agriculture distress, Centre-State relations, Ram Mandir became the major issues of debate and discussion in the run-up to the elections.

The Pulwama attack brought out several disturbing trends in the country. The lack of consensus on issues of national interest became apparent. It was a matter of concern that the political parties played politics over national security issues. Questions were raised within and outside the country on the credibility of the India electronic media coverage of sensitive subjects. Social media emerged as a major source of concern in the context of national security and unity of the country.

The VIF activities were conducted in the above global, regional and domestic backdrop with a focus on national interest. Number of publications increased substantially. The VIF website remained active with several new features added. Objective, fact-based research was carried out to generate a policy option on different themes. Our analysis and policy options were shared with the government on a variety of subjects including on the evolving situation in Afghanistan, BIMSTEC, Chabahar port, situation in Myanmar, developments in Indian economy, Indo-US relations, relations with China, elections with Pakistan, situation in Bangladesh, Sino Indian trade, rejuvenating indigenous electronic industry, the role of the Defence Planning Committee, implications of the US withdrawal from JCPOA, India's interests in South Indian Ocean, politico-military decision-making gaming exercise on a hypothetical Sino-Indian faceoff, the use of economic tools to achieve political objectives in Pakistan's context, US-Russia relations, India-Bhutan relations and the China factor, enhancing the effectiveness of Armed Forces etc. These inputs were generated following intense discussion amongst experts.

Several round table discussions, workshops, conferences, seminars and lectures were held during the year. These helped in developing an Indian narrative on issues of national importance. The details are in subsequent sections of this report.

The VIF also hosted a number of foreign delegations including from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, USA, South Korea and Uzbekistan. VIF delegations visited Beijing, Jerusalem, Sydney, Moscow and Tokyo on reciprocal visits. These interactions helped strengthen bilateral relations, enhance mutual understanding and flag Indian positions and concerns.

The scholars maintained substantive outreach with the media and the government. A number of meetings were held with the Indian media. The MEA directed media delegations from China, South Korea, Russia and Africa to the VIF. An Asian Buddhist media conclave was held in the VIF.

Special efforts were made to reach out to the youth. College students visited the VIF regularly for briefings on foreign policies and national security. Swami Vivekananda's messages aimed at instilling a sense of pride in India and nation building were tweeted on a daily basis. Several of the Vimarsh series of lectures focused on the youth.

The VIF website was highly active throughout the year carrying topical commentaries, articles and event reports. Efforts were made to build databases of primary source information.

The VIF made debut in the area of capacity building and learning. Two capsule courses on Indian Strategic Thinking and the essentials of Indian security and foreign policies were organised. One course was attended by students of international relations while the other one was attended by diplomats of 28 countries with embassies in Delhi. Both courses were well-received.

A sharp focus was put on civilisational, cultural and governance issues. Prominent speakers were invited every month to deliver Vimarsh series of public lectures. Inspired by the UN recognition of June 21 as International Yoga Day, the VIF, together with the ICCR and the India Council for Philosophical Research, organised a 2-day seminar on the overarching theme of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* to identify themes from Hindu philosophy and culture which could be relevant for the contemporary world. A number of scholars and experts in Dharma and ancient Indian culture interacted with policy experts and diplomats to find ways and means to project India's soft power. The VIF also participated in the fourth Hindu-Buddhist Samvad meeting in Tokyo. Volumes VI & VII of the VIF's History of Ancient India series were released.

The VIF research activities were stepped up. There was a considerable increase in the number of researched articles, monographs and books published. Details are given in the subsequent sections of the report.

A distinguishing feature of the activities of the VIF this year was the publication of a number of task force reports produced by eminent experts in various areas. These were published and uploaded on the website.

The VIF publications generated a number of innovative ideas, policy options and analyses. A brief description follows:

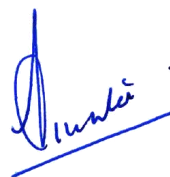
- A report prepared by Gen N C Vij (ret'd) on the newly set-up Defence Planning Committee (DPC) suggested that the DPC should urgently update Raksha Mantri's operational directives, issue a white paper on defence, establish jointness between Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence and ensure that budgetary resources for the requirement of armed forces over the next 10-15 years are provided.
- In his monograph "Employability in India", Partha Pratim Mitra studied the link between employability and skills. He argued that local knowledge of resources is a starting point for development process including skills. The report suggested the need for a separate strategy for skills development in the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected districts.
- A Task Force headed by Vice Admiral Raman Puri (ret'd) examined why India's efforts at indigenisation of defence production have not met with expected success. The Task Force went into the details of the indigenisation process and identified gap areas. Its key recommendation was that as the first step the government should evolve a meaningful, long-term integrated perspective plan (LTIPP) which would help future programmes and projects to build indigenous defence capabilities. It also suggested adoption of key technology programmes for the future.
- The report of the Conclave on River Basin Management held at the VIF was published during the year. While arguing that development and management of river basins should be done in an integrated manner, it strongly advocated that a national water framework law needs to be finalised. This will require necessary political will. The report also made a series of recommendations on wastewater management, food security, water resources management and hydro-water development.
- A Task Force report headed by Ambassador D P Srivastava examined the current status of India-Africa relations and made several practical recommendations to fully realise the potential. It identified building connectivity between India and Africa as a key requirement. Amongst its many recommendations, the notable one was that the EXIM bank should be allowed to join in the co-financing of projects with established regional African banks, the ECGC should be reformed to protect export credits and lines of credits should be routed through African Development Bank and other such institutions. Direct shipping lines should be set-up between India and Africa.
- A CII-VIF conference to assess India's connectivity with India's neighbourhood was organised. Several practical suggestions emerged from the gathering. The conference recommended inter-alia, the strengthening and harmonisation of regulatory and governance frameworks across the region to reduce uncertainty in infra-projects; implementation of ICT processes for faster turn-around of ships; establishment of Maritime Development Fund for India flagged-ships; stepping-up of investment in Hydro-power sector in Nepal and Bhutan; the need for a rigorous cost-benefit analysis before the final approval of inland waterways and public-private partnership model in energy sector capacity building and providing seamless connectivity between North-East of India with Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.
- A detailed monograph by Commodore Somen Banerjee on "*Maritime Power Through Blue Economy*" pointed out that India has a strong navy, it lags behind in other attributes being a maritime power. It

suggested that India should strengthen its blue economy to become a maritime power. A maritime economy advisor should be appointed in the NITI Aayog.

- The VIF carried out a novel strategic decision-making exercise “Indraprastha” involving nearly sixty experts, divided into eight syndicates, to analyse the dynamics of a hypothetical Sino-Indian conflict, its impact on regional and international security matrix and the possible response strategies. A hypothetical scenario was built around China’s assertive behaviour on the Sino-Indian border and in the Indo-Pacific. The syndicates were required to address the situation in diplomatic, military and information domain and come-up with responses. A number of interesting response strategies emerged. It was assessed that China would use the boundary dispute to keep pressure on India; a desperate Pakistan would toe China’s line and that maritime and information domain dimensions will play an important role in a possible Sino-Indian scenario.
- The two-day conference on the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam underlined the urgent need for the government and the civil society to work together on the neglected aspect of studying India’s history, civilisation, and culture to look for philosophical ideas and values which would be helpful for dealing with the contemporary global issues of conflict and environmental degradation.
- The VIF also made a suggestion to the government to launch a project to come out with an authoritative and comprehensive Sanskrit-English dictionary.
- Ambassador Satish Chandra, Prof CR Babu and the Director VIF called on the Lt Governor of Delhi to discuss a project aimed at treating sewage water coming from Kalyan Puri drain before it falls into the Yamuna River. Prof Babu is a pioneer in constructed wetland systems whereby sewage water can be treated by using certain plants. The Lt Governor showed keen interest in the project and has asked the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to cooperate with Prof Babu.
- Prime Minister Abe participated in the fourth meeting of Hindu-Buddhist Samvad held in Tokyo. Prime Minister Modi also sent a video message to the conference. Hindu-Buddhist Samvad has emerged as a credible platform of interaction amongst scholars and experts who study the two religions and cultures deeply.
- At the various public lectures given by eminent experts on Vimarsh platform, the need for building an Indian narrative on contemporary issues came out loud and clear. In this regard, the talks given by Shri S. Gurumurthy on Indian economy, Ku. Nivedita Bhide on Indian education, Shri Bibek Debroy on Bhagavat Gita, Dr Gulshan Rai on cyber security proved to be very useful.
- The various seminars, conferences, round-table discussions and interactions held at the VIF generated a large number of suggestions on foreign policy. It was assessed that while India’s image in the world has vastly improved, India continues to face a complex and challenging security environment. The threat of terrorism is ever-present. Pakistan-China axis is taking new shape; the US disengagement from Afghanistan will bring Taliban back. Tensions in the Indo-Pacific region could accentuate due to the US-China rivalry. The Quad is a useful platform for dialogue, but it has yet to gain credibility. India needs to build its comprehensive national power in all its dimensions to deal with emerging challenges. While India must achieve high economic growth rates, it must also follow a proactive policy of economic engagement. It needs to find solution for dealing with the unsustainable trade balance vis-a-vis China and unpredictable US. India must focus more on building economic engagement and connectivity in the region. India must also pay attention to maritime security. The suggestions generated in the VIF discussions, publications and interactions were shared with the government and the larger public.

Future Activities

The experience of last few years shows that multidisciplinary research, wider engagement, focusing on target audience, and improving research methodologies is essential for VIF to emerge as a leading think tank devoted to nation building. In the coming years, the VIF will strengthen its focus on historical, cultural and civilisational studies and using the knowledge and perspectives gained from these studies to deepen the understanding of the world around us. Working in siloes of foreign policy, defence, history and culture achieves only limited results. The effort of VIF is to expand the number of resource persons, identify interesting themes for research, and do policy research which is helpful to the policy-makers as well as the public at large. The VIF will also increase its interaction with the youth focusing on outreach, nation building, advocacy and training.



Dr Arvind Gupta, IFS (Retd)

Director ,VIF

(Former Deputy National Security Advisor

& Former Director General, IDSA)

May 2019

New Delhi

About the VIF



The aim and purpose of founding the VIF was to bring about a paradigm shift in the national and global discourse in India, which was constrained by the reservations of contemporary Indian intellectuals with regard to putting forward Indian nationalist and civilisational perspectives, in the national and global strategic domain.

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

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

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

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

Objectives

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

The Foundation resolves to carry on its mission in the coming years with renewed dedication.

One word of truth can never be lost; for ages it may be hidden under rubbish, but it will show itself sooner or later. Truth is indestructible, virtue is indestructible, purity is indestructible.

Swami Vivekananda

Year Outcomes (2018-19)

297

Commentaries & Articles
published on the website

88

Major events

35

Major Foreign
Interactions

43

Major publications

5

VIF Task Force Reports

6

Books

89

VIF Scholars in Media



4,07,261

Visitors on website

6,58,422

Views & Downloads



66,71,000

Impressions on twitter



13,69,848

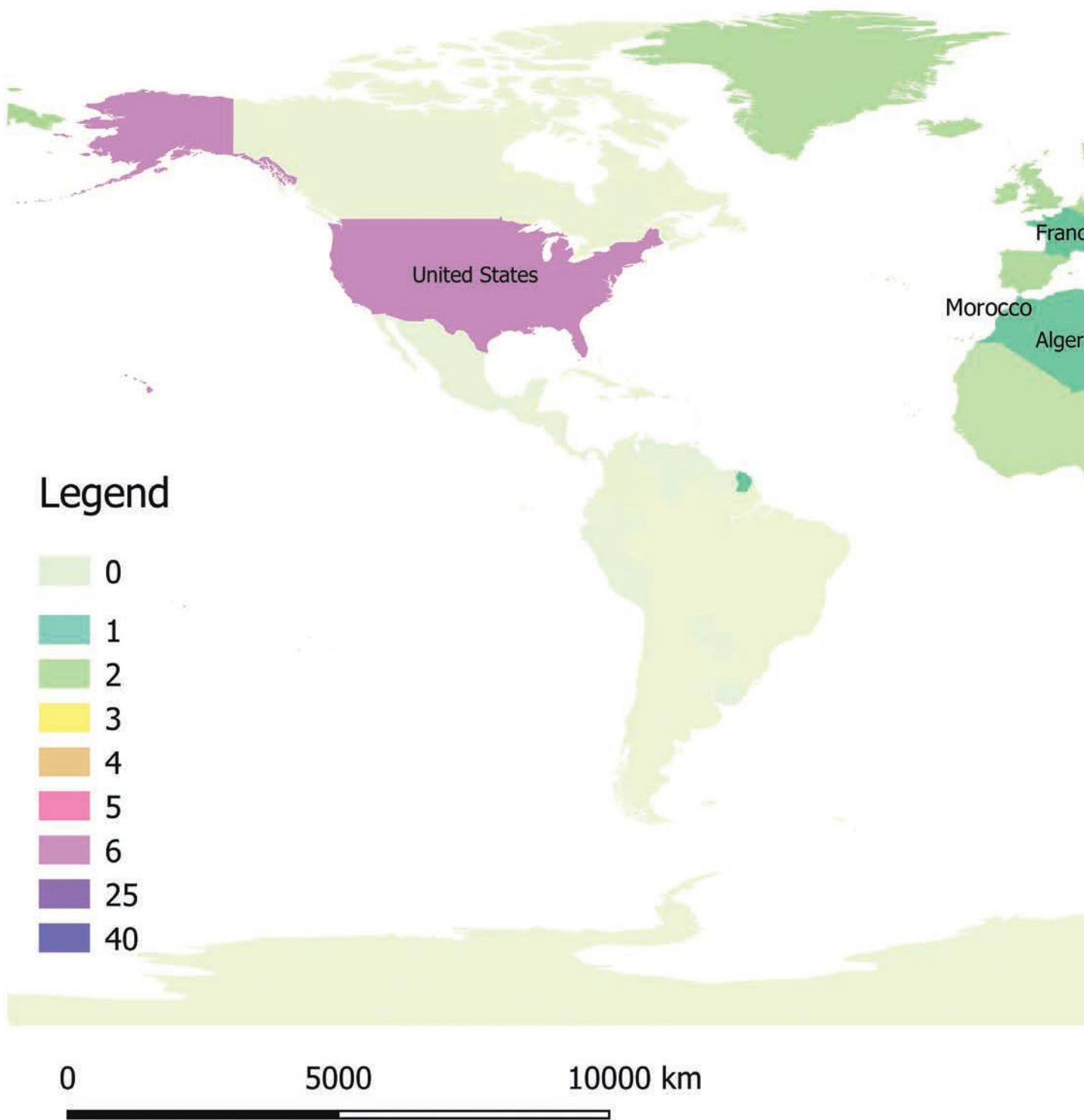
Impressions on Facebook



63,81,000

Minutes watched on VIF's
YouTube Channel

Map of Events Conducted:



Country-based Frequency



Map is for thematic representation only, it does not represent any legal survey.

Map by : Jyothy Nair

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Experience is the only teacher we have. We may talk and reason
all our lives, but we shall not understand a word of truth,
until we experience it ourselves .

Swami Vivekananda

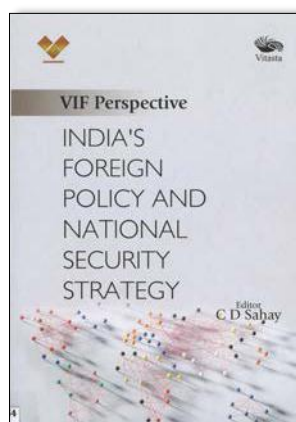
Publications



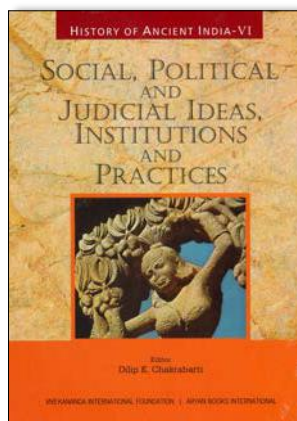
Books



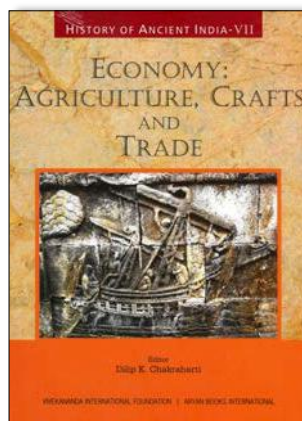
Essays in the volume focus on issues of economic security, health, food, water, skills development and education and highlight the urgent need to address these in the context of national security.



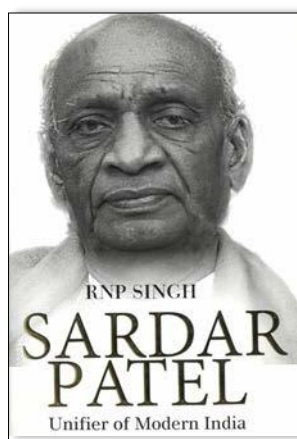
As the world becomes multipolar and India begins to take its deserved place in the comity of nations, there is an urgent need to develop an Indian narrative of its security and foreign policy needs, based on India's experience and cultural and civilisational values.



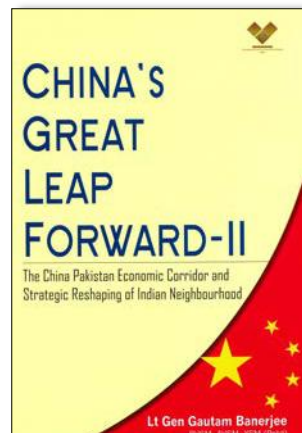
The Human society offers a vast field of study in any context, and for this volume of essays devoted to the study of ancient Indian society we have selected only a few of its aspects, like caste system, Ancient Indian education, position of women in Indian society.



The present volume on the economic aspects of the ancient Indian history falls into the following clear sections: agriculture, crafts and guilds, trade and trade routes, archaeological data on the trade in the Indian Ocean world in relation to India, and the whole range of the ancient Indian monetary systems and minting techniques.

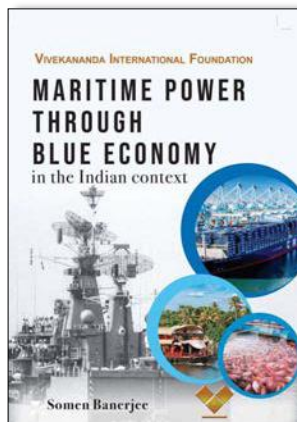


Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950) left his mark not only on the map of India but also on the minds of her people. He is said to have bequeathed the idea of an integrated India to the nation, and is often called the 'Iron Man', with an uncanny foresight and a clear vision of where independent India's future lay.

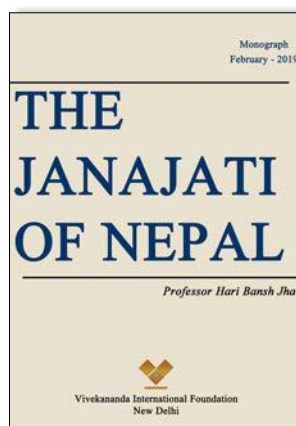


Development of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor is a fulcrum of the One Belt One Road Initiative through which China seeks to realise the 'Chinese Dream' to be a global power and a regional hegemon.

Monographs



The control of the seas washing the Indian shores have shaped her history throughout the ages. The key argument of this monograph is that maritime power can be enhanced through the development of the Blue Economy and the two should be linked.



In Nepal, the Janajati had been a most prosperous community in the past. They had rich social, cultural and spiritual traditions. Most of them had their own rule in different parts of the country. However, their voice was suppressed after the second half of the 18th century when Prithvi Narayan Shah established his rule in the country.

