

# **Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra**

Centre for International Studies

**विश्व अध्ययन केंद्र**

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## **ANNUAL REPORT 2008 – 2009**

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## Support to Tibetan Solidarity Movement in Mumbai



Beginning from the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2008, a series of protest demonstrations continued all over the three regions of Tibet, including Lhasa the Capital of Tibet. The people inside Tibet made a very strong statement at the cost of their lives that they are not happy with the policies of the PRC. They raised their voice for freedom, truth and justice. Over 142

peaceful protestors attained martyrdom and over ten thousand arrested and many more injured. Tibetans were denied the basic human rights.

The **Tibetan government in exile** conducted a series of demonstrations all over the world to protest the killings and arrests and to make the world aware of the situation inside Tibet.



In view of the above, there were various programmes in Mumbai **from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2008**. Under the guidance of Shri Bimal ji Kedia, **VAK helped in coordinating the various activities including the stay, food and transport arrangements for over 3500 monks.**

## Business of Freedom book launch

The book '**Business of Freedom – An Initiative for School of Indian Management**' was launched at a simple but emotional function held at Keshavrao Ghaisas Auditorium of Dahanukar College, Vile Parle East, Mumbai on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

The book is written by **Shri Sandeep Singh**, former Vice President (Sales & Marketing) at Sahara News and published by him in association with **Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra**, Mumbai.

**Dr Satish Modh**, Dy. General Manager Air India and President of Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra welcomed the guests. He felt that when 99% of all the management books available today are wholly based on western thought and philosophy **BoF** was a much needed book from Indian examples and history.



**Shri Ratan Sharda**, Senior IT Consultant and General Secretary of Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra confessed that despite his busy schedule he accepted to edit the book due to the inspirational character of Shri Sandeep Singh who had resigned his lucrative job to work for a noble cause and author the book.

In his emotionally charged speech **Shri Sandeep Singh** thanked everyone who played a minute role though, in helping to publish his dream book. He said that the collection of Rs 100/- from known and unknown individuals was an unforgettable experience. He said he realized that the new generation had little or no knowledge about our freedom fighters. **He specially thanked Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra for joining him in publishing the book.**



Speaking on the occasion after launching the book, **Shri Deepak Ghaisas**, Vice-Chairman and Director, i-Flex Solutions said he was thrilled to know that a book could be sold before being written and 800 people could commit to buy 3000 copies. He congratulated Shri Sandeep Singh for taking a very difficult, rare and bold decision of resigning his job to write a book for the benefit of the society and not for personal profit.

### **Reception to *swayamsevak*s from UK**

A special meeting of VAK was held on **14<sup>th</sup> July 2008** at Utkarsha Mandal, Vile Parle for giving a reception to *swayamsevak*s from UK. About 20 members of VAK attended the meeting.



**22 *swayamsevak*s from HSS-UK** joined the meeting to get introduced. They informed the VAK members about *shakha* and campus activities in U.K.



They had arrived for participating in the VSSV 2008 that took place in Bhagyanagar from 21<sup>st</sup> July to 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

VAK organized their stay arrangements, travel and trips to Raigad Fort and Mumbai Darshan.

## Universal Brotherhood Day 2008

Dr. Subramaniam Swamy propounded that it would be unrealistic to dream of *Hindi Cheeni bhai bhai* and it would be equally senseless to have hostile relationships with China. He advocated a balanced relationship as equals in mutual interest. He was speaking at the Universal Brotherhood Day as the keynote speaker on ‘**India – China: Traditions to Trade Relations**’ on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2008 at Nehru Science Centre, Worli, Mumbai.

**Common traditions of India and China:** In a 45 minute stimulating lecture he gave refreshingly different and frank views about Indo Chinese relations over ages through interesting facts, figures and anecdotes. He underlined the important aspect of India and China as neighbours - that it is a unique example in world history where neighbours sharing such a long common boundary did not fight any war or had no history of hostility over centuries till late 1950's, when India became free and China overthrew imperialism. The first contacts after *Buddha's nirvana* were established by *bouddh bhikus* in 483 BC according to western history and 1800 B.C. according to Indian accounts. It is amazing but true and the reason was that China had adopted Buddhism in a big way from this period which had come from India. Hence, there was no reason for hostility.



Post 1962 war, the relationships went into deep freeze and hostility and the first initiative to thaw the relationship came from the then PM Shri Morarji Desai who asked Dr. Swamy to visit China as a representative of the Indian government. It was followed by Dr. Swamy's visit as an emissary of GOI during Mrs. Gandhi's premiership. Incidentally, it was during this trip that Dr. Swamy was able to persuade Chinese government to open up Kailash Mansarovar to Indian pilgrims and he was the first Indian to do this *yatra* of nearly 110 km on feet, to convince the Chinese of his sincerity! Late Rajiv Gandhi's visit saw a major break through in relations with

China and 1998-99 saw the signing of the first trade agreement between the two countries. Since then, there is a good trade relationship but **we cannot describe it as friendly / neighbourly at all.**

**Hindi Cheeni Bhai Bhai cannot be a reality:** According to Dr. Swamy, we can neither be friends nor foes; we can only work out a balanced relationship. We can have a friendly foreign policy but a defence policy of equality vis a vis China for which we need to have a strong defence budget. Today, while China spends 6% of its budget on defence, India spends only around 2%.