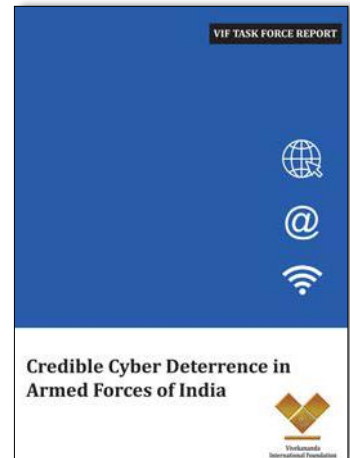
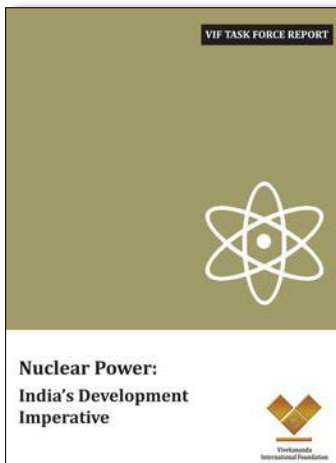
National Security



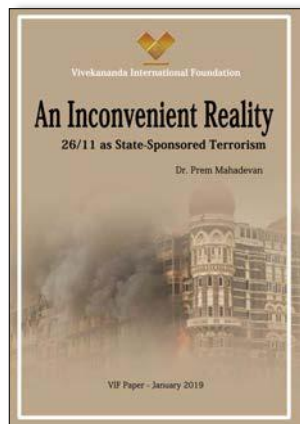
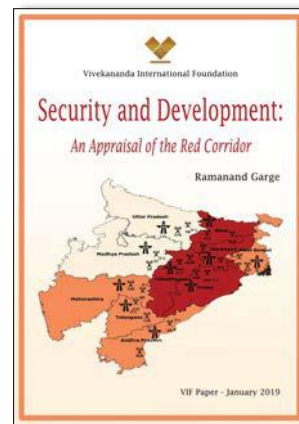
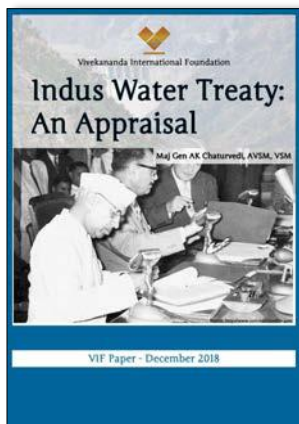
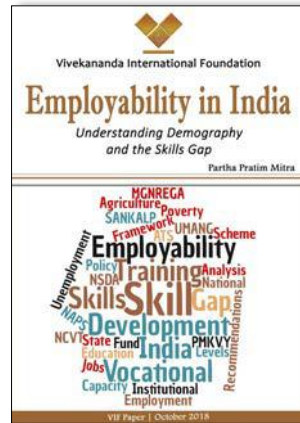
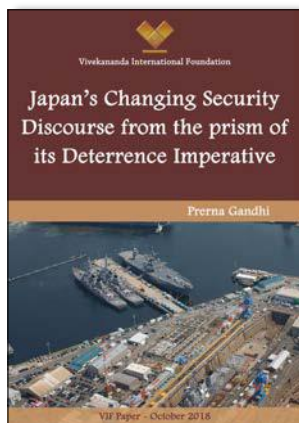
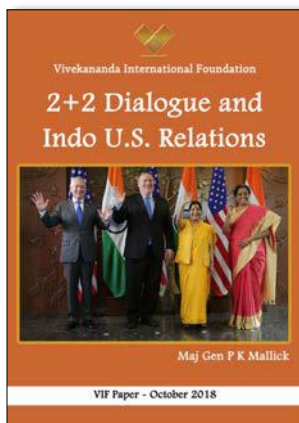
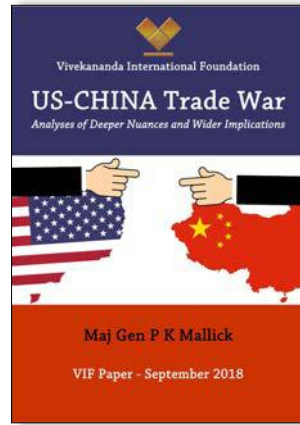
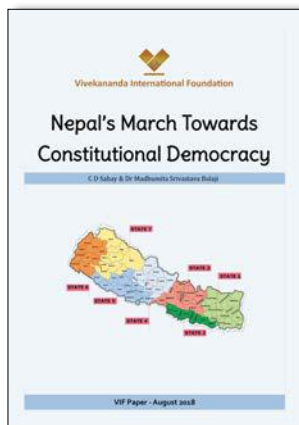
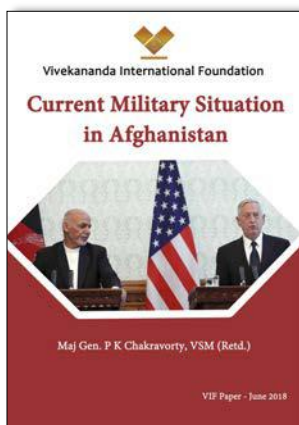
National Security is a policy-oriented academic publication of the VIF. It focuses on understanding the principal issues & trends in India's increasingly complex national security environment. National Security hopes to provide holistic analysis and informed debates keeping such a meaning in view. It

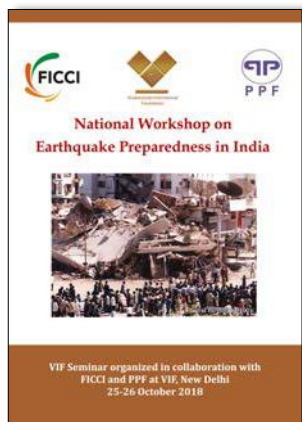
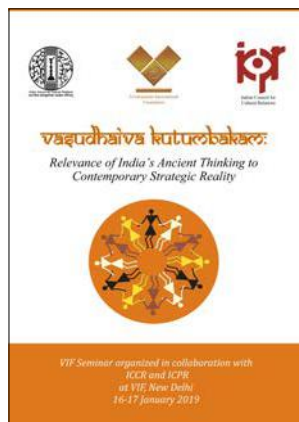
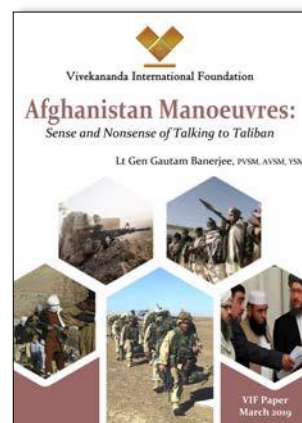
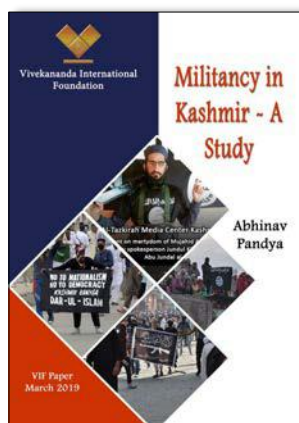
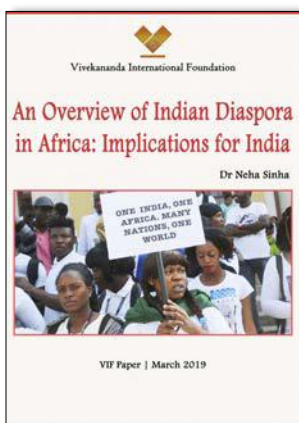
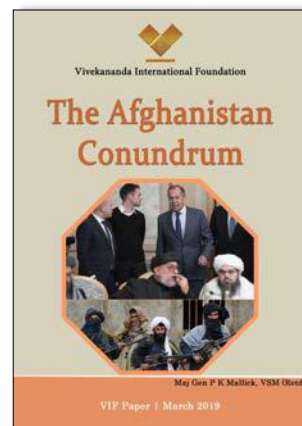
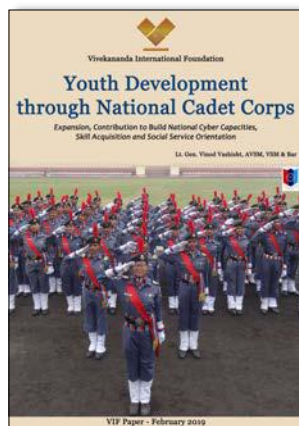
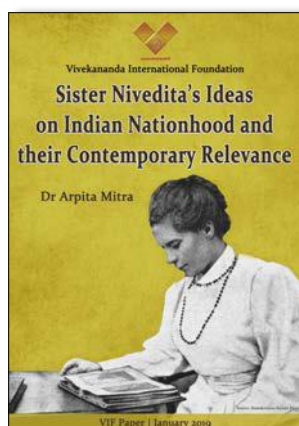
is a forum for top thinkers, policy experts, and academics. It hopes to meet the needs of an international readership that is increasingly interested in India's security policies as its role in world affairs grows.

VIF Task Force Repots

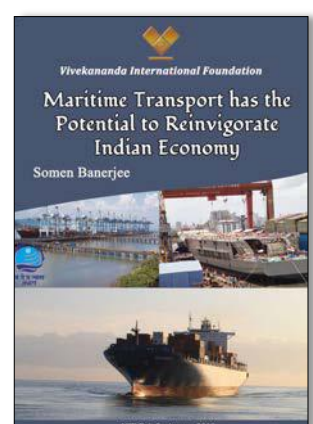
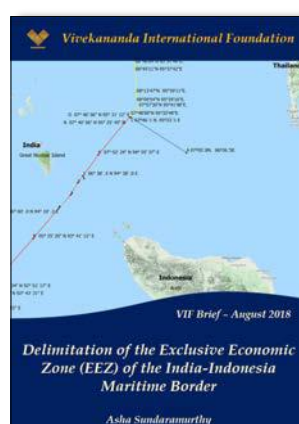
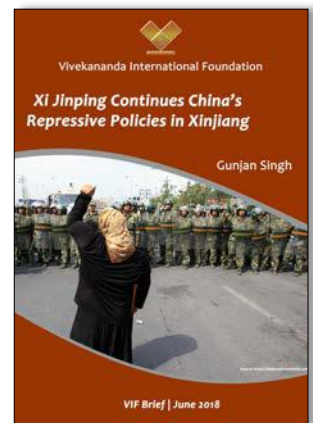
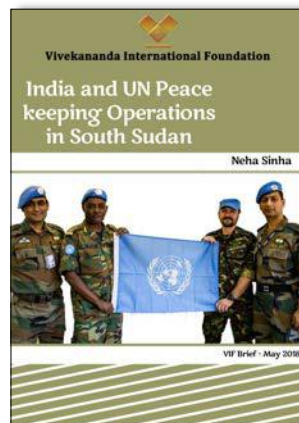
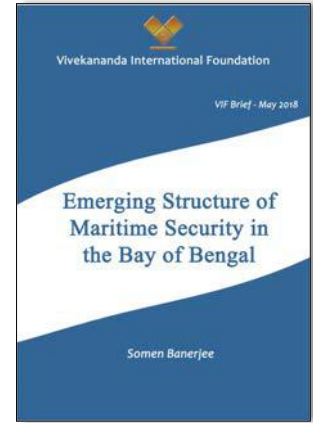
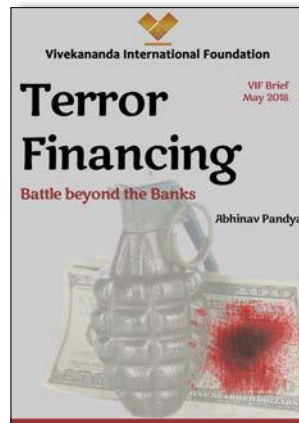
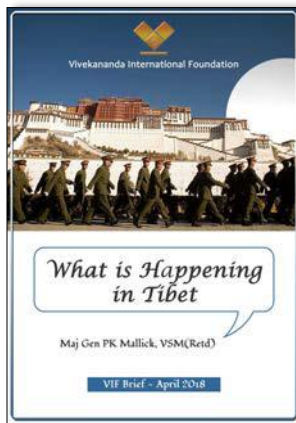


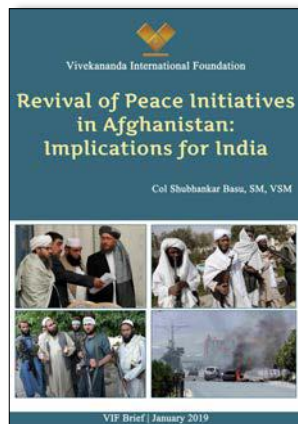
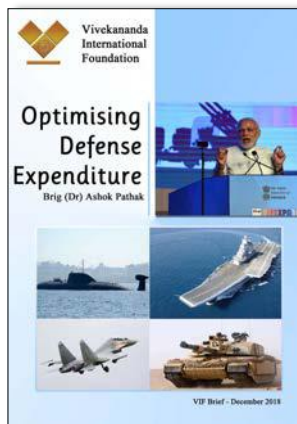
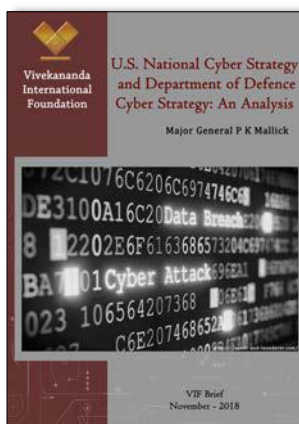
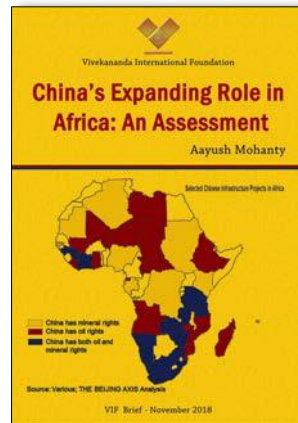
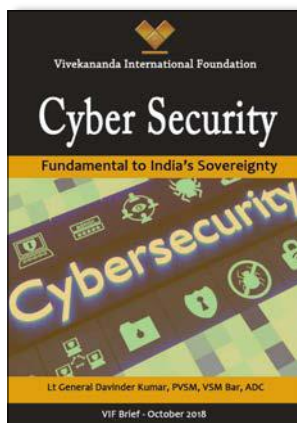
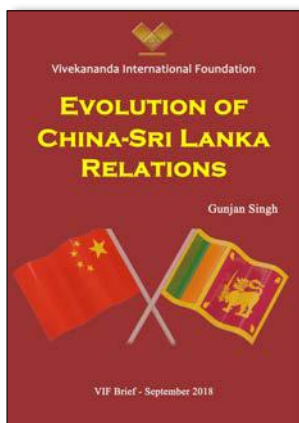
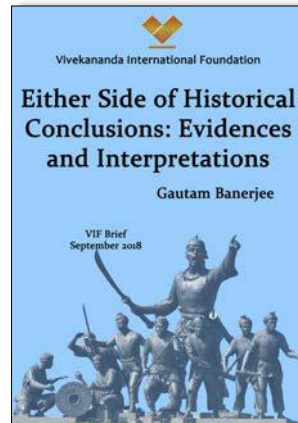
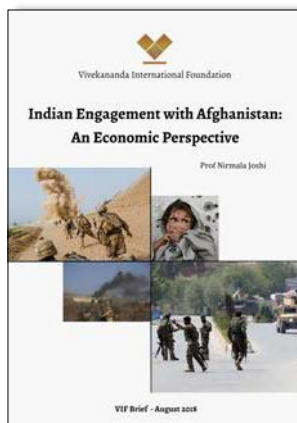
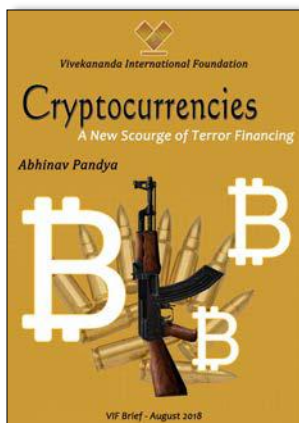
Papers

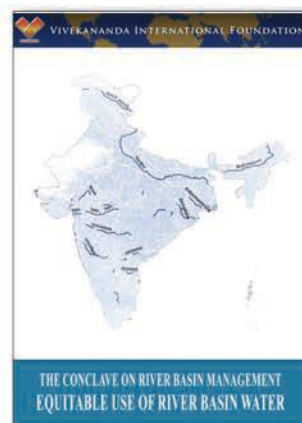
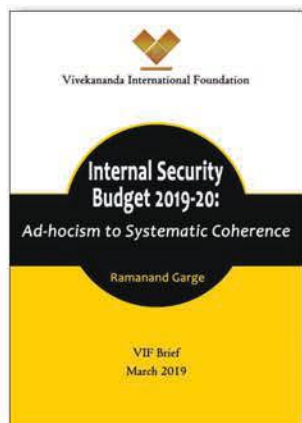
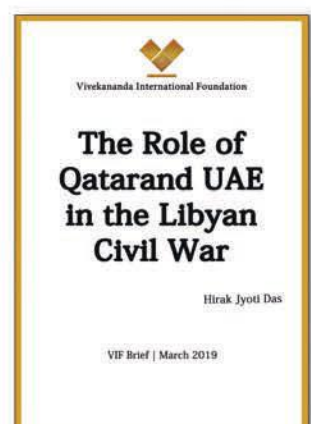
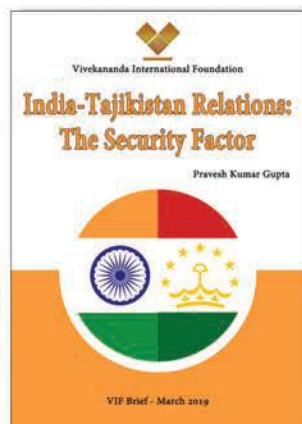
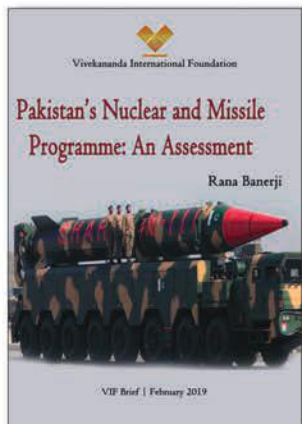




Briefs







Activities

The Year 2018-19 saw the VIF steadfastly pursuing its mission. The VIF faculty of academic, civil service, diplomatic, military, economic, history and scientific luminaries, ably assisted by highly motivated young scholars with intellectual potential, has thus been eminently successful in propagating the Foundation's objectives. A glance through this Annual Report would highlight that fact.

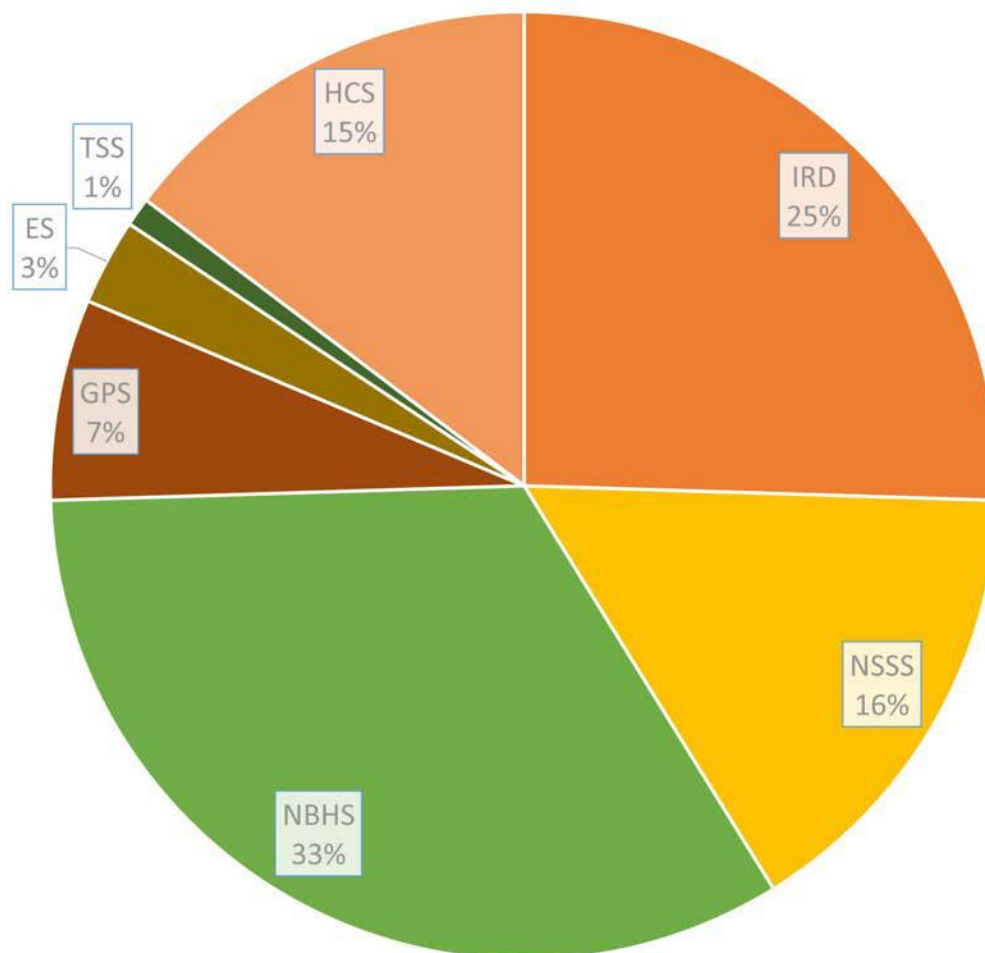
Strategic studies, expert group confabulations and analyses undertaken by the VIF during the year covered the entire spectrum of national and International concerns. The Foundation organised regular Round Table Conferences, Seminars, Briefings and Brainstorming Sessions in which expert analysts, scholars and informed stakeholders participated. Eminent speakers were invited to speak at the *Vimarsha* series of lectures.

Well-regarded for its integrity and independent thinking, the VIF has been a much sought after host for strategic discussions with a large number of global strategic think tanks, opinion shapers and decision makers. Many top global think tanks, including those from the US, UK, Japan, Russia, China and Africa have forged associations with the Foundation for regular exchanges of strategic views and concerns. VIF faculty members have been much in demand at global and national level interactions, various seminars and group events. The VIF website which carries commentaries, articles, Briefs, Papers, monographs, books, and VIF News Digest is widely subscribed and highly regarded.

As the following pages of this Annual Report will show, the VIF has been relentless in its pursuit of excellence in intellectual research and analyses in the service of the nation. Needless to emphasise, the Foundation resolves to strengthen its commitment and dedication in the coming years.



Seminars and Interactions held as per Centres of Study



- IRD - International Relations and Diplomacy
- NSSS - National Security and Strategic Studies
- NBHS - Neighbourhood Studies
- HCS - Historical and Civilisational Studies
- GPS - Governance and Political Studies
- ES - Economic Studies
- TSS - Scientific and Technological Studies

International Relations and Diplomacy



Centre for International Relations and Diplomacy

France

- Interaction with Mr Jérôme Bonnafont, Ex-French Ambassador to India on 'India-France Relations and the Evolving Scenario in Middle East'

Europe

- Meeting with H.E. Mr. Tomasz Kozlowski, on 'European Union – India Relations and a Way Forward'
- Interaction with Prof. Zaneta Ozolina on 'Future of EU in Context of Brexit and other Issues'

USA

- US Ambassador's Visit to the VIF
- RTD on 2+2 Dialogue
- Interaction with the Heritage Foundation

Morocco

- Interaction with Mr. Mohammed, President of Moroccan CMES

Algeria

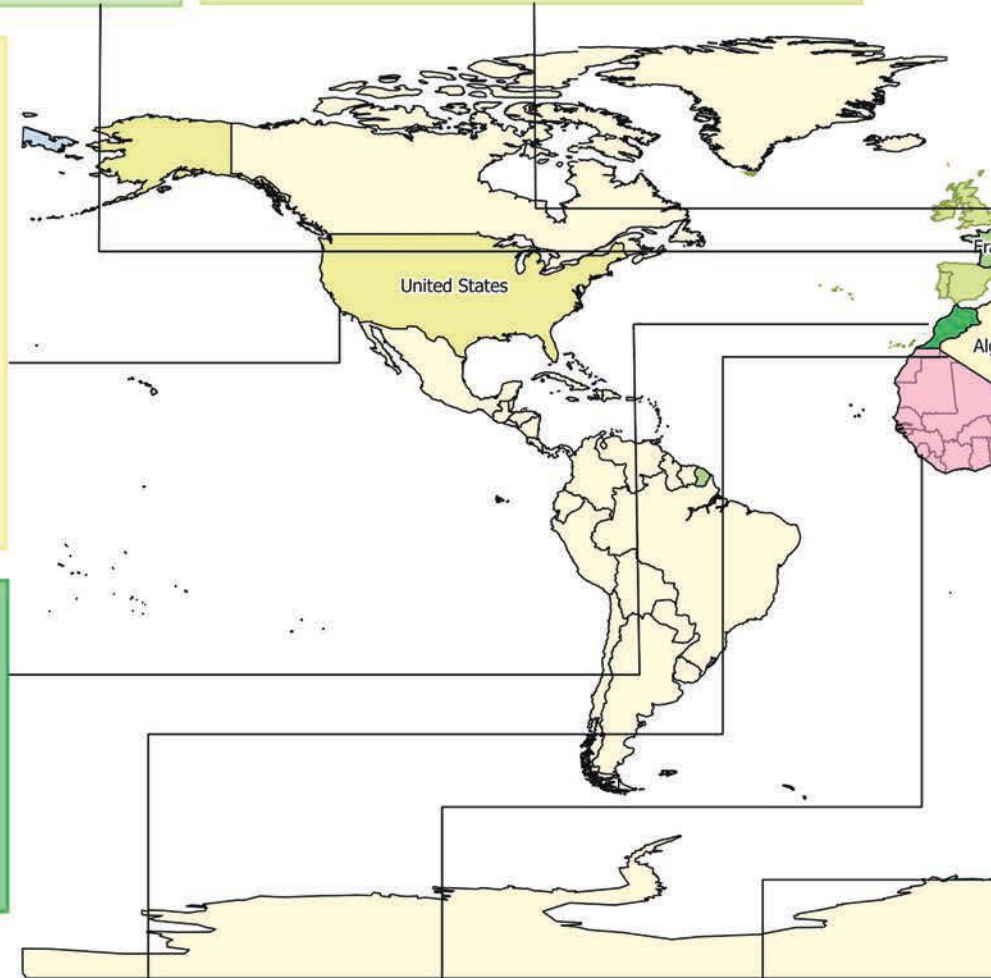
- Discussion by H.E. Hamza Yahia- Cherif, Algerian Ambassador, on 'De-radicalisation in Algeria- A Success Story'

Africa

- Round Table Discussion on 'Asia-Africa Growth Corridor'
- Conference on 'Enhancing India-Africa Cooperation'

Middle East

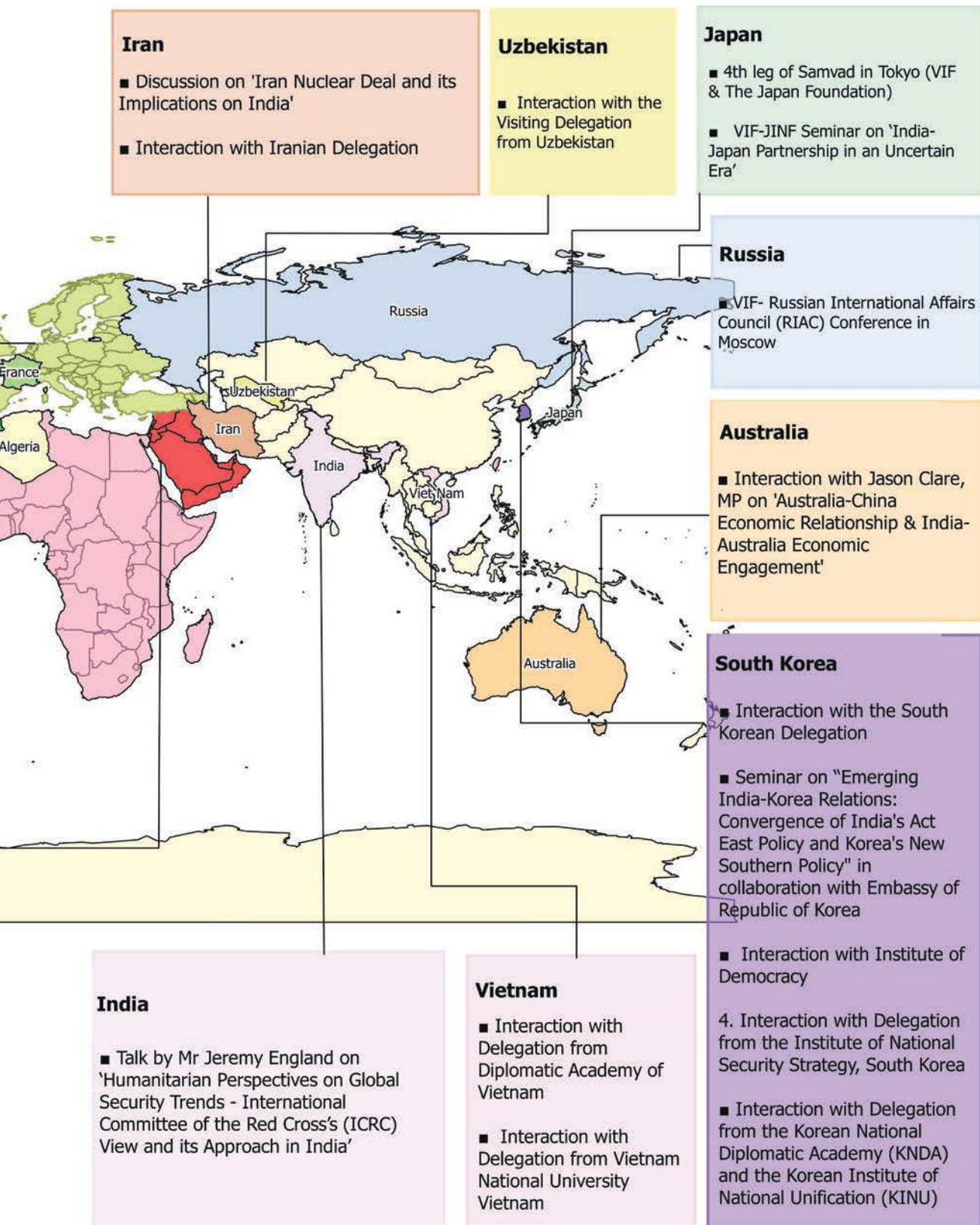
- Interaction with Mr. Gong Xiaosheng, China's Special Envoy on Middle East Issue



Map is for thematic representation only, it does not represent a legal survey.

Map By: Jyothy Nair

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Glimpses



Cluster for Indo-Pacific Studies

With 2018 being a momentous year in the Indo-Pacific discourse, the Cluster for Indo-Pacific Studies worked with ardent vigor to keep pace with the emerging international developments. There were extensive exchanges and dialogues with many prominent international think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, Japan Institute of National Fundamentals, Russian International Affairs Council, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, etc. A noticeable notation in the calendar year was the vibrant exchanges with the increasing number of South Korean delegations that visited the VIF, including a joint conference hosted with the Embassy of Republic of Korea in New Delhi and an interaction with South Korean media.

The Annual Quad Plus dialogue held in Sydney this year saw detailed and candid discussions on the future of the quad and Indo-Pacific. The deliberations underlined the need to strengthen the rules-based order and provide a sense of strategic certainty in a chaotic international environment. Other key in-house events included discussions on India's security concerns in the Indo-Pacific, impact of Global Economy on Geopolitics, Prime Minister Modi's Shangri La speech etc.

In the coming year, the cluster will focus on the future direction of India's Act East and BIMSTEC, the emerging contours of Quad and Indo-Pacific, the nature of India's Free Trade Agreements, the settlement of the Korean peninsula, India-ASEAN relations among others.

Africa Cluster

While there were a number of important activities undertaken by the Africa Cluster during the year, the chief outcome was an in-depth report of the Task Force on Africa. The project began as a report on Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC). Eventually, it focused entirely on India-Africa relations. The Task Force had numerous meetings with MEA, Ministry of Commerce, EXIM Bank, ECGC and SCI to bring out challenges and opportunities for India in Africa. The Task Force report was released on behalf of the Commerce Minister Shri

Suresh Prabhu by Secretary (ER), MEA and Director, VIF on 26th September, 2018.

Some other major activities of the cluster were interactions with the Institute of Advance Studies & Centre for African Studies, JNU and African Studies Association on "Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC): Opportunity & Challenges", conference on 'Enhancing Indo-Africa Relations' in collaboration with CII, presentation on Asia Africa Growth Corridor, discussions on 'Rise of Terrorism in Africa, Mozambique's Foreign Minister's visit to India and 'An Overview of Indian Diaspora in Africa: Implications for India'.

The cluster also participated in an interactive session with the visiting African media delegation.

The cluster proposes to continue with similar activities in the coming year.

Central Asia Cluster

During the year the Central Asia cluster interacted with a number of high level visiting delegations from the Central Asian countries. Database on Central Asia covering bilateral relations, Trade, PIB releases, Parliamentary Questions and responses, Mou's and Agreements was prepared.

The cluster shall continue to expand its engagements in 2019-20.

Major events held during the year

9 April 2018 – Discussion on India's Security Concerns in the Indo-Pacific

A RTD on India's security concerns in the Indo-Pacific was held with noted experts delving into India's security considerations in the emerging Asian Century. The idea of the Indo-Pacific, its geo-economic dimension, the China factor, militarisation of the Indian Ocean, regional organisations such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) & development of the Quadrilateral (QUAD) Security Dialogue were highlighted. The discussions revolved around the differing perceptions of threats as well as cooperation with China.

16 April 2018 - RTD on South Indian Ocean

The geopolitical underpinnings of South Indian Ocean (SIO) have become as dynamic as the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. To discuss this untouched issue, the panelists touched upon the nuances of its physical geography, trade aortas, governance, economic disparities, regional groupings to deal with threats and challenges, footprint of extra-regional players on stability and India's role as a net security provider. The discussion led to the formulation of six policy recommendations.

17 April 2018 - Round Table Discussion on 'Asia-Africa Growth Corridor'

A discussion on Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) was organised where important aspects of India-Africa relations were identified. Areas of development cooperation, like agriculture, health, technology, shipping connectivity, and disaster management were examined. Better disbursement of financial assistance committed by India and synergy with Japanese programmes was recommended.

24 April 2018 - Tomasz Kozlowski, on 'European Union – India Relations and a Way Forward'

The European Union's (EU) Ambassador to India and Bhutan, Tomasz Kozlowski, participated in a high-level RTD on the growing engagement between the EU and India. His speech covered the development of relations and the prospective areas of the EU-India Strategic Partnership in the fields of economic, foreign policy, security, counter-terrorism, cyber-security, maritime, energy, climate, space and non-proliferation cooperation.

15 May 2018 - Interaction with Delegation from Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam

VIF hosted a delegation from Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV) from Hanoi. The need to increase the economic and defense quotients of the bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), Search and Rescue and Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR), water security, non-traditional security threats and China's growing aggression, need for people-to-people contacts were discussed.

21 May 2018 - Interaction with a Visiting Delegation from Uzbekistan

A visiting high-level delegation from Uzbekistan interacted with the VIF on 'India-Uzbekistan Relations'. The multi-faceted areas of cooperation like political, trade, economy, education, science and technology, industry, agriculture, civil aviation and defence were discussed. Uzbekistan's National Action Strategy 2017-2022 to modernise public administration, judicial system, economy, social development, foreign policy and ease of doing business was touched upon. President Mirziyoyev's foreign policy and economic thrust on Central Asia was also elaborated.

23 May 2018 - Round Table Discussion on Iran Nuclear Deal and its Implications for India

A RTD on 'The Iran Nuclear Deal and the Implications for India' was held in which former ambassadors to the US, Iran and Middle East were invited to offer their inputs. The consequences of US-Iran antagonism on West Asian conflicts, economic sanctions, JCPoA and CAASTA on India's oil supply and connectivity projects were evaluated.

1 June 2018 – Interaction with a South Korean Delegation

An interaction focused on recent developments in the Korean Peninsula and its ramifications for the region was held with a delegation from South Korea. An overview of developments in North Korea, China and Japan's roles, the scope of India-South Korea relations were also discussed.

12 July 2018 – Discussion with H.E. Hamza Yahia- Cherif, Algerian Ambassador, on 'De-radicalisation in Algeria- A Success Story'

The Ambassador recounted as to how the efforts of Algerian youth's to bring constitutional democracy and freedom was diverted by radicalisation, and the sufferings that was inflicted by it upon the society. Explaining the mayhem brought about by radical interpretations of Islam, he dwelt upon the political, social, economic and cultural measures taken in the process of de-radicalisation.

1 August 2018 - Talk by Mr Jeremy England on 'Humanitarian Perspectives on Global Security Trends - ICRC View and its Approach in India'

The Head of ICRC, New Delhi, spoke about ICRC's functioning in India. He pointed out that it was a non-political organisation working in over 80 countries to promote International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and to respond to humanitarian concerns. He further elaborated on the global security environment that gives rise to humanitarian needs and ICRC's responses through worldwide humanitarian operations.

22 August 2018 - Release of the 'Policy Recommendations by Quadripartite Commission on the Indian Ocean Regional Security'

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), Japan, SPF-USA, National Security College, Australia and VIF formed the *Quadripartite Commission on the Indian Ocean Security* to delve into natural, economic, illegal and security issue in the Indian Ocean Region. Following a seminar in Washington DC in 2016, international conferences were convened in 2017 and 2018 at New Delhi and Tokyo respectively wherein the roles and functions of Maritime Domain Awareness and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy & Armed Robbery were examined. Reflecting independent Track 2.0 viewpoints, the need for force deployments and cooperation with other partners to balance the destabilising impact of larger Chinese presence was also highlighted.

31 August 2018 - US Ambassador's visit to the VIF

The US Ambassador interacted with former diplomats, military officers and scholars in the run-up to the US-India 2+2 Strategic Dialogue. Recent developments in India-US bilateral relations, 2+2 Dialogue and the road ahead were discussed. Congruence of geo-political views and greater opportunities for cooperation was highlighted. It was agreed that both should look for ways to further strengthen the economic and strategic partnership. Stakeholders in both countries remain hopeful that the world's two largest democracies will be able to come to an agreement on trade and look at it through a more strategic, long-term perspective as a

strong India-US relationship is beneficial for both countries.

17 September 2018 - Interaction with Russian Media

VIF hosted fifteen media representatives from Russia as part of an outreach programme of the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt of India to enhance awareness and understanding of contemporary India and its heritage.

26 September 2018 - Conference on 'Enhancing India-Africa Cooperation'

A bilateral initiative with an objective to enhance growth and connectivity between India and Africa, the conference delved into following themes for deepening India-Africa Engagement: Connectivity, Banking & Insurance, Skill Development and Defence, Economic Cooperation, Capacity Building, Infrastructure, Energy, and Agriculture, and Opportunities in Education and Healthcare. India's expected contribution to security and stability in Africa was also emphasised.

27 September 2018 - Interaction with the Visiting Delegation from Uzbekistan

A high-powered delegation from Uzbekistan held discussions in the wake of Uzbek President's visit to India in September 2018. The agenda centred on exploring options for expanding and deepening India-Uzbek relations in the context of recent global and regional developments. Various avenues of cooperation in the fields of IT, employment, medical, electronics, aviation, nuclear energy and defence manufacturing were discussed. It was felt that cultural and educational sector and e-governance to combat corruption would be some additional avenues of cooperation.

16 October 2018 - Seminar on 'Emerging India-Korea Relations: Convergence of India's Act East Policy and Korea's New Southern Policy'

The Seminar dwelt upon South Korea's New Southern Policy, North Korea's De-nuclearisation programme, the Regional Security Environment and nuances and implications of the Indo-Pacific Concept.

The imperative of developing India-South Korean bilateral relations was highlighted.

17 October 2018 - Interaction with the Heritage Foundation

The brainstorming session was devoted to Indo-US bilateral relations, developments in the South China Sea and Indo-Pacific, stabilising South Asia, and US-China relations. In bilateral domain, strengthening US-India defence cooperation, and issues of CAATSA, H1B1 and hurdles in trade and economic relations were discussed.

22 November 2018 - Interaction with Institute of Democracy

The South Korean delegation elaborated on issues like North Korea, US-China trade war and South Korea's foreign policy. The Indian stance on South Korea's partnership in the Act East Policy, benefits of larger economic engagement and expanding the scope of 'Special Strategic Partnership' were highlighted.

04 December 2018 - Interaction with Delegation from the Institute of National Security Strategy, South Korea

The interaction was focused on India-South Korea bilateral relations and the uncertainty in the regional security architecture. Criticality of the Korean Peninsula in stabilising the Northeast Asian order, dichotomy between the peace and denuclearisation processes, inter-Korean summits, India's Act East and South Korea's New Southern Policy, the Indo-Pacific and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue and concerns regarding China were discussed.

17 December 2018 - Interaction with Delegation from the Korean National Diplomatic Academy (KNDIA) and the Korean Institute of National Unification (KINU)

The interaction was devoted to the issues having bearing on India-South Korea bilateral relations and the regional order. The Indian side explained its position and apprehensions towards China's Belt and Road Initiative violating India's sovereignty, the scope of participation in the US' Free and Open Indo-Pacific

Strategy and India's Act East Policy. The South Korean delegation spoke on India-South Korean relations, the Korean Unification Process and South Korea's 'New Southern Policy'.

10 January 2019 - Interaction with Iranian Delegation from Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS)

The interactive session with Tehran based think-tank touched upon global issues, regional developments, bilateral relations and the developing scenario in Afghanistan. Iran's perspective on JCPOA, role of China, situation in Qatar, Palestine and Syria, dangers from terrorism and extremism, potentials of India-Iran relations and the need to strengthen bilateral relations were discussed.

10 January 2019 - Interaction with Jérôme Bonnafont, Ex-French Ambassador to India

The Head of the Department of Middle East and North Africa in the French Government spoke on China's Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping, demographics in the Middle East and realities of terrorism and war. He said that fighting terrorism has been on the top of political agenda for France. Further, with Daesh remaining undefeated, France does not support America's withdrawal from Syria, prefers diplomatic settlement with Iran, and seeks cooperation in human development in North Africa.

14 January 2019 - Interaction with Jason Clare, MP, Australia

The interaction with the Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister of Trade and Investment covered a gamut of issues impacting the regional, Indo-Australia bilateral relations and importance of economic component in strategic relations.

22 January 2019 - Interaction with Delegation from Vietnam National University

The VIF scholars discussed the salient points of India-Vietnam bilateral relations, India's Act East Policy, the Indo-Pacific perspective, Indo-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, defence cooperation and people-to-people understanding of culture and social values. India's commitment to

economic and commercial engagements, freedom of navigation and dispute resolution according to international law through dialogue and peaceful means was emphasised.

30 January 2019 - Interaction with Media delegation from South Korea

A group of Journalists and Editors from South Korea visited the VIF as part of an outreach programme of the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt of India to enhance awareness and understanding of contemporary India and its heritage.

5-6 February 2019 - VIF-JINF Seminar on 'India-Japan Partnership in an Uncertain Era'

The VIF organised a seminar on 6th February 2019 for a senior delegation visiting from Japan Institute of National Fundamentals (JINF) led by its President Ms Yoshiko Sakurai. Attended by senior strategic experts, the discussion focused on 'India-Japan Economic and Technological Cooperation', 'Assessing the Regional Situation from India and Japan's Perspective' and 'India-Japan Defence and Security Cooperation'. A wide spectrum of issues including managing relations with China, Indo-Pacific, Quad, BRI, third country cooperation, defence and technology cooperation, international cooperation through UNSC etc. were discussed. Both sides mentioned that the India-Japan bilateral partnership held great importance for their respective governments and countries.

20-21 February 2019 - The Quad Plus Think Tank Dialogue at Sydney, Australia

The Quad Plus Think Tanks Dialogue was hosted by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), along with VIF, Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), and the Heritage Foundation, USA. French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) and Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) were additional invitees. The panel discussions covered the parameters of Indo-Pacific concept, maritime domain awareness and Quad Plus cooperation, Afghanistan-Pakistan security issues and missile defence cooperation. Imperative of supporting the Afghan Government and reigning in the Taliban was highlighted by the VIF delegation.

20 March 2019 - Visit of the African Media Delegation

Thirty Journalists/Editors from different African countries visited the VIF to familiarise with the socio-political and economic facets of the Indian society. Centered on the seven decades of shared political and economic relations as well as India's contribution to peace and security in Africa through participation in UN peace-keeping operations, further strengthening of India's engagement with the African continent was also discussed.

25-26 March 2019 - VIF-Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) Conference, Moscow

The theme of the conference was 'Global Strategy and Foreign Policy Priorities in India-Russia Relations', wherein various positives and road blocks in bilateral and multilateral were discussed. The discussion also focused on US, China, South Asia and Pakistan, besides the multilateral organisations like the UN, SCO and the BRICS.

The worship and service of humanity are the only prayer in which
the worshiper, the worship, and the worshiped are One.

Swami Vivekananda

National Security and Strategic studies





During the year, the National Security cluster maintained high level of activities. It covered nearly every aspect of its assigned charter. Apart from producing regular Fortnightly Reviews covering important developments in Defence, International terrorism and Internal Security scenarios, the centre's major focus were the issues of rapid spread of Islamic Radicalization globally and in India, Left Wing Extremism, developments in the North East. Understandably, developments in J&K drew special attention.

While details of the various participative events organised at the VIF and attended by the faculty led by the Director are listed separately, some of the major ones were talk on Radicalization by Shri DC Pathak, former Chairman JIC and Former DIB, analysis of ISIS Footprints in Europe and trend analysis of Islamic State (IS) activities in India.

On Internal Security, VIF partnered with FICCI in organising a 2-day Homeland Security Conference on Cyber Crime Management, organised a talk by Dr Gulshan Rai, National Cyber Security Coordinator, NSCS on 'Digital Disruption in India', held discussion on Police Reforms and Information age Crimes, talk on Naxalite Movement in India by Shri Prakash Singh, produced an article on Appraisal of the Red Corridor and a special 10th Anniversary write up on 26/11 by Dr Prem Mahadevan.

With special focus on the developments in Jammu & Kashmir, the cluster organised talks on 'Engagement of Youths -A New Narrative for Peace in J&K' by Waheed-ur-Rehman, one on 'Jammu & Kashmir : The Big Picture' by Lt Gen. (retd) Syed Ata Hasnain, a brainstorming session on Neutralising the 'Idea of Azadi' in J&K. etc. Providing extensive coverage and analysis of developments in the State, the cluster produced series of write ups titled Kashmir - An Analysis of Recent Developments, UN Report on Human Rights 'Violations' in Jammu & Kashmir, Strategy of Military and Non-Military Measures for Stability in Kashmir, Impasse in Jammu and Kashmir, decoding threat to India from Terrorism and Insurgency, Review of Governor's Rule in J&K, Pulwama Terror Strike, Imran Khan's Pulwama

Statement: Indecent and Insensitive, Pulwama and After, Militancy in Kashmir - A Study. etc.

The Centre proposes to maintain the tempo of activities in the coming year with continued coverage on internal and international terrorism through well researched articles, monographs and books. The centre proposes to bring out a monograph on Jurisprudence of terrorism in India, a book on Radicalisation in the country and another book on Policing in Troubled Regions-Afghanistan; a Case Study in the coming year. A Task Force study group is also being set up to study the complex issue of growing radicalisation with special focus on de-radicalisation and counter radicalization measures needed to deal with this menace.

Major events held during the year

9-11 April 2018 - Exercise Indraprastha

Exercise Indraprastha was conducted as a 'Strategic Gaming Exercise'. The aim of the exercise was to analyse the dynamics of a Sino-Indian conflict, its impact on regional and international security matrix and the possible response strategies. Veterans of armed forces & diplomatic community participated in the exercise.

24 April 2018 - Handling Radicalisation – A Prime Threat : a talk by Shri DC Pathak, former Director, Intelligence Bureau

Shri Pathak gave an overall security perspective of radicalization. He highlighted the rapid growth of Islamic radicalization and its emergence as a prominent geopolitical challenge worldwide. He outlined the historical chronology of some significant events such as Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, disintegration of the USSR, emergence of Taliban, various activities facilitated by Pakistan, etc., and emphasized that the situation changed dramatically after the brazen attack of 9/11 in the US. Defining terrorism as 'use of violence to achieve a political objective', the speaker said that there can be different reasons behind the movements, yet ideological inspiration behind all these remained consistent.

24 May 2018 - Brainstorming Session on 'Campaign Beyond Hard Power: Neutralising the Idea of Azadi & Road Ahead in J &K'

The J&K proxy conflict, hybrid in nature, has been in place for 28 years. It has been a dynamic conflict with the situation having moved in and out of favour of different sides. A principal Centre of Gravity (CoG) of the separatists, terrorists and external sponsors (hereafter called the Nexus) identified by the Army has been the Kashmiri populace (Awam). True to sub conventional operations terrorists merge with the people, draw their support and prevent that space being breached by the security forces. To target that CoG the Indian political leadership and the Army follow a two pronged approach. First, was the early return to democracy in 1996 (power back to the people) and persistence with it, despite the ups and downs in the elections. Second, and very important, was the institutionalization of military civic action (MCA) through adoption of Operation Sadbhavana. Progressively the 'Idea of Azadi' has gained ground, taken shape and emerged as a core mantra of motivation. India needs counter narratives to match the achievements of the Nexus and adequate soft power measures to defeat the notions in play in J&K even as hard power and robust action continues.

30-31 May 2018 - Conference on Homeland Security

The two-day conference brought together stakeholders of the cyber security domain i.e. the government, intelligence agencies, police, industry, academia and think tanks, in promoting development and implementation of systems and concepts in effectively dealing with growing threat of cyber crimes. The stakeholders discussed various facets of Make in India initiatives in cyber domain and underscored the need of indigenous expertise in this field.

31 May 2018 - Brainstorming Session on Defence Planning Committee (DPC)

The VIF conducted deliberations with experienced professionals from armed forces, bureaucracy, industry and academia to review the challenges currently faced in defence planning and capability

development and identify the issues that DPC must address to streamline the system. Effort was made to suggest appropriate 'positioning' of this committee in the existing organisational structure, so that it becomes an 'enabler and force multiplier', rather than it attempting to be a panacea for all that ails national defence.

11 July 2018 - Book Discussion: 'Naxalite Movement in India' and Review of Present Status of LWE Movement

A programme on the current status of Left Wing Extremism (LWE) movement in India, based on the book "Naxalite Movement of India", authored by Shri Prakash Singh, noted expert on internal security, former DG BSF and former DG Uttar Pradesh, was organised at the VIF. Dr Arvind Gupta, Director VIF, who introduced the author and outlined the detailed chronology of the growth of LWE movement in India, starting from Naxalbari village in West Bengal in the mid-1960s to its peak over the last 50 years plus, spreading across 123 districts and 20 states of the country noted that in the recent years the movement has suffered serious setback due to sustained operations of the local police and the CRPF detachments deployed in the affected areas. He also noted the positive impact of improved connectivity and well-coordinated intelligence backed operations of the security forces. Shri Prakash Singh, traced the historical genesis of the LWE movements, his personal interactions with the Maoist leaders, the growth of the LWE movement and its having acquired a degree of legitimacy amongst the poor, disadvantaged and exploited sections on the masses. Shri Singh and fellow discussants, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Ahluwalia and Dr. Rammana of IDSA pointed out the need for sustained proactive kinetic pressure on the activists by further strengthening counter-insurgency capabilities of the Central and State forces, providing them equipment, specialised training, ensuring flow of actionable intelligence and coordinated operational centres.

30 July 2018 - Kashmir - Engagement of Youth through Sports

Waheed-Ur Rehman Para narrated his perspective of social process in the Kashmir Valley and the rising

level of disorientation among the youth who constitute majority of population in Jammu and Kashmir where violence and rebellious bravado seem to be the only manner for them to express themselves. He spoke of role of sports, agricultural employment and social media in developing the right narrative. Such opportunities from educational and social measures for real empowerment will strengthen the democratic fabric of Kashmir and enshrine 'Kashmiriyat' in real sense, the speaker concluded.

27 September 2018 - Navy Team Tarini at the Vivekananda International Foundation

The feat of the globe circumnavigating INSV Tarini team of six women officers of the Indian Navy was lauded at the VIF wherein its formidable challenges and inspirational results were recounted in the backdrop of historical contributions made by women in India.

27 September 2018 -Interaction with Angus Lapsley, Director for Defence and Security, British Foreign Office

Director for Defence, International Security and South East Europe at the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) visited the VIF for a focused discussion on regional security issues, NATO, West Asia, Afghanistan and South Asia.

8 October 2018 - Brainstorming Session on 'Evolving a Strategy for International Defence Cooperation'

A brain storming session was held to evolve the guiding principles, concept and strategy for Indian Defence Cooperation (a vital sub-set of Indian diplomacy). International defence cooperation with leading countries have not only become the primary means of bolstering Indian defence capabilities, but also are the foundation for bilateral strategic/ diplomatic relations.

5 - 8 November 2018 - Introduction to Indian Strategic Thinking (a certificate programme)

A workshop on strategic and security approaches of India was attended by about 26 students from all walks of life, and all parts of India to gain insights and awareness of India's history, heritage and culture. Diverse topics like understanding neighbours, non-traditional threats, India's maritime power, leveraging the diaspora future of Indian security, strategy and the defence were discussed.

20 - 22 Feb 2019 - VIF Workshop for Foreign Diplomats on 'Introduction to India's Strategic Thinking'

In an endeavour to introduce foreign diplomats posted in India to the conceptual frameworks and thought processes in the light of India's cultural moorings and traditions that go into crafting of foreign and security policies, 47 foreign diplomats were briefed on India's foreign and security policies, cultural ethos and historical and civilisational roots that goes into forming India's world view.

Neighbourhood Studies



Afghanistan

- Brainstorming Session on Afghanistan
- Dialogue on Afghanistan
- Round Table on Changing Dynamics and the Evolving Situation in Afghanistan

Nepal

- Talk on India- Nepal Relationship: Current Perspectives by Amb. Jayant Prasad, DG, IDSA
- Brainstorming Session on 'India-Nepal Relations - Oli's Six Months: A Review'

Maldives

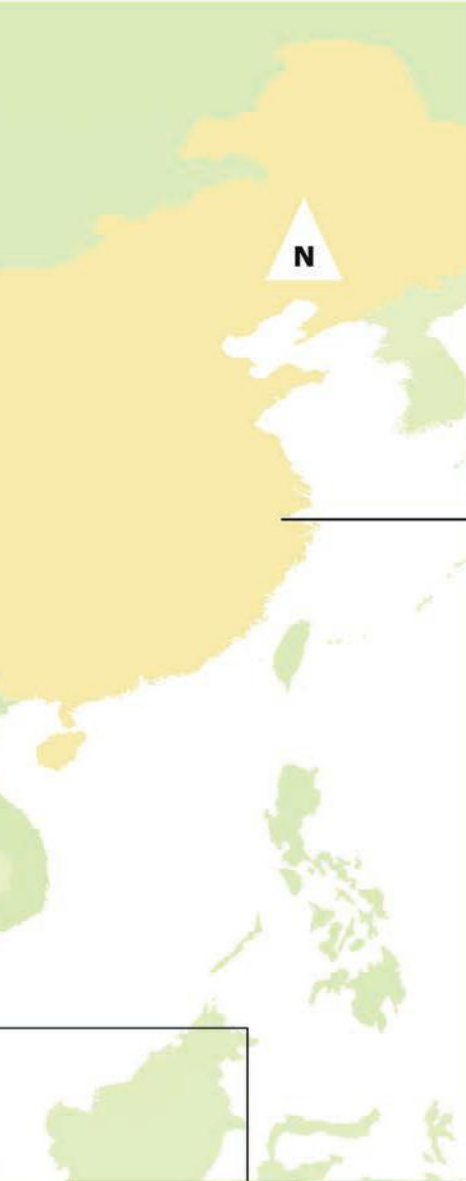
- Interaction on 'Regional Situation and India-Maldives Relations'

Bangladesh

- Interaction with Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Party (BTF)
- Interaction with Bangladesh Delegation
- Indo-Bangladesh Bilateral Dialogue
- Trilateral Dialogue: India-Bangladesh-Myanmar



Centre for Neighbourhood Studies



China

- Discussion on 'India-China Relations: Global, Regional and Bilateral Context including Economic Issues'
- Interaction with Chinese delegation on 'India-China Relations in the New Era'
- Discussion on 'Wuhan Informal Summit: Implications for India'
- Delegation from the VIF visits China
- Prof Tai Ming Cheung's Talk, 'Understanding China's Progress in the Development of its Defence and Strategic Science, Technology and Innovation Capabilities'
- Interaction with Sichuan University Delegation
- Brainstorming Session on 'India-China Relations: Global, Regional and Bilateral Context including Future Trajectory'
- Interaction on 'Global and Regional Environment and India-China Relations'
- Interaction with Delegation from the Tsinghua University, Beijing
- Interaction with the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC)
- Interaction with Prof. John Lee, Hudson Institute, Washington on China
- Interaction with Prof. Wang Dong, Secretary General, Pangao Institution, Beijing
- Interaction with the China Institute of Maritime Economy and Technology
- Interaction with Delegation from Research Institute of Indian Ocean Economies, Kunming, China
- Interaction with the Tsinghua University, Beijing
- Roundtable on 'Recent Developments in Nepal-China Relations: Implications'
- Discussion on 'India's Recent Foreign Policy Moves in Wuhan, Sochi, Singapore and Qingdao'

Myanmar

- Interaction with Myanmar Delegation
- Indo-Myanmar Dialogue
- Trilateral Dialogue: India-Bangladesh-Myanmar

Map is for thematic representation only, it does not represent any legal survey.
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India's engagement with the Neighbours

This period under review saw elections being held in Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Maldives, and Bangladesh. The reverberations from the neighbourhood were felt in VIF as well. It hosted several talks, roundtable discussions, including few visits in the neighbourhood. This period also marked completion of four years of India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and several of the themes and sub themes in the interactions also reflected upon India's engagement within the neighbourhood and the way ahead.

Nepal

Given the ushering of a new government in Nepal, headed by PM Oli earlier in the year, that led to a 're-set' of ties leading to frequent exchange of high level visits and the various agreements that were signed, these developments received focus at the VIF too. Talks focussing on the bilateral and regional situation were held with Prof. Vijay Kant Karna of Tribhubhan University and Mr. Sunil KC, CEO of Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs, Kathmandu. Various aspects of Sino-Nepal relations, its implications for India-Nepal relations and the way forward for the South Asian region were discussed. A review on six months of India-Nepal Relations under PM Oli and the future prospects was held with a group of experts from within and outside of VIF. VIF also participated in the first Nepal India Think-Tank meeting held in Kathmandu on 31 July 2018.

Bhutan

Developments in the other Himalayan neighbour Bhutan, in the context of Chinese road building and military activity in the disputed Doklam region, which was the major reason for India-China stand-off last year, was the focus of a brainstorming session at VIF among others.

Bangladesh and Myanmar

The two eastern neighbours, Bangladesh and Myanmar, received greater attention. There were a number of delegation visits including two bilateral and a trilateral dialogues amongst India- Bangladesh-Myanmar. Apart from a group of young leaders and Members of Parliament in the aftermath of the 11th Parliament elections in Bangladeshi visiting VIF several other interactions with senior members of Bangladesh

Nationalist Party were held. A four member delegation led by former foreign secretary Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury highlighted several of the positive developments along with the outstanding issues that remain between the two neighbours. This was followed by a trilateral interaction with members of delegation from Myanmar and India. While the issue of Rohingya dominated the discussions, possibilities of common economic agenda especially on the common borders saw many flow of ideas. A six member delegation led by Gen. U Aung Min, formerly a Minister and Chief Negotiator with Myanmar's Ethnic Armed Organisations visited the VIF during the year. The ensuing discussion covered large grounds including role of China in Myanmar. The delegation expressed their interest in India increasing its engagement with Myanmar.

Maldives

Elections in Maldives had ushered in President Solih, following which a high level Maldivian delegation led by Mohamed Jameel Ahmed, former Vice President of the Maldives, Shidhatha Shareef, Minister for Gender, Family and Services and Adam Shareef visited the VIF and discussed issues of mutual interest. Mention was made of the past domestic instability in Maldives that had put heavy strain on the bilateral relations which has traditionally enjoyed close ties.

BIMSTEC

The first BIMSTEC Think Tanks Dialogue on Regional Security was held at the VIF on 13-14 November 2018. The discussion revolved around the need for cooperation amongst the security institutions of BIMSTEC member states to deal with the common challenges of terrorism, radicalization, response by BIMSTEC Countries, trans-national crimes (involving arms smuggling, narcotics, human trafficking), cyber security, climate change, challenges associated with Disaster Management and maritime security. It was reiterated that besides physical connectivity, there should also be connectivity between people, organisations and security agencies. The final session deliberated on the way forward in the BIMSTEC security discourse. All delegates, participants and attendees appreciated the initiative taken by the VIF to hold the first such Dialogue on Regional Security.

Suggestions were made to ensure continuity of the dialogue and transform it into a robust platform that would generate new and core ideas for common action against common security risks, threats, and challenges in the BIMSTEC security space.

The neighbourhood studies would, in the next few months, host a delegation from Nepal and Sri Lanka and also follow up on the past interactions and proposes to remain engaged with all the neighbours and forge close institutional ties with them in the year ahead.

Major events held during the year

2 April 2018 - Interaction with Visiting Chinese Press Delegation

The VIF hosted twelve senior journalists and editors from China for a wide ranging interaction on economic relations, adverse balance of trade, China's defence spending, India's strategic partnerships, India's soft power and India's repudiation of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

4 April 2018 - Round Table Discussion (RTD) on 'India-China Relations: Global, Regional and Bilateral Context including Economic Issues'

A RTD on 'India-China Relations: Global, Regional and Bilateral Context', was organised at the VIF to assess the impact of China's call of 'New Era'. Top experts deliberated on issues such as China's new constitution, military restructuring, economic and technology issues, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), influence in South Asia, the Quad Grouping, Indian media and perception management.

13 April 2018 - Interaction with Prof. Hon-Shiang Lau on Tibet

Prof. Hon-Shiang Lau, a research scholar of Chinese history, gave a presentation on 'How Tibet was never a part of China since antiquity. The presentation affirmed that the China's official authoritative and primary source documents - historical records written in Chinese language by the Ming and Yuan dynasties - do not support the claim that Tibet was part of China. The first time China published a map showing Tibet to be a part of China

was in the year 1812. It was only in 1927 in the Republic of China era, official books accepted by the Chinese Government as being authentic, that Tibet has been mentioned as part of China.

23 April 2018 - Interaction with Chinese delegation on 'India-China Relations in the New Era'

A RTD was organised with a delegation from the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) on 'India-China Relations in the New Era', in the aftermath of China's 19th People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and National People's Congress (NPC). The Chinese side stated that a new understanding of the 'New Era' was necessary to appreciate China's move into the Indian Ocean, helping Pakistan improve, and also to expand bilateral relationship and trade. India, therefore, has a great opportunity to cooperate with China. The Indian side pointed at the need to address the key structural issues that have become obstacles to the growth of bilateral ties, including the territorial issue, CPEC, China's position on India's entry into NSG, Pakistan based terrorism, growing trade deficit etc. Both sides agreed that there are a large number of issues between both sides which need increased dialogue.

9 May 2018 - Round Table on 'Wuhan Informal Summit: Implications for India'

A RTD of top experts was organised to discuss on the Modi-Xi Informal Summit at Wuhan and its Implications. Major questions discussed were the motivations behind the Summit and its implications on bilateral relations, foreign policy and economic relationship be adjusted. Giving divergent assessments, some felt that the Summit augurs well for cooperative partnership while others felt that without solving the existing hurdles the cooperative relationship will be weak. Future courses of actions were also discussed.

22 June 2018 - Discussion on 'India's Recent Foreign Policy Moves in Wuhan, Sochi, Singapore and Qingdao'

The RTD discussed the increasing unpredictability of international players and great power politics in

East Asia between China, Russia, and US. Effects of Chinese investments and border disputes and US foreign policy, ranging from the Singapore Summit to protectionism and withdrawal from international agreements, were discussed.

27 June 2018 - Roundtable on 'Recent Developments in Nepal-China Relations: Implications'

In a RTD on 'Recent Developments in Nepal-China Relations: Implications', various aspects of Sino-Nepal relations, its implications and the way forward was discussed in the backdrop of Nepalese Prime Minister K.P Oli's recent visit to China. It was pointed out by the Nepalese side that Chinese investments would benefit Nepal, and that Prime Minister Oli had managed to resolve many outstanding issues between the two neighbours. Concerns in Nepal on delayed Indian projects, India's inability to compete in the Lumbini and Pokhara international airports, and contrasting completion of hydropower projects by the Chinese companies were also mentioned. The Indian side countered that unfortunately, Nepal failed to take India's offer to develop its disaster response and mitigation capabilities, while questionably inviting China to setup close to the Siliguri corridor. They called for a need to clear the negative perceptions about India.

16 July 2018 - Visit of Delegation from the VIF to China

A VIF delegation interacted with representatives of top Chinese think tanks and other organisations where discussions were held on bilateral, regional and international issues, including the Belt and Road Initiative, India studies, trade and investments, cultural cooperation and issues of international importance. The delegation was led by Director-VIF, Dr Arvind Gupta.

24 July 2018 - Understanding China's Progress in the Development of its Defence and Strategic Science, Technology and Innovation Capabilities :Prof Tai Ming Cheung

Associate Professor at the School and Director of the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation

(IGCC), University of California, outlined China's science and technological (S&T) development and expounded on China's shift from 'absorptive statist' to innovation-led model. Xi Jinping's vision of civil-military fusion and China's Innovation Driven Development Strategy (IDDS) was also elaborated to show government and private companies investing in the S&T projects.

3 August 2018 - Conference on 'Assessing India's Connectivity with its Neighbourhood'

The conference, in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) with the participation of industry, intelligentsia & policy makers was aimed at taking stock of India's achievements and shortcomings with regard to its extended connectivity with its neighbourhood. The conference deliberated on the identification and prioritisation of projects, potential welfare gains and geo-strategic implications of connectivity projects.

6 August 2018 - Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Party (BTF) Delegation's visits VIF

A delegation of BTF and Awami League alliance elaborated upon a trend of a particular section of Bangladesh's polity attempting to move the narrative further right, while the other sections wished to arrest that trend and promote the secular inclusive fabric for Bangladesh. The discussions were a poignant reminder of the nation's political trajectory from being East Pakistan to its birth as an independent Bangladesh, and its urge to uphold the tenets of secularism and integration in the 2010 Constitution.

7 August 2018 - Interaction with the Sichuan University Delegation

An in-depth discussion on the international and bilateral issues affecting both the countries, such as Asia Africa Growth Corridor, Indo-Pacific, Quad, India-China trade deficit, border issue and exchange of maps, water security was organised with the top Chinese think tank. It was concluded that economic cooperation and better understanding among academics and policy-makers can be the basis to solve strategic issues and enhance mutual trust.

20 August 2018 - Brainstorming Session on 'India-China Relations: Global, Regional and Bilateral Context including Future Trajectory'

The session examined the structural challenges in India-China relations and its future trajectory. The need for a new approach in India-China Relations to improve strategic communication and collaboration at the multilateral level was highlighted. To bridge the economic gap it was considered essential to develop India's science, technology, engineering and mathematics issues along with military build up. It was concluded that India needed to manage its difficult relationship with a combination of cooperation and competition.

23 August 2018 - Brainstorming Session on Afghanistan

The brain-storming session was devoted to the greater security challenges Afghanistan faces as elections draw closer. It was observed that the situation necessitates greater assistance and coordination of efforts from Washington, along with military pressure, to gather international consensus on de-legitimising insurgents and their enablers, particularly those elements in Pakistan that support terrorist networks.

23 August 2018 - Interaction with Dr Ying Rong, on 'Global and Regional Environment and India-China Relations'

The Vice President and Senior Research Fellow, China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), China, interacted with VIF on Sino-Indian relations to offer an overview of the course of the Chinese Foreign Policy and the blueprint of Xi Jinping's thought on building 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' for the 'New Era'. On India-China relations, he proposed that both work together in institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), New Development Bank (NDB) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In conclusion, he reiterated that India-China cooperation was an important factor in the changing global situation and both the countries should join hands to make the international order more stable.

29 August 2018 - Interaction with Delegation from the Tsinghua University, Beijing

The delegation from Tsinghua University, Beijing, discussed the issues related to US-China conflict and India-China Cooperation on Indo-Pacific and maritime issues, Afghanistan, various regional forums, climate change, WTO, trade imbalance, cultural contacts etc. It was pointed out that progress on border issue can be the single most important confidence building measure between the two countries. Xi Jinping's proposition about the 'alternative world order', Indian concerns regarding the kind of the order and the role of India, ASEAN, Japan and the US were also raised.

21 September 2018 - Interaction with Myanmar Delegation

A high-powered delegation from the Peace Development Foundation of Myanmar discussed the India-Myanmar relations and the way forward. Issues discussed included the China factor, its economic monopolising, insurgency, the Panglong Conference, socio-economics of Nagas on both sides, and problems of the Arakan Army and the Rohingyas, while India was seen as a balancer. It was reiterated that Myanmar did not want to become a peripheral province of China and therefore it needed India for defence equipment, cooperation in high technology areas like space, etc.

27 September 2018 - Interaction with the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC)

Discussions were held with a high-powered delegation from the IDCPC on the concept of the Indo-Pacific, India's own interpretations, and the recent 2+2 Dialogue. While India's trade and investments and collective security concerns were highlighted, it was clarified that the 2+2 Dialogue was a benign, need-based agreement. The Chinese delegates expressed their concern about Japan's and US' Indo-Pacific role, their technology, energy and infrastructure initiatives. They reiterated that China stands for regional cooperation as India does.

5 October 2018 - Interaction with the Delegation from the Prospect Foundation, Taipei

Discussions were held with a delegation from the Prospect Foundation, Taipei on three themes: India's Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific Strategy; India's Foreign Policy outlook and its relations with major global players; and Prime Minister Modi's Act East Policy and Taiwan's New Southbound Policy: Convergence and Cooperation. Increasing Chinese aggression in the South China Sea, the counter-weight concept of the Indo-Pacific, India's bilateral and major power relations and the upward trajectory of India-Taiwan relations were delved into.

30 October 2018 - Discussion on Neighbourhood

A roundtable discussion with a group of experts was held to take stock of the four years of 'Neighbourhood First' policy'. While India had made some gains with Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan it was a work in progress for others that requires sustained attention in the days ahead.

13-14 November 2018 - BIMSTEC Think Tanks Dialogue on Regional Security

Held in pursuance of the decision taken in the first and second meetings of the National Security Advisers of BIMSTEC member states in March 2017, the first such dialogue organised jointly by the VIF and the BIMSTEC Secretariat, saw participation from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. Highlighting that there were no territorial or maritime disputes within the members, a higher profile for BIMSTEC on the international platform was sought. Issues of security cooperation, terrorism, radicalization and transnational crime, disaster management and finally, the way forward for the BIMSTEC were touched upon.

11 January 2019 - Interaction with Prof. John Lee, Hudson Institute, Washington

The Professor speaking on 'Responding to China's Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping', stated that China was looking for regional pre-eminence, wanting to loosen the US alliances in the region and seeking to project its power through its alliances adopting coercive and

persuasive approaches to weaken the American security posture, rather than going to war. China's spread of two narratives - first, that it already dominates the world economically and its pre-eminence is inevitable; and second, it does not have to be more powerful than the US, all she has to do is to inflict a cost on the US, either military or economic - was also explained.

14 January 2019 - Interaction with Prof. Wang Dong, Secretary General, Pangao Institution, Beijing

The interaction with the VIF and the CII focused on potentials for enhanced India-China cooperation against the problem of sustainable economic growth. Expounding on Xi Jinping's diplomacy the Professor highlighted its key features of independence, peace, development and great relationships, and proposed an India-China-US triangle discussion on economic and global issues. The Indian side proposed a synergy in bilateral relations through trade, investments in infrastructure sector, clean technologies, building materials etc., and resolution of differences on terrorism, Nuclear Suppliers Group and the boundary issue.

14 January 2019 - Round Table on Changing Dynamics and the Evolving Situation in Afghanistan

A brainstorming session with top experts was organised to deliberate on India's approach towards Afghanistan. Appreciating the Taliban's irreversible intransigence, four scenarios were discussed: Taliban victory, Taliban defeat, power sharing and status quo. Need for continued support to the people and elected government of Afghanistan was emphasised.

15 January 2019 - Interaction with the China Institute of Maritime Economy and Technology

The Chinese delegation showed interest in exploring areas of cooperation in order to bolster India-China relations through use of China's capacities in the shipbuilding industry.

18 January 2019 - Interaction with Delegation from Research Institute of Indian Ocean Economies, Kunming, China

Discussions were held on the current status of India-China Relations and the way forward, global geopolitics and triangular relationship between India-US and China, India's Act East Policy and the prospects of India-China economic cooperation. The Chinese delegation noted that the Wuhan summit had 'reset' the scope for cooperation while Indian participants highlighted that strategic partnership requires resolution of issues like the exchange of LAC maps, position on terrorism, NSG and clarification of intents in the Indian Ocean Region and the South China Sea.

29 January 2019 - Interaction with Maldivian Delegation on 'Regional Situation and India-Maldives Relations'

In an interaction with a high-powered delegation from the Maldives, foundation of India-Maldives relations, revival of bilateral ties, India's commitments to Maldives socio-economic development, strengthening of democratic and independent institutions, prevention of radicalisation and terrorism, and maritime, defence and regional cooperation were discussed. Security aspects of China's moves to create bases in the Maldives were also discussed.

30 January 2019 - Interaction with the Tsinghua University, Beijing

A 23-member student delegation from the Tsinghua University, Beijing, sought answers to their queries regarding India. Shaping of India-China relations, position on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), tackling unequal growth, environment problems and social diversities were explained. India's Sustainable Development Goal through redistributive justice and knowledge-intensive services sector and the 'India story' like Yoga etc. were also explained.

12 March 2019 - Interaction with Bangladesh Delegation

A delegation of 17 young members of Bangladesh Parliament interacted with the VIF faculty covering a

wide gamut of bilateral issues. While acknowledging India's interest in generation of many infrastructure development and small development projects, they suggested that India could continue to contribute to the growing economy of Bangladesh.

19 March 2019 - Indo-Bangladesh Bilateral Dialogue

A three-member Bangladesh delegation led by former foreign secretary Shamsher Chowdhury highlighted several of the positive developments along with the outstanding issues that remain between the two neighbours. Views on issues of connectivity corridors, economic growth zones, seamless trade and travel, BIMSTEC, borders, water, non-state actors, besides the regional issues including the role of China, Myanmar and other extra regional players were discussed.

20 March 2019 - Indo-Myanmar Dialogue

A four-member delegation from top think tanks of Myanmar discussed various issues under bilateral as well as regional ambit. Bilateral discussions ranged from social, economic and security issues, India's 'neighbours first' policy, connectivity and development and Myanmar's expectations of India's support in greater developments in Myanmar and the Indo-Myanmar border regions. Ways for India to fulfil a greater role in regional development was also suggested.

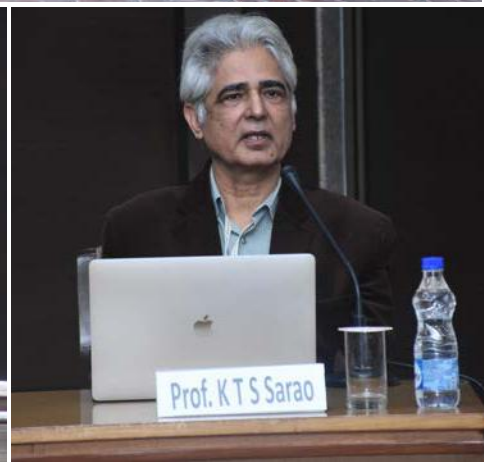
20 March, 2019 - Trilateral Dialogue: India-Bangladesh-Myanmar

A trilateral dialogue comprising of delegation from Bangladesh, Myanmar and VIF experts examined the possibilities of closer bilateral and regional ties through economic, strategic, cultural and maritime cooperation. Possibilities of strengthening regional collectiveness by creating an environment of cooperation, development and 'single market' zones, common border economic zones and communities was discussed. Ways to amicably resolve the Rohingya issue that was the cause of tension between Bangladesh and Myanmar was also discussed.

Historical and Civílisational Studies









In the past one year, the focus of the Centre for History & Civilisational Studies has been to expand its activities along the following thematic axes:

Greater awareness about Indian history & civilisation

The History of Ancient India series was conceptualized in 2010 to address the need of providing a fresh and objective perspective on ancient Indian history and civilisation. These volumes are intended to serve as authoritative reference books, where an interested reader would find the most comprehensive knowledge related to various aspects of ancient Indian history. Under the editorship of Prof. Dilip K. Chakrabarti, volumes 6 & 7 of the series were officially released in January 2019. These two volumes deal with 'Social, Political and Judicial Ideas, Institutions and Practices' and 'Economy: Agriculture, Craft and Trade' respectively.

VIF has also instituted a new lecture series Understanding Indian History & Civilisation (UIHC) in order to promote knowledge and understanding about Indian civilisation. Distinguished scholars from different related fields are invited to give in-depth lectures on their subject. Four lectures were held from August 2018 to March 2019.

India's soft power and cultural diplomacy

Since the overwhelming success of the International Day of Yoga, it has been felt that it is now time to mobilize our ancient resources of ideas and bring them to practical and strategic use to build an Indian narrative. It is important to recognise these components of India's soft power and international cultural diplomacy as vital strategic asset. With this end in mind, a major conference was organised in January 2019 on the theme 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Relevance of India's Ancient Thinking to Contemporary Strategic Reality'. Distinguished scholars from various disciplines like Philosophy, History, Religious Studies, Sanskrit Studies, Political Science and International Relations, and senior diplomats and bureaucrats participated to discuss ancient Indian ideas and provided recommendations for mobilizing them to promote India's soft power worldwide. The proceedings of the conference will be

published shortly. The conference also led to the formation of a Core Committee comprising of senior diplomats, bureaucrats and academics, who would oversee the process of carrying forward the recommendations that emerged in the course of the conference.

In order to capture India's already existing cultural footprints in other Asian countries, different talks have been organised at the VIF. There was a panel discussion on Ramayana in ASEAN countries. Dr. Shashi Bala, Dean, Centre for Indology, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, is giving a series of lectures at the VIF on the cultural linkages between ancient India and China.

Hindu Studies

VIF has also recognised the need to intervene in the academic study of Hinduism, which is by far dominated by Western approaches and concepts. Since we recognise the need for developing an Indian narrative in every domain, it is equally important that the academic discipline of Hindu Studies allows an analysis of the Hindu tradition from Indian viewpoints and not from the perspective of developments in Western societies. In other words, the discipline has to achieve a certain degree of autonomy, and for that we first need to understand and identify the problems in the field so that a solution could be worked out. It is equally important to highlight the ideational resources that this tradition provides for human development.

Vivekananda Studies

Given that VIF is named after Swami Vivekananda and stands for the ideals taught by him, it is only natural that we would also try to create greater awareness about his ideas and contribution towards the development of the Indian nation. With this end in mind, many commentaries and articles have been carried on Swamiji and Sister Nivedita. The year 2017 marked the 150th birth anniversary of Nivedita, while 2018 was the 125th year of Swamiji's Chicago address.

Indian Nationalism

This year, VIF has also worked to bring to public domain ideas related to Indian nationhood and the importance of nationalism in today's context of

globalisation. Hence, an Occasional Paper was published on Sister Nivedita's ideas on Indian nationhood that aptly address the present challenge posed to the idea of Indian nationalism.

Policy intervention

VIF has also recognised the need for salvaging our priceless tangible heritage (monuments and antiquities) from obscurity and negligence. Work is in progress as to how effective policy recommendations can be formulated to protect our monuments and to spread greater awareness about them.

Major events held during the year

Lecture series : 'India-China Cultural Linkages' by Dr. Shashibala, Dean, Centre for Indology, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi

21 June 2018 - Echoes of Indian Culture in China

Juxtaposing historical connections and the movement of ideas between India and China, Dr. Shashibala argued that Chinese folklore, culture, food habits, music, dance and architecture were influenced by India. Influence of Buddhism and Vedic studies were also elaborated.

13 August 2018 - Indian Scholars in China: Voyages for Cultural Advancement

In the second lecture on India-China Cultural Linkages, Dr. Shashibala dwelt upon the India-China cultural relations and propagation of Indian ideas to China over the ages. Prestigious positions to Indian scholars in Chinese courts, and the saga of legendary scholar-travellers in spreading Indian influence on China was also mentioned.

29 October 2018 - Chinese Masters in India

During her third lecture, Dr. Shashibala spoke about Chinese pilgrims who came to India in search of Buddhist sutra texts and to pay homage to the sacred land. She spoke about Chinese monks Faxian, Zuanxang, Yijing and relatively less-known Chinese travellers. Indian scholars from universities and monasteries in Kashmir, Gandhara and Nalanda who

visited China and carried texts with them were also mentioned.

10 December 2018 - Silk Route: A Bridge between India and China

In her fourth lecture of the series, Dr. Bala spoke about the small kingdoms situated on the Silk Routes that connected China and India through a vast expanse of desert. Kashgar as a centre of Vedic learning and Khotan as a centre of Buddhist learning were mentioned with the evidences of archaeological excavations which exemplified the influence of Indian culture along the Silk Route.

Lecture Series : Understanding Indian History & Civilisation (UIHC)

7 August 2018 - 'Dharma & Ecology' by Dr. Pankaj Jain

In his lecture, the Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy & Religion, University of North Texas, USA spoke on how ancient Indian ideas are applicable to modern times in the context of environmental activism. Based on the findings from his first book *Dharma and Ecology of Hindu Communities: Sustenance and Sustainability*, his talk revolved around the contribution of the Bishnoi community and the Swadhyay movement towards environmental conservation.

10 October 2018 - 'Indian Mode of Philosophising' by Prof. S. R. Bhatt

The second talk of the VIF lecture series, UIHC was delivered on the theme that philosophy was a cognitive enterprise, but it also acquired some distinctive characteristics based on cultural specificities. It was explained that in India, philosophy represented love for life lived in wisdom; it was a holistic view unlike the compartmentalised approach dominant in the Western philosophy.

27 February 2019 - 'Debates on Ancient India' by Prof. Dilip K Chakrabarti

In this long trajectory of study, Prof. Dilip K Chakrabarti finds three issues particularly problematic: (1) the Aryan hypothesis; (2) the extent to which our

literary texts could throw light on actual historical events; and (3) the academic suitability in the Indian context of some frequently-used European concepts and terms such as 'feudalism' and others. Commenting on the two disciplines of archaeo-linguistics and archaeo-genetics, he questioned history derived from study of languages, scholars dwelling on human differences rather than unities and the Marxist historians' concoction of communal perspectives of India.

15 March 2019 - 'Hindu Studies in India and Abroad Problems & Prospects' by Swami Narasimhananda

As part of the VIF Lecture Series UHIC, Swami Narasimhananda described the two current trends of Hindu Studies. Study of books written by sincere but culturally different people taking the themes out of context, and our failure to have a certified system of Hinduism and Hindu Studies were identified as the core problems. Besides, the problems of divorce between theory and practice, translation, funding and inadequate public access were highlighted.

Other Major Events

5 April 2019 - Panel Discussion on 'India's Cultural Linkages'

Dr. Shashibala spoke on how Ramayana travelled to the South-East Asian countries through traders and other travellers. She discussed the presence of Ramayana in each of these countries. She described how Ramayana stories are depicted in temple panels in Cambodia, how rivers and cities in the country are named after rivers and cities found in the Ramayana, and went on to explain the matter. Ms. Rizvi, a conservationist by profession, spoke on how art has a universal nature despite the fact that our ideas of what we view are culturally attuned. She tried to trace the commonalities between Buddhist art across the world, for instance, the differences and the similarities between the architectural patterns in Buddhist stupas in India and Pagodas in China and Japan. She also discussed about other common features such as the Wheel of Existence and the Mandala. Her central

purpose was to highlight how art, especially Buddhist art, can be an instrument for promoting peace and understanding.

5-7 July 2018 – 'Shared Values and Democracy in Asia' - The 4th Samvad Conference in Tokyo

In 2015, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Abe of Japan had mooted a unique idea of holding a regular dialogue on 'Samvad' amongst Asians to discuss conflict avoidance, and philosophical and cultural heritage of Buddhism and Hinduism, the dominant religions in Asia. Four conferences have been held within the Samvad framework since, in New Delhi (2015), Tokyo (2016), Yangon (2017), and Tokyo (2018). The Japan Foundation, in collaboration with Hajime Nakamura Institute, the foreign office of Japan and Nikkei Corporation hosted a symposium titled 'Shared Values and Democracy in Asia' on 05th July 2018 in Tokyo, under the Samvad series of dialogues. Prime Minister Modi, in his video address thanked Prime Minister Abe for supporting and hosting the Samvad conference. Speaking about the openness of Hinduism and Buddhism, he said: "Openness, and not dogma, and engaging in philosophy, and not ideology, were among our shared heritage of democratic spirit. This philosophical and cultural heritage of dialogue in the two most ancient Asian faiths, Hinduism and Buddhism, helps us promote better understanding." Describing the proposal as "unique", Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in his address at the closing session said, "Ours is an especially unique venue for discussions. It is not only unparalleled anywhere in the world but also unmatched at any other time in history. It has its beginnings in a proposal Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and I made jointly when he visited Japan four years ago in the autumn." The symposium was attended by scholars from India, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and China. The Government of India sent a high-level official delegation to Tokyo comprising of Shri Banwarilal Purohit, Governor of Tamil Nadu and Shri Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh. The VIF delegation included Shri S Gurusamy, Dr Arvind Gupta, Prof Sujit Dutta and Ms Anuttama Ganguly.

27 - 28 August 2018: Asian Buddhist Media Conclave – Mindful Communication for Conflict Avoidance and Sustainable Development

Organised by the International Buddhist Confederation in association with the VIF & attended by Dr Dhammapiya and Shri S Gurumurthy, the Conclave delved into the salience of mindful communication in conflict avoidance and sustainable development. Developing Buddhist media network like films, TV, print and social media and cultural festivals to spread peace and development through Buddha *dhmma* culture was emphasised.

16-17 January 2019 - Seminar on 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Relevance of India's Ancient Thinking to Contemporary Strategic Reality'

The VIF organised a seminar titled 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: Relevance of India's Ancient Thinking to Contemporary Strategic Reality' in collaboration with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) on 16 and 17 January 2019. Dr. Arvind Gupta, Director, VIF, said it was time for us to think what Indian thought has to offer to the modern world, torn apart by different kinds of conflicts, like conflicts based on linguistic, religious and ethnic identities, climate change, environmental degradation and so on. Any narrow understanding of such issues cannot promote peace. Prof. Kapil Kapoor said that Indian civilisation has always stood for the upholding of dharma. He noted that Indian culture has been a human-centered culture, unlike the Hebraic culture that was God-centered and followed commandments. *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is an ideal that speaks of a person who bears and forbears. It points towards an interdependent, supportive, mutually inclusive system. *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is the ideal of that person who is *udaracharita*-one who is large-hearted and generous in nature; in other words, one who realizes the interconnectedness of the world. The Bhagavad Gita clearly states the ideal as being able to see everyone in oneself and oneself in everyone. It is only in a state of brahmisthiti that one can feel oneness. Prof. S R Bhatt, Chairman, ICPR, opened the session with his observations on how Vasudhaiva

Kutumbakam helps us move towards a different conceptualization of 'Other'-from an "I-Thou" approach to an "I-We" approach. Should we talk in terms of clashes of civilisations or harmony of civilisations? Prof. Dilip K Chakrabarti, University of Cambridge, explored when the concept of 'pan-India' developed historically. Swami Shuddhidananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Prof. Dayanand Bhargava Dr. J M Dave of Swaminarayan Shodh Sansthan, Prof. KTS Sarao, Head of the Department of Buddhist Studies, DU, Prof. Ram Nath Jha, Kum. Nivedita Bhide, Dr. Nanditha Krishna, President, CP Ramaswamy Aiyar Foundation, Chennai, Prof. Balaganapathi Devarakonda, Head of the Department of Philosophy, DU, Pradeep K Gautam of the IDSA and Dr. Arpita Mitra spoke on various facets of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. Shri S. Gurumurthy, reminded us that *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, in order to be effective in International Diplomacy, has to be a reciprocal virtue. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is undoubtedly important, and that is why it appears in so many ancient texts. However, a strategic think tank's approach to the issue will be different from that of a religious or spiritual organisation. Dr. Deepshikha Shahi explored the concept of Advaita Vedanta, Prof. Sujit Dutta dealt with the real challenges of implementing the philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* in International Politics, Swami Paramatmananda, Secretary General & Coordinator of Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, spoke about the nature of Indian culture, Amb Asoke Mukerji evaluated India's contribution to international cultural diplomacy in the last hundred years. India was one of the members of the League of Nations and a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles signed in 1919 with the objective of preventing future war. Amb Mukerji traced the long history of India's involvement in international intellectual and cultural cooperation and the role of great Indian stalwarts such as Tagore, Acharya J C Bose, Prof. D N Banerji and others. Prof. Priyankar Upadhyaya of the Benaras Hindu University (BHU) talked about how *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* can provide a framework for an indigenous approach to peace.

17 January 2019 - Panel Discussion on 'Swami Vivekananda and Nation Building'

Panelists consisting of top names in Indian philosophy, such as, Swami Paramatmananda Saraswati, Swami Shuddhidananda and Ku. Nivedita Bhide commemorated Swami Vivekananda's 156th birth anniversary by focusing on his teachings. Themes like a country can progress only if each and every citizen can progress and India's providence to develop new civilisation in the world were elaborated. Swamiji Vivekananda's bold message asking for muscles of iron and nerves of steel to work for the nation was recalled.

18 March, 2019 - Book Discussion on 'The Borderlands and Boundaries of the Indian Subcontinent' by Padma Shri Professor Dilip K. Chakrabarti

A distinguished panel of scholars and VIF faculty examined the basic elements of geographical, historical, economic and religious interactions between the accepted outer boundary line of the Indian sub-continent and the major geographical zones which lie outside it, as described in this path breaking book. It was revealing to take a novel approach to look at Indian history from the prism of India's borderlands. The book brings out the importance of recognising the importance of this Indic world spanning the entire Asian landmass to get a sense of who we were and who we are, as against unsubstantiated claims made by others, including China. It was felt that based on that understanding of history, India needs to examine her foreign and security dilemmas.

Governance and Political Studies





During the year covering major developments in the North East, the Centre for Governance Studies organised a Round table Discussion on the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB). This was followed by series of articles on the implications of the CAB and a talk under the Vimarsha series on 'India's North East: From Periphery to the Core' by Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister of Finance & Health, Govt of Assam among others.

Discussions were also held on Ecological Restoration, Criminal Justice System in India, on Emergency and Earth quake Preparedness. The centre also organised two very important book discussions: one on Sardar Patel and the other on Portraits of Hindutva.

The Centre proposes to continue with similar activities in the coming year.

Major events held during the year

14 May 2018 - Interaction with Prof CR Babu, Environmentalist and Ecologist, on 'Ecological Restoration of Degraded Lands and Wastelands'

Noted environmentalist Prof C.R. Babu shared with the VIF's faculty his views on the importance of ecological restoration of degraded lands and wastelands by recounting many of his 'barren to beautiful' stories wherein large swaths of degraded and wastelands around the national capital have been turned into major tourist attractions, also attracting a wide variety of flora and fauna. Citing land degradation as one of the major challenges of the 21st century, he floated the idea that a 'National Mission on Ecological Restoration of Degraded Lands and Wastelands' was a necessity to ensure environmental sustainability that in turn can ensure sustainable development. A detailed discussion followed.

6 June 2018 - Talk on 'Criminal Justice in India – Police and Prosecution Reforms'

Advocate DP Singh gave his insight into the drawbacks and prospects of criminal justice procedures in India. Citing the disparities between development of economic and scientific sectors as opposed to that of our legal system, that is marred by

mutual distrust between all stakeholders of the criminal justice system in India, he highlighted comparisons with the international system, and emphasised on the need for reforms. He also focused on terror laws and the Information Age Crime Act.

25 June 2018 - Release of 'The Emergency: Indian Democracy's Darkest Hour', authored by Dr. A. Surya Prakash

Eminent political commentator and Chairman Prasar Bharati, Dr. Surya Prakash's book was released by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Vice President of India. Describing the repressions during the Emergency, the author said institutions of democracy and democratic values should be strengthened. Shri Venkaiah Naidu spoke of the need for incorporating information about Emergency in textbooks and stated that democracy demands the participation of leaders who conduct themselves on the basis of character, calibre, capacity and conduct.

4 September 2018 - Release of 'Sardar Patel, Unifier of Modern India', by Shri Ajit Doval, KC (National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India)

The book chronicles the remarkable contributions of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to the post-Independence integration of states into the Indian Union. Shri Doval appreciated the authors' efforts at writing a book about the persona of a man whose contribution can draw "no other parallels" in modern history. He recognised Sardar Patel as someone who comprehended the idea & importance of sovereignty and was instrumental in laying the foundations of a nation state. He said in a nation state there was one law, one Constitution. Sovereignty cannot be divided.

25-26 October 2018 - National Workshop on 'Earthquake Preparedness in India'

The VIF, Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) organised a workshop to deliberate on topics such as earthquake risk reduction, safety of the built environment, earthquake response, earthquake mitigation, and public-private partnership in promoting earthquake preparedness. Minister of

State for Urban Development, Shri Hardeep Puri delivered a Special Address at the workshop.

7 January 2019 - Seminar on Challenges of Migration

In order to understand the logic of Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) a seminar was organised by the VIF in which various facets of the Act were discussed. It was pointed out that the proposed concession is guided by humanitarian considerations and not religious consideration. CAB covers six religious minorities and not just the Hindus. Therefore, it will not be correct to say that it is Hindu centric. CAB is applicable to the entire country. The people who are granted citizenship can be settled all over the country. The load of resettlement will not fall on one state. CAB is not against the Assam Accord, as is being made out. The National Register of Citizen (NRC) provides protection to the indigenous community from illegal migrants. It is an enabling provision for a certain section of illegal migrants facilitating their acquisition of citizenship keeping in mind their unique circumstances. While there is a logic behind the CAB it is nevertheless a sensitive issue that needs to be handled carefully and objectively.

13 February 2019 - Panel discussion on the book, 'Portraits of Hindutva: From Harappa to Ayodhya', authored by Shri Rajesh Singh

The discussion traced the evolution of the Hindutva phenomenon since the Vedic period to the present, and recorded the contributions of great personalities to its growth which led to the proliferation of Hindutva sentiments - Adi Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, to name the tallest among them. It was pointed out that the narrative of the Hindu-Muslim divide was first created and then promoted to discredit the Hindutva elements.

Everything that has selfishness for its basis, competition for its right hand and enjoyment as its goal, must die sooner or later.

Swami Vivekananda

Economic Studies





The Centre organised discussions on economy, India-China trade and Impact of global economy on geopolitics during the year.

The Centre proposes to continue with similar activities in the coming year.

Major events held during the year

30 August 2018 - Round Table Discussion on 'India-China Trade'

The RTD was attended by India's top economists, including the Vice Chairman of NITI Ayog, members of PM's Economic Advisory Council and others who made presentations, followed by discussion on India-China trade. India's participation in the RCEP and TPP, reforms in tax structures, land and labour laws and US-China trade dispute were factored in. Some experts believed that it is an opportune time to cooperate with China while the others believed India needed to be cautious against China's trade and investments policies.

15 November 2018 - Panel Discussion on Economy

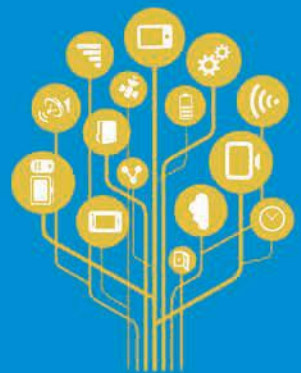
Dr Roger Moser, Assistant Professor and the Director of Asia Connect Center at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) and Shri S. Gurumurthy, eminent Indian political and economic analyst and Chairman, VIF participated in a panel discussion on Economy. Dr Roger Moser spoke on the topic 'From Insight to

Impact: How Technology Integration might matter more than Innovation'. Dr Moser highlighted the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) that characterises today's business environment. He elaborated how business model innovation can help to differentiate value proposition in such VUCA environment, and find the right fit between the intelligence required as inputs to decision making and how companies can gather and process intelligence. Shri S. Gurumurthy enunciated on the transformation of the US economy and the growing interlinkages between the global economy and world order. With globalization and its institutions such as the WTO, IMF and even the UN losing their relevance, Shri S Gurumurthy anticipated a rise of 'Asianism' as regional relations would branch into a web of bilateral relations.

11 December 2018 - Impact of Global Economy on Geopolitics - Implications for India

Eminent economists and diplomats highlighted the inter-linkages between the global economy & geopolitics. Rising inequality and failure of globalisation, trade slowdown, weakening of international financial institutions, multipolar transitions, Russia's role, oil and gas politics, China's rise, BRI, 'America-First' and US-China Trade War, RCEP, 5G and the Act East Policy were dissected in details.

Scientific and Technological Studies





Technology is and shall remain a critical component of India's comprehensive national power. During the year the centre explored several issues including nuclear power, cyber security and emerging technologies etc.

The Centre proposes to continue with similar activities in the coming year.

2 February 2019 - Release of Nuclear Power India's Development Imperative (a VIF Task Force Report) by Shri Suresh Prabhu

The task force report titled 'Nuclear Power: Imperative for India's Development' brings out challenges facing the nuclear power at a time of falling tariff and large number of stressed assets in power sector. The report points out that despite these difficulties, there is no alternative to nuclear power in a carbon constrained world. Nuclear power, unlike renewables, provides stable base-load power. Wind and solar are intermittent source of power, which

need balancing power. Nuclear power could be competitive if these external costs are factored into tariff structure of renewable energy.

27 February 2019 - Dealing with India's Cyber-security Challenges, Interaction with Dr Prasanna Mulgaonkar, CEO Cloud Raxak Inc.

Highlighting the significant role of the communication infrastructure technology in routine activities from fake news to operating home appliances, and to online financial transactions, the speaker discussed the good and bad sides of cyber-space. The need of everyone, users, policymakers, and technologists, to work together for a model of 'proactive' measures to consistently raise the bar of the security was emphasised.

Outreach



VIMARSHA

26 April 2018

Talk by Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VM, ADC, on **'Role of Indian Air Force in the Changing Security Environment'**



23 May

'Role of Indian Navy in Changing Security Environment', a talk by Admiral PVSM, AVSM, VM, ADC

21 September 2018

Talk by Swami Avdheshanand Giri ji Maharaj, Acharya Mahamandaleshwar of the Juna Akhara on **'Desh, Samaj aur Vyakti'**



8 August

Talk on **'Technology Development'**, by Prof. Dr. J. P. Singh, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, JNU

13 October 2018

Talk by Ku. Nivedita Bhide, Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, on **'Swami Vivekananda and his Contemporary Relevance'**



15 November

'State of the Economy: India's Growth Story', talk by Shri S. Gurumurthy

14 March

'Jammu & Kashmir: A State of the Nation' by Lt General Syed Ata Hasnain, AVSM, SM (Bar), VSM (Bar), Corps & Militia



Centre for National Security and Strategic Studies.

Centre for Historical and Civilisational Studies.

Centre for Governance and Political Studies

2018-19

July 2018

Changing Security
Admiral Sunil Lanba,
1, ADC



19 June 2018

Talk on '**Understanding the Ancient Indian Texts: Puranas and the Bhagavad Gita**', a talk by Dr. Bibek Deb Roy, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister



August 2018

Policy for Sustainable
Prof M Jagadesh Kumar,
Director of Jawaharlal Nehru
University (JNU)



23 July 2018

A Talk by Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, on '**Urbanisation in India: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities**'

September 2018

India and the World', a
talk by Dr. V. K. Rajwade, Chairman, VIF



11 January 2019

'India's North-East: From Periphery to the Core', a talk by Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister of Finance and Health, Government of Assam



October 2019

India - The Big Picture,
Prof. Dr. B. V. Subramanian, PVSM, UYSM,
Bar, Former GOC 15
Secretary



11 February 2019

'Digital Innovation and Disruption in India', a talk by Dr. Gulshan Rai, National Cyber Security Coordinator, NSCS

Centre for Technological and Scientific Studies

Centre for Economic Studies

Centre for Neighbourhood Studies



26 April 2018 - Role of Indian Air Force in the Changing Security Environment : Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VM, ADC

Under the aegis of Vimarsha, Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa spoke on 'The Role of Indian Air Force (IAF) in the Changing Security Environment'. The Air Chief detailed out the role and capabilities of the IAF as the fourth largest in the world with wide ranging operational capabilities. He delved into India's threat spectrum and touched upon the need for upgrading and modernising air power in winning modern wars. The recently conducted Exercise *Gagan Shakti* was also explained. An interactive session with the audience followed.

23 May 2018 - Role of Indian Navy in Changing Security Environment : Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC

Admiral Lanba, Chief of Indian Navy, was invited at the Vimarsha to speak on the key features of India's security environment. Describing India's security as dynamic and uncertain, accentuated by great power rivalry across a wide range of domains like economic, technological, military and climate change, and complemented by shift of global centre of gravity to Asia, the Naval Chief said India's maritime doctrine rests on five pillars, i.e. strategy for deterrence, preparation for conflict, creating favourable and positive environment, coastal and offshore security, and finally, force and capability development. The Indian Navy, the Chief stated, was a balanced, multi-dimensional and fully networked force with optimum mix of capabilities and capacity development to perform that duty.

19 June 2018 - Understanding the Ancient Indian Texts: Puranas and the Bhagavad Gita : Dr Bibek Deb Roy, Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

Dr. Bibek Deb Roy, speaking on *Bhagavad Gita*, chose to focus on its richness. He discussed the different versions of Gita and the Purana's. He then elaborated upon the usually overlooked subtle

meanings of particular words and verses of the *Bhagavad Gita* and the meter in which it was composed. He opined that our object should be to engage with the *Gita* closely for what it speaks for.

23 July 2018 - Urbanisation in India: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities : Amb Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

The speaker put forth the proposition that India's growing urbanisation was largely born out of her growing economy as also a reduction in the share of Agriculture to GDP. He stated that the Government had embraced the challenge of urbanisation as an opportunity and cited the examples of the many flagship initiatives launched by his Government on housing, employment, water, medical, hygiene etc.

8 August 2018 - Technology for Sustainable Development : Prof M Jagadesh Kumar, Vice Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

That the progress of civilisation has always been underpinned by advanced technology, and in today's age, technology is the key driver of globalisation, was the theme of this Vimarsha. Its two sides - improvement in material well-being and creation of instruments of destruction were also highlighted. The speaker pitched for Indian societal values, responsibilities and strategies to build a sustainable society.

21 September 2018 - Desh, Samaj aur Vyakti : Swami Avdheshanand Giri ji Maharaj, Acharya Mahamandaleshwar of the Juna Akhara

In commemoration of 125th year of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech, Swami Avdheshanandji expressed his concern over increasing materialism, insecurity, consumerism, extremism, and self-ignorance in today's society. Elaborating on society, nation, civilisation, humanity and *Dharma*, he advised all to recognise their inner-selves and work for the greater humanity by following our culture, traditional values and spiritual path; this according to him was the ultimate solution for the present chaos in our society and also in our mind.

13 October 2018 - Swami Vivekananda and his Contemporary Relevance : Ku. Nivedita Bhide, Vice President of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari

Besides explaining Swami Vivekananda's vibrant and relevant teachings and personality, Ku. Bhide pointed out that practicing our duty towards family, society and country is the real *Dharma*. She added that Indian people, since the ancient times, have travelled to far off lands and have always shown respect towards local culture and traditions and have tried to integrate with them.

15 November 2018 - State of the Economy: India and the World' : Shri S. Gurumurthy, Chairman, VIF

Shri S Gurumurthy touched on a wide spectrum of economic issues, including capital adequacy ratio, credit flow to MSMEs, liquidity problem, cryptocurrencies, among many others. Regarded as a great exponent of Indian economic model, he underscored the need for an India-centric approach in economic planning and decision-making. He further elaborated on the government's major economic initiatives, and offered suggestions on banking norms and import policy.

11 January 2019 - India's North-East: From Periphery to the Core : Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister of Finance and Health, Government of Assam

In this Vimarsha talk, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Minister of Finance and Health, Government of Assam was invited to deliberate upon India's strategically important North-East, both from national and regional perspectives. The talk touched upon the complexities of the region, its long neglect and recent move from the periphery to the core as part of

national development agenda. Saliency of improving infrastructure, the 'Act East' policy, the Citizenship Act to preserve Assam's identity and demography and tribal empowerment among others were discussed.

11 February 2019 - Digital Innovation and Disruption in India : Dr. Gulshan Rai, National Cyber Security Coordinator, NSCS

Recounting the emergence of Cyber, Internet and Information & Communications Technology (ICT), the speaker elaborated on the digital transformation. Impact of digital revolution through innovative technologies and concepts like Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, machine translation, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR), robotic process automation, Cloud, cyber security, Block Chain, Advanced Analytics, etc., which engulf majority of the spheres like strategic, economic, political, social, commercial, etc., was touched upon.

14 March 2019 - Jammu & Kashmir - The Big Picture : Lt General Syed Ata Hasnain, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM (Bar), VSM (Bar), Former GOC 15 Corps & Military Secretary

Beginning with Pakistan's geo-strategic salience, situation astride the LC and the Zia doctrine, Gen Hasnain dwelt upon Pakistan's new strategy to keep India militarily and politically imbalanced by creating a cycle of terror, managing India's retribution, escalating and de-escalating and waiting for the next opportunity. In that strategy, the role of radicalism through Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and others in South Kashmir was explained. Pakistan's own vulnerabilities from its internal dissections should be used to advantage by the Indian government, the speaker opined.

Scholar Outreach

Dr Arvind Gupta, Director - VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. 'Achieving self-reliance in defence production will require a comprehensive roadmap', Published in The Economic Times, 02 May 2018.
2. 'Now to Determine a Deterrence', Published in The Economic Times, 04 July 2018.
3. 'यहां से बदल सकती है तस्वीर', Published in Live Hindustan, 02 March 2019.
4. 'View: Masood Azhar episode could lead to a recalibration of Sino-Indian ties', Published in The Economic Times, 15 March 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Delivered a talk on 'National Security Management' at IIC, New Delhi (Saturday Group), 07 April 2018.
2. Inaugural Address on 'Changing Face of Terrorism' at Institute of Social Science, New Delhi, 12 April 2018.
3. Delivered a talk on 'India and the world' at LBSNAA, Mussoorie, 20 April 2018.
4. Attended a Task Force meeting on 'Cyber Security and Privacy' at CII, New Delhi, 26 April 2018.
5. Attended 9th NMF-CAN Dialogue on 'Power play and Responses of China, USA, India and Japan within the Indo-Pacific' at Naval Officers Mess- Varuna, New Delhi, 03 May 2018.
6. Valedictory address on 'China, India and the possibilities for future, Tibet factor in Sino-Indian relations' at OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat, 12 May 2018.
7. Participated in panel discussion on 'Metamorphoses: Talking Technology' at IIC, New Delhi, 24 May 2018.
8. Attended a closed-door discussion on (i) current regional and international situation; (ii) role and position of India in the global chess board; (iii) Indo - Vietnam relations in a new context at Vietnamese Embassy, New Delhi, 25 May 2018.
9. Delivered a talk on 'National Security' at FSI, New Delhi, 28 May 2018.
10. Keynote address on 'Cyber Crime Management in India' at FICCI, New Delhi, 30 May 2018.
11. Attended Lt Gen Prakash Menon's book release 'The Strategy Trap- India and Pakistan under the Nuclear

- Shadow' at Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi, 16 June 2018.
12. Panel discussion on 'India in Nuclear Asia: evolution of Regional Forces, perception and policies' at NMML, New Delhi, 18 June 2018.
13. Delivered a talk on 'National Security' to the Gambian diplomats at FSI, New Delhi, 26 June 2018.
14. Delivered a talk on 'Cyber Deterrence and Cyber Resilience: Need and Ways to achieve it' at DRDO, New Delhi, 27 June 2018.
15. Delivered a talk on 'National Security' at Administrative Training Institute, Govt of West Bengal, Kolkata 26 July 2018.
16. Attended CII Task force meeting on 'cyber security' at CII, New Delhi, 27 July 2018.
17. Attended Inaugural Session on 'India needs a proactive approach to the Indo-Pacific' at IIC organised by Society for Indian Ocean Studies, New Delhi, 31 July 2018.
18. Delivered a talk in 1st Special Course for 25 young Nigerian Diplomats on 'National Security' at FSI, New Delhi, 2 August 2018.
19. Chaired a session on 'China-India Maritime cooperation: Opportunities and challenges and formulating maritime confidence-building measures' at Naval Officers Mess Kota House, New Delhi, 24 August 2018.
20. Attended the launch of Mohan Kumar's book on 'Negotiation dynamics of the WTO: An insider's account' at IIC, New Delhi, 30 August 2018.
21. Conversation with Happyman Jacob, Associate Professor of Disarmament Studies, Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament School of International Studies at JNU, on the book 'How India Manages its National Security', New Delhi, 04 September 2018.
22. Chaired a session on 'West Asia' at IDSA, New Delhi, 05 September 2018.
23. Remarks on 'Challenges for International Collaboration in facing unconventional Security Threats' at Gen Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka, 13-14 September 2018.
24. Spoke on 'Commentary and conclusion of the strategic neighbourhood – the realities and the road ahead' at NDC, New Delhi, 17 September 2018.

25. Attended Sh. Mohan Bhagwat's lecture on 'Hindutva' at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, 18 September 2018.
26. Remarks given on 'India's policy towards West Asia' at Jerusalem Centre, Israel from 02-05 October 2018.
27. Remarks given on 'Future of war: Shift to hybrid warfare' at Valdai Club, Sochi, Russia, 17 October 2018.
28. Attended India Idea Conclave on 'Agenda for Peace', New Delhi, 28 October 2018.
29. Delivered a talk on 'National Security' to 1st Special Course for Tunisian diplomats at FSI, New Delhi, 02 November 2018.
30. Delivered a talk on Swami Vivekananda's idea of Service at Commemoration of Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary at JNU, New Delhi, 12 January 2019.
31. Attended Inaugural Session on 'Evolving Facets of Aerospace Power in the Changing World' at CAPS, Air Force Auditorium, Subroto Park, New Delhi, 31 January 2019.
32. Panel of discussion on 'Contemporary Issues in India's Foreign Policy' SIS national convention on IR Studies, JNU, New Delhi, 01 February 2019.
33. Delivered Opening Remarks at JINF-CII meeting on 'India Japan Economic Cooperation', New Delhi, 05 February 2019.
34. Delivered a lecture during Panel discussion on 'India's National Security Challenges: Is the country well equipped?' at Kolkata Literary Festival, Kolkata, 07 February 2019.
35. Attended Noida Dialogue on 'Security for all', Noida, 15 February 2018.
36. Attended Valedictory Address by Dr Devi Shetty on 'Health', Kaushambhi, 16 February 2019.
37. Book discussion: 'How India Manages its National Security' authored by self at ICWA, New Delhi, 25 February 2019.
38. Attended Inaugural Session of the Seminar 'China's economy and its implications' at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, New Delhi, 26 February 2019.
39. Delivered a talk on 'India's National Security Challenges and Decision Making' at 25th Joint Civil Military Training Programme at LBSNAA, Mussoorie, 01 March 2019.
40. Valedictory address at 'Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue' at National Maritime Foundation (NMF) at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi, 06 March 2019.
41. Attended Opening Session of the Seminar on 'Defence Technology in India' at Delhi Policy Group, New Delhi, 11 March 2019.
42. Delivered a talk on 'India's National Security and Challenges' at 67th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats, FSI, New Delhi, 13 March 2019.
43. Keynote address at Centre for Professional Development and Higher Education (CPDHE), on 'Contemporary Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra' at North Campus, Delhi University, 17 March 2019.
44. Attended National Health Conclave (PHFI) on 'Climate Change and Health – Role of the Health Sector' at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi, 23 March 2019.
45. Speaker in Special Panel discussion on 'India in a Multipolar Asia' at IDSA, New Delhi, 28 March 2019.

Television/Radio Appearances

1. Discussion on 'National Security' in Rajya Sabha TV, New Delhi, 23 August 2018.

**Dr Sreeradha Datta, Centre Head & Senior Fellow,
Neighbourhood Studies, VIF**

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Elections in Bangladesh: More crises in the offing?', Asia Dialogue, 13 June, 2018.
2. 'India's Eastern regional sin : Looking Beyond SAARC', India Review & Analysis, Vol 2 , Issue 13 July , 2018.
3. 'Eastward ho! India looks beyond SAARC,' South Asia Monitor, July 2018.
4. 'Women Leaders' in India and Bangladesh : Norm or Exception,' in Prasenjit Saha edited Women, Society and Politics: A Study of South Asia, (Avenel Press, Kolkata, 2018).
5. 'Landslide Victory, Long-term Implications,' Organiser, 8 January 2019.
6. 'Awami Victory and its implications,' Prothom Alo, 26 January 2019.
7. India-Nepal Relations, (interview) FPRC Journal-15-Focus Feb 2019.
8. 'Cross border terror: Friendly neighbours and escalation dangers', India Review & Analysis, Vol 3, Issue 5, 2019.
9. 'Re-covering the Women: Trans-border Dynamics in Rural Border of North and South 24 Paraganas,

West Bengal', in Imtiaz Ahmed edited 'Women, Veil and Politics: The South Asia Conundrum', (Co-authored) (UPL, Colombo, 2019).

10. 'Regionalism in South Asia : Can India provide the Engine,' in A. Subramanyam Raju edited Rethinking Regionalism in South Asia, Studera Press, Delhi, 2019.
11. 'India -Bangladesh in an evolving world,' UNISCI Journal, No. 49, 2019, (Special Issue on Indian Strategic and Foreign Policy Making), pp. 191-208, ISSN-e 2386-9453.

Participation in Conferences

1. Women in South Asia at Karimpur Pannadevi College , Kalyani University, 24-25 April, 2018.
2. Women leaders but limited empowerment, Women's Studies Program Vidyasagar University, West Bengal, 16 June 2018.
3. Partition in the Sub-continent, Jana-Itihas Charcha Kendra, Dhaka University 11-13 August 2018.
4. Shillong Dialogue - 'Shared Borders, Shared Opportunities: Transforming Geo Spaces to celebrating ideas, skills, and people', Asian Confluence, Shillong, 16- 17 August 2018.
5. 12th IISS-NESA Southern Asia Security Conference, Muscat, Oman, 12-14 October 2018.
6. Delivered a lecture, 'Competing Connectivity Strategies: Infrastructure Politics in Asia and Beyond', GIGA, Berlin, Germany, 08 November 2018.
7. GIGA South Asia Fellow, Hamburg, Germany, November 2018.
8. Consultative Meeting on the UPE II Research Project Reimagining Southeast Asia from India's North-East and Bengal: Culture, Connectivity and Development, Calcutta University. 28 January 2019.
9. The Belt and Road Initiative and its Implications for India, School of International Studies, Central University of Gujarat, 27-28 March 2019.

Television/Radio Appearances

1. BBC news service Bangla.
2. Voice of America Bangla.

Lt Gen Gautam Banerjee, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, Web Editor, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. 'Counter-Point: Has India No Strategic Culture!,' Published in Indian Defence Review, April 2018.
2. 'Strategic Partnerships and the Quadrilateral Initiative Military Considerations', Published in Manekshaw Paper, CLAWS, May 2018.
3. 'Now Doklam: Renounce of the Eternal 'Wisdom of China', Published in India Defence Review, 21 August 2018.
4. 'Awakening to National Defence – Hope at Last?', Published in Indian Defence Review, Jul-Sep 2018.
5. 'For Want of India Narrative: Scourge of Insurgencies in North-East India', Published in Manekshaw Paper, CLAWS, December, 2018.

Participation in Conferences

1. Chaired a panel discussion on 'Security and Administration in the North East Frontier Agency', and delivered a talk at the Haryana Institute of Public Administration-Gymkhana Club Ltd. on 26 September 2018.
2. Conducted a four hour mentoring session with University researchers and scholars of Defence Studies, Pune, 30 November 2018.
3. Participated in a panel discussion and gave a talk on Present and Future of Kashmir Valley at the the 'Military Litfest 2018', organised by the Govt of Punjab, Chandigarh, 07-09 December 2018.

Brig Vinod Anand, Senior Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Politico-Strategic Developments in Southeast Asia' & 'Integrated Defence Staff: Analysis of Developments during the Year', Two Book Chapters in the SP'S Military Year Book 2017-2018 SP Guide Publications 2018, ISBN 978-93-5174-302-6.
2. 'Demilitarization of the South China Sea: Concerted Efforts Needed' Published in Institute of Transnational Studies, Munich, May 2018.
3. 'Shangri La Dialogue and the South China Sea Conflict', Published in Research Institute for European and American Studies, 12 June 2018.

4. 'BRICS summit in South Africa shows high level of mutual understanding between leaders', Published in Penza News, 09 August 2018.
5. 'China-Philippines Joint Development of Hydrocarbons in South-China Sea: Prospects and Issues', Published in RIEAS, Greece, 26 December 2018.
6. 'Sino-India: More convergence than divergence', Published in The Hindu, Business Line, 26 December 2018.
7. Essay on 'Renewed Engagements, Cooperation Essential to boost India-China Synergy' Published in India-China Chronicle, November-December 2018 Issue
8. Chaired a discussion on 'Current Situation in India's Internal Affairs, Diplomacy and Evaluation of India-China Relations' at China Institute of International Studies, Beijing on 20 November 2018.
9. Participated in Luncheon Discussion on 'India-China Relations' at China People's Institute for Foreign Affairs at Forbidden City, Beijing on 20 November 2018.
10. Co-chaired a discussion on 'China's Economic Transformation & the Space and Potential for Cooperation between China and India' at China Institute of Reform and Development, Haikou, Hainan on 21 November 2018.
11. Participated in discussions on 'Situation in South China Sea and Prospects for Peace and Stability' at National Institute for South China Sea Studies, Haikou, Hainan on 22 November 2018.

Participation in Conferences

1. Presented a paper on 'China's Belt and Road Initiative' on 08 May 2018 during a '7 Day Certificate Programme on International Relations for Officers of the Central Tibetan Administration' conducted by OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana.
2. Presented a paper on 'Recent Developments in India-China Relations' to the faculty and researchers of Research Institute of Indian Ocean Economies, Yunnan University of Finance, Kunming on 14 June 2018.
3. Presented a paper on 'India-China Economic Relations and Prospects of BCIM' during Sixth China South & South East Asia Think Tank Forum on 15 June 2018.
4. Presented a paper on 'Emerging Dynamics in Indo-Pacific and India-Vietnam Relations' on 24 August 2018 during a conference on 'Vietnam-India Cooperation on Economy, Defence & Security in context of Indo-Pacific: Free & Open' at Ho Chi Minh Academy of Political Sciences, Hanoi.
5. Made a presentation on 'Think Tank to Think Tank Cooperation between Vietnam and India' at Vietnam National University, Hanoi on 25 August 2018.
6. Co-Chaired a discussion on 'Economic Situation in China and India-China Economic Cooperation' at Pangoal Institute, Beijing on 19 November 2018.
7. Chaired discussion on 'Current Situation in South Asia and India-China Relations' at South Asia Research Centre, Peking University on 19 November 2018.
8. Chaired a discussion on 'Current Situation in India's Internal Affairs, Diplomacy and Evaluation of India-China Relations' at China Institute of International Studies, Beijing on 20 November 2018.
9. Participated in Luncheon Discussion on 'India-China Relations' at China People's Institute for Foreign Affairs at Forbidden City, Beijing on 20 November 2018.
10. Co-chaired a discussion on 'China's Economic Transformation & the Space and Potential for Cooperation between China and India' at China Institute of Reform and Development, Haikou, Hainan on 21 November 2018.
11. Participated in discussions on 'Situation in South China Sea and Prospects for Peace and Stability' at National Institute for South China Sea Studies, Haikou, Hainan on 22 November 2018.
12. Visit to Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and held discussions with Prof. Sui Guangjun, Party Secretary of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou and Faculty on 'India-China Relations' on 23 November 2018.
13. Co-chaired a conference on 'China-India Relations in Changing World' and also presented a paper on 'India-China Relations-Striving to Achieve Stability' at Guangdong Institute of International Strategies, Guangzhou on 23 November 2018.
14. Chaired a Round Table Discussion on 'China-India Economic and Trade, Humanities Exchange & Cooperation' organized by Guangzhou Urban Strategy Institute and Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences on 23 November 2018.
15. Presented a paper on 'A Perspective on India's Approach to Countering Radicalism & Combating Extremism' during a symposium on 'Jointly Combating Extremism, Safeguarding Security and Stability' organized by Institute of Chinese Borderland Studies, CASS at Beijing on 27 November 2018.

Dr Harinder Sekhon, Senior Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. 'Decoding Trump-Kim summit', Published in DNA, 16 June 2018.

2. Book Chapter in SP's 45th Military Year Book 'India - US Relations: Stable Trajectory Upwards Despite Irritants', September 2018.
3. 'The Quad Way: Mapping Pathways of Cooperation', Published in The Global Insights India, 'India and the World, Vol 2, No. 1', 30 November 2018.

Participation in Conferences

1. Paper Presented - 'India's Rise and Challenges in its Neighbourhood' at Stockholm School of Economics, 23 April 2018.
2. Paper Presented - 'India and the Big Powers: Evolving Geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific' at Association of Schools of the Council of Europe, Stockholm, 24 April 2018.
3. Paper Presented - 'Security Challenges in East Asia and the Role of the QUAD', ICDS, Tallinn, Estonia Lennart Meri Conference, May 31-01 June 2018.
4. Presented a Paper on 'American Approach Towards the Indo-Pacific Security and Korean Peninsula', at IDSA- Korea Foundation - Sejong Institution, Conference at New Delhi, 12 November 2018.
5. Delivered an address to visiting 'European Diplomats' at the Foreign Services Institute' New Delhi, 14 November 2018.
6. Invited by the Chinese MOFA as part of the Indian Think Tanks Delegation to China from Nov 19 to November 24.
Presented two papers –
 - a) 19 November at Peking University, South Asia Research Centre – 'An Assessment of US South Asia Policy and US-India Relations.'
 - b) 23 November at Guangdong International Strategy Institute, GUANGZHOU – 'India and the United States in the Indo-Pacific.'
7. Presented a paper at IDSA-Japan Foundation Conference on 'Infrastructure connectivity in Donald Trump's Indo-Pacific Strategy', 07 December 2018.
8. Participated in a closed-door RTD at the NSCS - 'Energizing India-Russia Relations' spoke on the 'Role of Soft Power – Promoting people to people, cultural and educational linkages', 20 December 2018.

Television Appearances

1. Discussion on US Policy in East Asia with special reference to developments in the Korean Peninsula, Times Now, 07 April 2018.

2. Series of interviews on DD News, Lok Sabha TV and Rajya Sabha TV on current events.
3. Discussion on 'India and the Big Powers', Times Now, 03 November 2018.

Tilak Devasher, Consultants, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. 'Hardliners on the ballot', Published in The Indian Express, 06 July 2018.
2. 'Lacklustre century', Published in The Indian Express, 06 Dec 2018.

Maj Gen P K Mallick, VSM (Retd), Consultant, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Testimony of Admiral Michael S. Rogers and Implications for India', Published in CLAWS, 29 April 2018.
2. 'Defence Implications of Key Emerging Technologies', Published in the March-April 2018 issue of Salute.
3. 'China's Defence Budget: An Analysis and Comparison with India's Defence Budget', Published in CLAWS, 02 June 2018.
4. 'Technological Solutions to Reinforcing Security', Published in India Foundation Journal', July-August 2018 issue, pp 45 -53.
5. 'Artificial Intelligence in Armed Forces - An Analysis', Published at CLAWS Journal Winter December 2018 issue.'
6. 'Cyber and Space Strategy for India', Published in the book 'Military Strategy for India in the 21st Century' published by Knowledge World, 24 January 2019.
7. '2+2 Summit Meeting and Beyond', Published in CLAWS, January 2019.
8. 'Quad and India's Balancing Act', Published in CLAWS, January 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Delivered a talk on 'Cyber Security in India Present Status' at Military College of Telecommunication Engineering (MCTE), Mhow, 25 September 2018.
2. Delivered a talk on 'Indo-US cooperation after the 2+2 meeting - the Next Stage' at a Seminar on 'Indo-US Relations in a Changing World - Implications for India' organised by Forum for Strategic Initiatives

(FSI) and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) held at New Delhi, 04 November 2018.

Dr. Teshu Singh, Research Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Has the Wuhan Meeting 'reset' the India-China Relations?', Published in Institute for Transnational Studies, 5 May 2018.

Participation in Conferences

1. Participated in the 'Russia-India-China Think Tank Interaction' organised by the Eurasia Division (Ministry of External Affairs) at the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, New Delhi, 23 April 2018.
2. Presented a paper titled 'Locked in a Spiral? Sino-US Relations in the Asia-Pacific Region: An Indian Perspective' in the 'First Wanshou Dialogue on Global Security' organised by the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, Beijing, China, 20-21 June 2018.

Dr Arpita Mitra, Associate Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. Aryan', 'Atman', 'Dvaraka', 'Neo-Vedanta', 'Reason', 'Sraddha'- entries in Pankaj Jain et al (eds.) Hinduism and Tribal Religions Encyclopedia of Indian Religions, Springer, Dordrecht, April 2018.
2. Darśana, Overview of Six Schools' - entry in Pankaj Jain et al (eds.) Hinduism and Tribal Religions Encyclopedia of Indian Religions, Springer, Dordrecht, August 2018.
3. 'The Dawn of Religious Pluralism? The Importance of the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago', in Prabuddha Bharata, special issue 'Commemorating 125 years of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Address', 123(9), pp.659-667, September 2018.
4. Book review of Arun W Jones, Missionary Christianity and Local Religion: American Evangelicalism in North India, 1836-1870, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2017, Published in Indian Historical Review, 45(2): 1-3, 2018.
5. 'Historiography (Hinduism)' in Pankaj Jain et al., eds., Hinduism and Tribal Religions. Encyclopedia of Indian Religions, Springer, Dordrecht, January 2019.
6. 'Mother Nivedita' (in Bengali) in Dure Kothao magazine, vol 2, issue 3, Kolkata Book Fair special

issue, January 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Presented a paper titled 'The Unfolding of the Divine Feminine in India' at the Third International Conference of Indologists on India-Russia: Past, Present and Future in the Context of Indological Studies organised by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and St Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, 26-28 April 2018.
2. Intervention titled 'Historical Geography of Varanasi' in Round Table on 'Varanasi: Creativity and Freedom', organised by Science and Heritage Initiative, IIT Kharagpur in association with Sruti Nandan, IIT (BHU), CIMA and Asoka University held at India International Centre, New Delhi, 06 February 2019.
3. Paper presentation titled 'Devi Worship: Deep Continuities in Indian History' at Sankhanad: Bharatiya Kalakrama (Inaugural Conference on Indic Chronology), organised by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in collaboration with Indian History Awareness & Research (IHAR), held at IGNCA, New Delhi, 22-24 February 2019.

Ramanand Garge, Associate Fellow, VIF

Participation in Conferences

1. Attended the 26th edition of National Security Law Institute, 2018 (NSLI-2018) organised by the Centre for National Security and Law (CNSL), University of Virginia School of Law (UVASL), Charlottesville, VA from June 03-15, 2018.

Dr Neha Sinha, Associate Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'सामुद्रिक सहयोगी बना सेशेल्स', Published in प्रभात खबर on 12 April 2018
2. 'Mozambique-India Relations: Surging Ahead', Published in 'Diplomacy & Beyond', June 2018 Issue.
3. 'Ghana's Contributions to the African Union', Published in 'Diplomacy and Beyond', 15 October 2018.
4. 'संभावनाओं से भरा एक संबंध', Published in Prabhat Khabar, 23 January 2019.
5. 'President Cyril Ramaphosa presence as Republic Day Chief Guest: A Curtain-Raiser', Published in The Pioneer, 24 January 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Presented a paper titled 'India-Africa Relations - Surging Ahead', in a International Conference on 'International Relations in India: Evidences from History, Scholastic Writings and Diplomatic Practices', held in the Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi, 27 April 2018.
2. Presented a paper on 'An overview of Indian Diaspora in Africa: Implications for India', in an International Conference held in the Center for the Study of Indian Diaspora, University of Hyderabad, 04 October 2018.
3. Presented a paper on 'Role, Identity and Contribution of Indian Diaspora in Mozambique', in a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique Jose Antonio Pacheco at New Delhi, 29 November 2018.
4. Presented a paper on 'India's Engagement with its Diaspora in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges' in an International Conference organised by Organisation for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI), JNU and Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, 25 Jan 2019.
5. Presented a paper on 'India-Africa Relations: Surging Ahead' in an International Conference organised by the Center for African Studies, Delhi University on 'Transforming Africa: Potential and Challenges' 07-08 February 2019.
6. Participated as a Discussant in an International Conference on 'India's Global Search for Energy: Africa in Focus', organised by Centre for African Studies and the Energy Studies Programme (JNU), in collaboration with African Studies Association of India (ASA) and TERI at the India International Center (IIC), New Delhi, 22-23 February 2019.

Prerna Gandhi, Associate Fellow, VIF

Lectures

1. Lecture on 'Recession in the Japanese economy and its impact on industrial relations in Japan' for Japanese Management in Global Perspective paper for Semester 3 MA East Asian Studies at Dept. of East Asian Studies, Delhi University, 11 September, 2018.

2. Presentation on 'Japan's Changing Security Discourse under Abe' at Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University, 17 September, 2018.
3. Lecture on 'Transferring and Adapting Management Practices to Overseas Enterprises' for Japanese Management in Global Perspective paper for Semester 3 MA East Asian Studies at Dept. of East Asian Studies, Delhi University in 10 October, 2018
4. Lecture on 'Gender Discrimination in the Japanese Management System' for Japanese Management in Global Perspective paper for Semester 3 MA East Asian Studies at Dept. of East Asian Studies, Delhi University, 12 November, 2018.

Kapil Patil, Associate Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'India's new template for counterterrorism: Do the Balakot strikes signal a new strategy?', Policy Forum, Asia and the Pacific Policy Society (APPS), 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Presented a paper titled, 'Sanctions as an Instrument of Non-Proliferation Policy: The North Korean Experience' at the Workshop on Major Powers and Korean Peninsula: Policies, Politics and Perspectives, held at the Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi, 10 May 2018.
2. Presented a paper titled, 'Deterrence & Stability in the run-up to North Korea's denuclearisation' at the 2018 International Conference Building a Peaceful Korean Peninsula. (A part of Emerging Leader's Fellowship Programme hosted by the Institute for Unification Education, Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea, July 02-11, 2019.)

Prateek Joshi, Research Associate, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. Despite 34 years since Siachen conflict, this High Asia region's strategic implications for India can't be overstated, Published in Firstpost, 14 April 2018.
2. 'The Wuhan dialogue: dismantling old structures and debating the 'reset'', Published in Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 03 May 2018.
3. 'Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping signal reset at Wuhan, but BRI and Afghanistan may further

complicate relations', Published in Firstpost, 15 May 2018.

4. 'Gilgit Baltistan Order 2018: Towards greater federalism or redefining alienation?', Published in Hudson Institute, 31 May 2018.
5. 'With India a reluctant partner, the US-South China Sea strategy is more about muddying the waters than concrete action by Quad allies', Published in South China Morning Post, 08 June 2018.
6. 'Pakistan Election: Quest for right arithmetic, pre-poll engineering becomes clearer as military shows its hand', Published in Firstpost, 23 July 2018.
7. 'Imran Khan's victory and the question of South Asian Strategic Stability', Published in Hudson Institute's South Asia Program, 17 August 2018.
8. 'The US-India 2+2 Dialogue: Implications and Challenges for the Indo-Pacific', Published in Center for Strategic and International Studies, 13 September 2018.
9. 'The Indo-Pacific is big enough for both China and India', Published in East Asia Forum, 21 September 2018.
10. 'India should keep close eye on Kabul as General Raziq's death gives ISI crucial role in stabilising Afghanistan', Published in Firstpost, 21 October 2018.
11. 'Tahir Khan Dawar Murder Case: Divergent narratives and missing dots', Published in South Asia Program at the Hudson, 25 November 2018.
12. 'The big churn in Dhaka', Published in The Pioneer, 20 December 2018.
13. 'Could Hanif Atmar become the next President of Afghanistan?', Published in Lowy Institute, Australia, 21 December 2018.
14. Chapter titled 'Evolving Political Spaces for women in Pakistan: Understanding the Challenges' in the book titled 'Women, Society and Politics: A Study of South Asia'. Edited by Prasenjit Saha. (ISBN: 978-93-80736-98-3, Dec 2018.)
15. Talking to the Taliban Challenges for Kabul', Published in Lowy Institute, 21 Jan 2019.

Aayush Mohanty, Research Associate, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. 'Indo-U.S. Relations Dilemma: CAATSA', Published in Diplomatic Courier, 15 June 2018.

2. 'India's Choice: Bilateral and Quadrilateral?', Published in Columbia Journal of International Affairs, 29 June 2018.
3. 'The U.S.-India 2+2 Dialogue', Published in Columbia Journal of International Affairs, 03 September 2018.
4. 'China's Belt and Road dilemma: It's brute efficiency contrasted with ethical legitimacy', Published in Daily O, 23 Jan 2019.

C D Sahay, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Participation in Conferences

1. Met with Delegation from Kashmir regarding current developments, 01 May 2018.
2. Attended VIF-FICCI meet on Cyber Security, 30 May 2018.
3. Attended a meeting in Cabinet Secretary on Intelligence Restructuring, 30 May 2018.
4. Attended a meeting with Home Secretary and DIB on Intelligence Reforms, 30 May 2018.

Amb DP Srivastava, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journal

1. Article on 'Iran', published in Hindustan Time on May, 18, 2018.
2. 'Iran, OPEC and politics of oil' published in the Business Standard, 01 July 2018.
3. 'Imran Khan's many economic challenges' Published in Mint, 21 August 2018.
4. A Tough Balancing Act between Geopolitical Realities and energy Security, published in Mint, 02 November 2018.

Participation in Conferences

1. Chaird a session on UN Peacekeeping at Center for UN Peacekeeping, CLAWS, New Delhi, 29 May 2018.
2. Participated in Discussion on UN Peacekeeping with Under Secretary General of United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 30 June 2018.
3. Panel discussion in India's Eye program (web based portal) on 'India's Iran Oil Dilemma', 06 July 2018.
4. Talk on Iran sanctions: Challenges and Opportunities at NDC, 23 August 2018.
5. Mentored Strategic Gaming Exercise in National Defence College from 16-18 October, 2018.

6. Lectured Iranian Foreign Office trainees at Foreign Service Training Institute on India-Iran relations, 22 November 2018.
7. Gave two lectures on UN Security Council Reforms and Oil and Geopolitics at Center for Professional Development in Higher Education, 10 December 2018.
8. Lectured Indian Foreign Service Probationers on Chabahar and Gwader: A Tale of Two Ports, 23 January 2019.

Television Appearances

1. Interview on Rajya Sabha TV, prime time news broad - cast on Trump Administration's decision to sanction Iran, and the International community's reaction, 07 July 2018.
2. Interview on CNBC on US sanctions against Iran, 08 August 2018.
3. Interview on RS TV on Iran's case against US in the ICJ, 27 August 2018.
4. Interview on RS TV on US – Iran tensions in World Panorama programme, 29 September 2018.
5. Interview on Times Now on US sanctions against Iran for their Latitude program, 01 November 2018.

Amb Asoke Mukerji, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'US Moves India Into Tier 1 of The Strategic Trade Authorization (Sta.)', Published in All India Radio World Service, 3 August 2018.
2. 'ATAL-THE AJATSHATRU', Published in Air World Service, 17 August 2018.
3. 'Visit of UN Secretary-General to India', Published in Air World Service, 5 October 2018.
4. 'Achievements of Indian Foreign Policy in 2018', Published in All India Radio World Service, 31 December 2018.
5. 'India's Counter-Terrorist Response', Published in Air World Service, 1 March 2019.

Participation in Conferences

1. Delivered a Lecture on 'International Cooperation on Cyber Space: India's role' at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN), Faridabad, 4 April 2018.

2. Participated in a Panel Discussion on the 'Global Cyber Security Landscape' at the Global Technology Summit in Bengaluru organised by Carnegie India, 19 December 2018.

Television Appearances

1. Interview about his time at the UN on United Nations India Youtube Channel, 24 October 2018.

Amb Anil Wadhwa, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Chinese Investments in Europe', Published in Institute of Chinese Studies, 25 May 2018.
2. 'Interests are paramount in this globalised & transactional world Alliances are not', Published in The Print, 11 June 2018.
3. 'Vote in The Hague on the Chemical Weapons Convention: Symptomatic of a divided world', Published in The Economic Times, 08 July 2018.
4. 'India, Russia Should Enhance Ties Beyond Military Domain', Published in Strategic News International, 04 October 2018.
5. 'Modi-Putin summit set a new milestone for Indo-Russian ties', Published in News Mobile, 06 October 2018.
6. 'India And Russia Need To Diversify Their Economic Relationship but Structural Constraints Remain', Published in Outlook on 07 October 2018.
7. 'Technology Tie-Ups Dominate Italian Prime Minister Conte's Visit To India', Published in Outlook Magazine, 01 November 2018.
8. 'US-China relations likely to drive Indo-Pacific geopolitics this year', Published in Telegraph India, 08 January 2019.

Television Appearances

1. Interview on 'RCEP and India china trade deficit', CNBC TV, 05 June 2018.

Amb Anil Trigunayat, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'Tenacious Tenets of Israel's Foreign Policy', Published in Values, Foreign Policy and Universality, 21 August 2018.

2. 'Kazakhstan's Odyssey of Peace and Harmony', Published in The Tuck Magazine, 23 October 2018.
3. 'The Challenges of Economic Diplomacy: Reminiscence of a Diplomat', Published in Madras Courier, 19 November 2018.
4. 'Qatar Flexes Its Muscles by Leaving the OPEC', Published in Outlook India, 07 December 2018.
5. 'India's Longstanding Commitment to the Palestinian cause', Published in Madras Courier, 28 December 2018.
6. 'India in the Libyan Conundrum', Published in Sage Journals, 31 December 2018.
7. 'India-Malta relations: Building bridges at the phoenician crossroads of Mediterranean', Published in Financial Express, 23 January 2019.

Prof. Sujit Dutta, Distinguished Fellow, VIF & Editor, National Security

Participation in Conferences

1. Trends in Global Conflicts, Academic Staff College, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 19 April 2018.
2. 'China's Expanding Footprint in India's Neighbourhood—Implications', Special lecture to Army Commanders, Army Head Quarters, 06 August 2018.
3. A Comparative Analysis of Indian and Chinese Strategic Cultures, Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 23 August 2018.
4. Developments in China: Implications for India-China Relations, National Security Course for Senior Officials, IDSA, New Delhi, 07 December 2018.
5. Papers Presented : China's One-Belt, One Road: Strategic Implications and India's Options, National Conference on 'BRI and India', Gujrat Central University and ICWA, New Delhi at Gandhinagar, 27-28 March 2019.

Television Appearances

1. A series of interviews to WION, Hindustan Times, Zee News, Voice of America, Sputnik, Reuters, AFP and others were given in 2018 -19.

G Mohan Kumar, Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'View: Rafale critics glossed over urgency to acquire aircraft', Published in The Economic Times, 03 Jan 2019.

Lt General S A Hasnain, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM (Bar), VSM (Bar), Distinguished Fellow, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals

1. 'By discussing retribution for Pulwama, the element of surprise is lost', Published in Indian Express, 23 February 2019.
2. 'To war with wisdom, not blustering into it', Published in Deccan Herald, 23 February 2019.
3. 'IAF's surgical strike at Balakot is balanced and appropriate strategy, gives India definite advantage against Pakistan', Published in Firstpost, 25 February 2019.

Amb Satish Chandra, Vice Chairman, VIF

Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals:

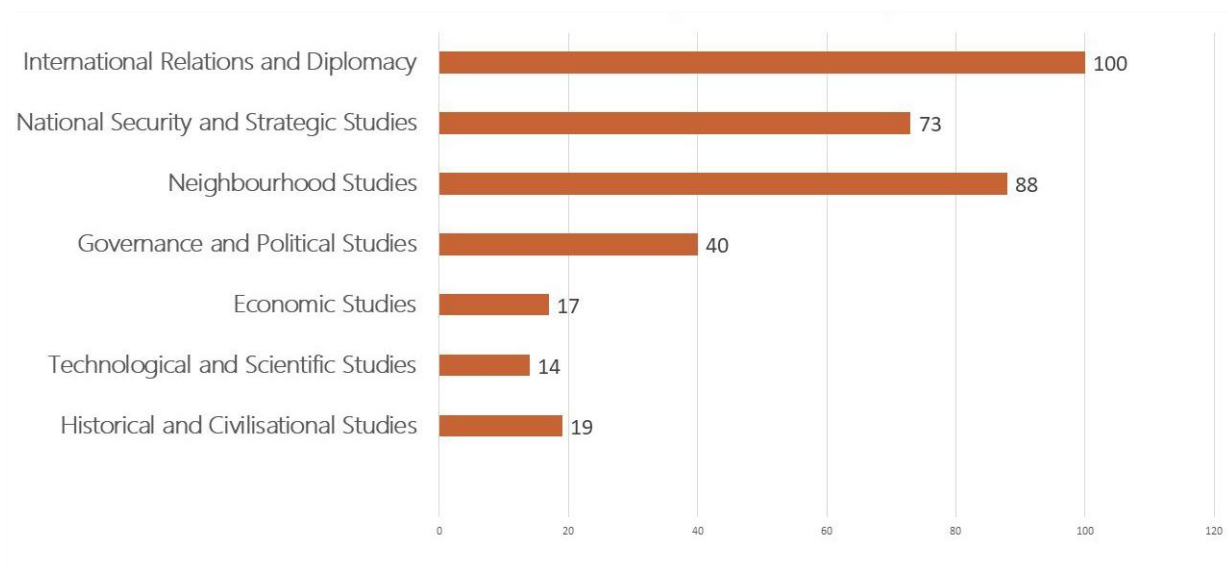
1. 'The Trinity Of Power', Published in The Indian Express, 19 November 2018.
2. 'India-Pak: Calls for de-escalation and dialogue smack of defeatism', Published in The Sunday Guardian, 9 March 2019.

General NC Viji, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, Member, Executive Committee, VIF

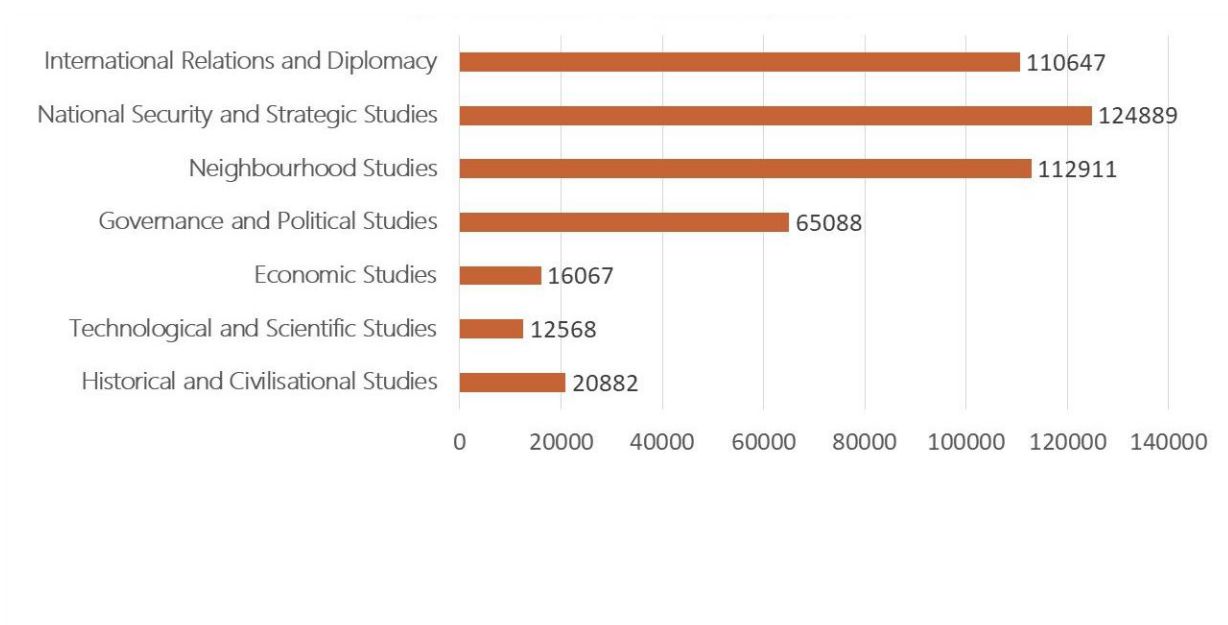
Articles/OPEDS in Indian main stream Media/Journals:

1. 'Arihant to India's defence: Nuclear triad is now fully operational and provides us with credible strategic deterrence', Published in The Times of India, 13 November 2018.

Number of VIF Publications per Centre of Study



VIF Publications : Views and Downloads



Top Articles/Commentaries of 2018-19

(based on Views and Downloads)

S. No	Title	Author	Views
1	Modernisation of the Armed Forces of China: Wake Up Call for India	Maj Gen (Retd.) P K Chakravorty	16194
2	The Middle East and the Israeli Gains – Bridging the Diplomatic Divide	Amb Anil Trigunayat	14373
3	Pakistan: The Aasia Bibi Case and its Aftermath	Tilak Devasher	13545
4	A Cogent National Strategy is Needed for J&K in 2019	Lt General S A Hasnain	11904
5	Ayushman Bharat a Game-Changer, but concerns have to be addressed	Rajesh Singh	12085
6	Gandhi and the Question of Racism: The Statue Controversy in Ghana	Dr Neha Sinha	11353

Top Videos watched in 2018-19

S. No	Title	Views
1	Talk by Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VM, ADC, on ' Role of Indian Air Force in the Changing Security Environment ', (26 April 2018)	4,432
2	' Global Economy Today ', as explained by Shri S Gurumurthy, Chairman, VIF (Economic & Political Analyst) (15 November 2018)	3,863
3	Vimarsha on ' State of the Economy: India and the World ' by Shri S Gurumurthy, Chairman, VIF (Economic & Political Analyst) (15 November 2018)	3,510
4	Release of Shri RNP Singh's book, ' Sardar Patel, Unifier of Modern India ', by Shri Ajit Doval, KC (National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India) (4 September 2018)	3,416
5	Vimarsha on ' J&K: The Big Picture ' by Lt General Syed Ata Hasnain, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM (Bar), VSM (Bar), Former GOC 15 Corps & Military Secretary (14 March 2019)	2,831
6	Swami Avdheshanand Giri ji Maharaj (Junapithadhishwar and Acharya Mahamandaleshwar) on ' Desh, Samaj aur Vyakti ', (21 September 2018)	1,550

Resource Research Centre and Library

The VIF's Resource Research Centre & Library, while endeavouring to provide its research faculty with a seamless flow of information and data, concomitant with their various research objectives, has evolved over the years into a vibrant knowledge hub buzzing with innovative ideas in knowledge retrieval and dissemination. The Library has a remarkable collection of high quality and peer reviewed books, journals and other associated resources, including an equally impressive archive of Public Opinion Trends on the neighbouring countries. In keeping with the changing dynamics of information science, the centre has kept its focus on building up a vast reservoir of digital resources, comprising of both primary and secondary sources, since its inception. The digital archive, developed in-house, provides just the right platform to access catalogues of physical books as well as e-resources obtained from myriad sources. The Library's database presently has the strength of 3,242 physical books and 12,700 e-resources including 1,100 books. Besides, the Library also subscribes to a number of reputed journals and newspapers.

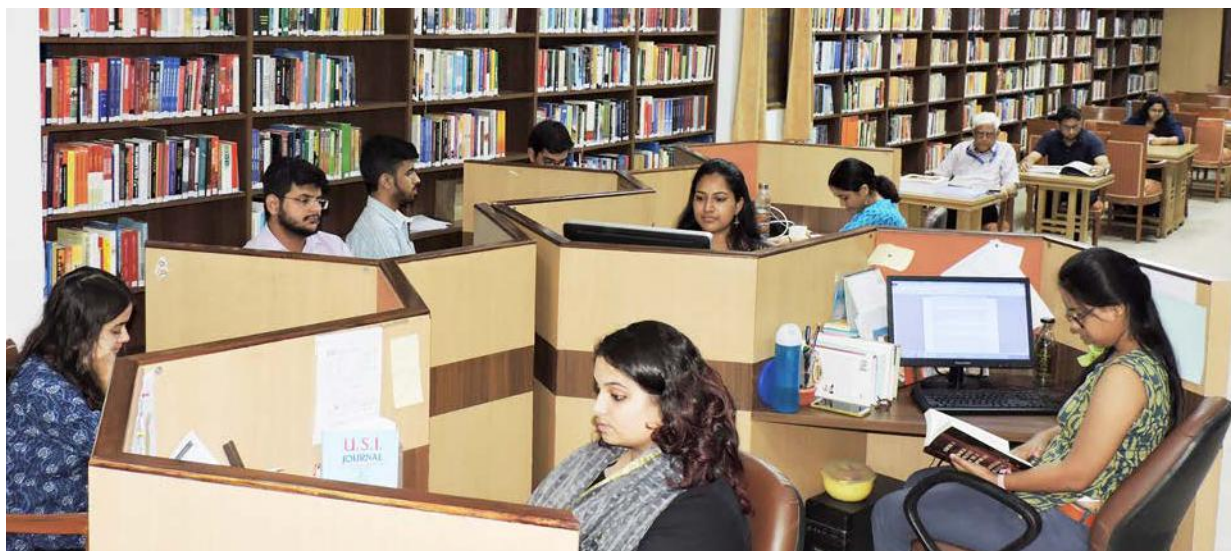
Selective Disseminations of Information

As part of an endeavour to reach out to its patrons as also the academia at large, the Resource Research Centre sends out daily alerts in the form of Neighborhood News Digest and Information Alerts.

These daily alerts, not specific to any particular country or discipline but general in nature, are meant to keep the targeted readership ahead of the information curve, as also keep them well informed about latest developments, evolving trends etc. from national, regional and global perspectives. Both 'Neighborhood News Digest' and 'Information Alerts' forms part of VIF's Daily Update on its website.

Online Database

In realisation of the fact that irrefutable, authentic data is the first requisite for any credible, cutting-edge research, the Resource Research Centre has taken upon itself the onerous task of creating an online database of primary source materials, comprising of acts of legislative bodies, treaties, white papers, reports, press releases, parliamentary Q&As etc., and making it available for the wider research community through its website. With a plan to host six different online databases, the first database on Internal Security with 1,133 records has already been operationalized, while the second database on Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, which has 2,136 records so far, is also expected to reach its fruition over the next couple of months. The database has till date generated over 11,000 hits on the internet, with an average hit-count of 50 per day.



If you can lay down your life for a cause, then only you can be a leader. But we all want to be a leader without making the necessary sacrifice. And the result is zero - nobody listens to us!

Swami Vivekananda

Our Exchanges Worldwide

Think Tanks, Institutions, Universities with whom VIF had Exchanges during 2018-19

Australia

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

China

- China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)
- Research Institute for Indian Ocean Economies (RIIOE), Yunnan University of Finance and Economics
- National Institute of International Strategy (NIIS) of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
- Center for South Asia & West China Cooperation & Development (SAWCCAD), Sichuan University
- Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), Sichuan University
- International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
- China Institute of Maritime Technology & Economy
- China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)
- Tsinghua University

Germany

- The Institute for Transnational Studies (ITS)

Iran

- Institute for Political and International Studies

Israel

- The Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs (JCPA)

Japan

- Japan Institute for National Fundamentals (JINF)
- The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)
- The Japan Foundation
- The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Myanmar

- Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS)
- Peace and Development Foundation

Russia

- Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC)

South Korea

- Institute of Democracy
- Korean National Diplomatic Academy
- Institute of National Security Strategy
- Korean Institute of National Unification

Sri Lanka

- Pathfinder Foundation

Taiwan

- The Prospect Foundation

UK

- Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)

USA

- The Atlantic Council
- The Heritage Foundation
- US-India Security Council Inc. (USISC)
- The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Uzbekistan

- Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies
- Center for International Relations Studies (CIRS)
- The University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED)
- Development Strategy Center (DSC)

Vietnam

- The Institute for Foreign Policy and Strategic Studies (Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam)
- Vietnam National University

Indian Universities

- Gorakhpur University
- Amity University

Other Institutions

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
- The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)



I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: “As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.”

~ Swami Vivekananda's historic speech at the World's
Parliament of Religions in Chicago on 11 September 1893

Finances

Vivekananda International Foundation, created under the aegis of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, was registered as a Trust on 25 March 2010 at New Delhi.

The trust holds its meetings periodically.

The Annual Audited Accounts for the financial year 2018-19 is presented here.

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

VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION 3, Institutional Area, San Martin Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi - 110 021			
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH, 2019.			
PARTICULARS	SCHEDULE	CURRENT YEAR'S FIGURES '000	PREVIOUS YEAR'S FIGURES '000
SOURCES OF FUNDS			
Corpus & Non-Corpus Fund	"A"	27,774.00	18,563.00
TOTAL ::		₹ 27,774.00	₹ 18,563.00
APPLICATION OF FUNDS			
Fixed Assets	"B"	8,845.00	9,471.00
Investment	"C"	7,000.00	2,000.00
Current Assets	"D"		
- Advances, Deposits & Receivables		786.00	279.00
- Cash & Bank Balances		13,734.00	9,692.00
		<u>14,520.00</u>	<u>9,971.00</u>
Less: Current Liabilities	"E"		
- Other Liabilities		2,591.00	2,879.00
		<u>2,591.00</u>	<u>2,879.00</u>
		11,929.00	7,092.00
TOTAL ::		₹ 27,774.00	₹ 18,563.00
Notes on Accounts and Significant Accounting Policies	"F"		

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

For VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

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

sd-
Dr. Arvind Gupta
Director

sd-
A. Balakrishnan
Trustee

sd-
(Kishor Tokekar)
Secretary

New Delhi, Monday, The 10th day of June, 2019

VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

3, Institutional Area, San Martin Marg,
Chanakyapuri, New Delhi - 110 021

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 2019

PARTICULARS	CURRENT YEAR'S FIGURES '000	PREVIOUS YEAR'S FIGURES '000
[A] INCOME		
Donations	51,800.00	46,000.00
Bank Interest	794.00	726.00
Publications Royalty	109.00	54.00
TOTAL ::	₹ 52,703.00	₹ 46,780.00
[B] EXPENDITURE		
Audit Fees	65.00	59.00
Bank Commission & Charges	9.00	11.00
Books, Journals, Papers & Periodicals	17.00	15.00
Conferences, Seminars, Vimarsha & Other Activities	4,832.00	3,473.00
Depreciation	1,659.00	1,459.00
Gardening Expenses	653.00	584.00
General up-keep and Cleaning Expenses	2,500.00	2,176.00
History Project Expenses	1,358.00	519.00
Honorarium, Salaries, Fees & Stipend	22,818.00	19,747.00
Hospitality Expenses	-	31.00
Initiative on Conflict Avoidance & Environment Conciousness-HBC	266.00	5,505.00
Insurance Charges	2.00	2.00
Interest on TDS	6.00	-
Legal & Professional Fees	92.00	53.00
Library Expenses	1,961.00	1,138.00
Office Expenses	288.00	549.00
Postage & Courier Charges	23.00	171.00
Power, Fuel Charges & Expenses	2,191.00	1,657.00
Printing & Stationery	276.00	331.00
Publication Expenses	852.00	2,180.00
Repairing & Maintenance Expenses	1,716.00	1,544.00
Security Services Expenses	995.00	887.00
Outreach to Universities	50.00	-
Telephone, Mobile & Internet Expenses	181.00	183.00
Travelling & Conveyance Exp.	295.00	586.00
Water Charges	86.00	158.00
Website Renewal & Maintenance Charges	301.00	296.00
Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year	9,211.00	3,466.00
TOTAL ::	₹ 52,703.00	₹ 46,780.00
Notes on Accounts and Significant Accounting Policies "E"		

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

sd-

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

For VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

sd-

Dr. Arvind Gupta
Director

sd-

A. Balakrishnan
Trustee

sd-

(Kishor Tokekar)
Secretary

Think that the whole work is upon your shoulders.
Think that you, young men of our motherland, are destined to do this.
Put yourselves to the task. Lord bless you.

Swami Vivekananda

Vivekananda International Foundation
3, San Martin Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi - 110021
Phone No: +91-(0)11-24121764, +91-(0)11-24106698
Fax No: +91-(0)11-66173415
E-mail: info@vifindia.org
www.vifindia.org
Follow us on Twitter @VIFINDIA