**Can India overtake China?** -Dr. Swamy brought up the oft repeated question – “Can India equal China in economic growth?” or “can it race ahead?” According to Dr. Swamy, till 1980’s, growth rates of both China and India were around 3.5% because both followed the 5 year socialist plans, which suppressed the growth potential of both ancient and great civilizations. The fact is that till 17th Century, India and China had a 50% share of global GDP and both produced everything possible at that time. It was only after advent of British and Imperialists in two countries that they went down into the quagmire of poverty. Thus, both have inherent potential to do well due to their civilizational strengths. However, while China embarked on economic reforms in 1980’s, India waited another ten years to embark on reforms. Thus, India lost 10 years in this growth story. It will take some time cover up this gap.

While on this subject, he also asked people to be more careful when talking of figures touted by Chinese as their measuring standards are very different from others, thus giving wrong ideas; and he gave some examples to buttress his argument. He asserted that in the long run, India will over take China in economic development. Reason was its healthy democratic system which allowed for a political change when things went wrong and comparatively strong financial institutions. He pointed out that whenever financial crises engulfed a nation and took it down, there were major political changes which brought in new leadership and new ideas which turned around these countries. He gave examples of Brazil/Chile/Argentina economic recession of 1960’s and Japanese financial melt-down of 1970s and India’s own examples of 1990’s to strengthen his argument.

According to him, Chinese financial system is highly primitive and on the verge of breakdown due to profligacy of Communist party which is asking banks to fund public sector to keep supporting workers who are mostly their party members and that is eating away the assets of all financial institutions which may collapse any time. While in a democracy it is

possible that people would take corrective action and throw up a new leadership and new ideas, in China, Communist party would not allow the power to go out of their hand and therein lies its serious problem. He believed that it could happen in a not very distant future.

In case of India, though there is a serious indiscipline in fiscal management with government following populist agenda at the cost of financial health, the democratic system will help it come out of it soon. Another factor in favour of India is its young population. While India's average population is 27 years, China's average age stands at 37 years. With tight population control this average is going to go further up with higher life expectancy and lower birth rates, putting lot of pressure on economy to support old population. All these factors taken together indicate that 2050's India would be in a position to overtake China, was his contention.

**Issue of Tibet** – Tibet also came up during a sparkling Q&A session. Dr. Swamy lamented that there was NO clarity in Indian establishment about its stand on Tibet. While on one side, India has reiterated time and again that Tibet is a part of China; it has let a government in exile be established in India under His Holiness Dalai Lama. As a country that has given asylum and right to live decently to many a persecuted communities over ages, it is right to give asylum to Tibetans he said. India should not open up hostile fronts both against China and Pakistan, it should support Dalai Lama's request for freedom to practice its culture in line with its assertion that Tibet is a part of China and not talk of independence as it has no relevance in present circumstances.

The programme was chaired by **Shri Shriram Dandekar**, Chairman of Camlin International, who in his brief address, talked of Chinese traditions and culture and quoted some very interesting Chinese proverbs which he gathered during his Chinese business trips from local population and gave a glimpse of Chinese thinking about life and business.

The programme closed with vote of thanks proposed by **Shri. Sanjay Kelapure, U. B. Day 2008** Coordinator. He thanked Dr. Swamy for his well prepared speech and also the sponsors M/s Kisan Moulding, M/s Kisan Irrigation, M/s Sureshot Advertising & M/s Edge Consultancy for sponsoring the programme.





## Dr. Satish Modh's USA *pravas*

President of VAK, **Dr. Satish ji Modh** visited USA from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008. His *pravas* was part of **Speaker on Campus (SoC)** Program in the Universities of Southern California. His lectures were titled '**Vedanta concept of personality analysis and development**'.



Speaker on Campus events were held on 7<sup>th</sup> October at University of California, San Diego; on 8<sup>th</sup> October at San Diego State University; and on 9<sup>th</sup> October at University of Southern California.



On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October he was *vakta* at **Southern California Vibhag Vijaya Dashami Utsav**. Speaker on Campus was one aspect; Satish ji's *pravas* was very fruitful and effective for the regular shakhas and

karyakartas too.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Lakshmanrao Bhide Memorial Lecture

VAK and Keshav Srushti jointly organized the 3rd Lakshmanrao Bhide Memorial Lecture on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at the Alkesh Dinesh Mody Auditorium, Kalina Campus, Vidyanagari, Mumbai.



The programme commenced with the soul stirring rendering of *sanghathan mantra* from the *rig veda* by Ms Mridula Kulkarni.

**Shri Sanjay Kelapure**, President of VAK, welcomed the gathering and gave a brief profile of VAK. He made a special mention of Dr Satish Modh and Shri Ratan Sharda for painstakingly nurturing VAK for over a decade to its present position.

**Dr. Shankarrao Tatwawadi**, *Vishwa Vibhag Samyojak* (International Coordinator of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh) who had a long personal association with Late Lakshmanrao Bhide, introduced Bhide ji. He mentioned that Lakshmanrao Bhide was a calm, silent, self-effacing RSS

*pracharak* who went around the world many times to meet the NRIs and PIO's to understand their problems and also to make them organized.

The Keynote address was given by **Shri Ram Madhav**, member of the National Executive of RSS on the topic '***From Chanakya to Chandrayaan – Our Global Vision***'. Shri Ram Madhav traced the ancient civilization of Bharat during the time of Chanakya when he had put his thoughts on state craft in his book the *Arthashastra*. Shri Madhav ji mentioned that Bharat has come a long way from Chanakya to Chandrayaan and Indian civilization he said is identified with great thinkers - Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. Having just returned from China Sri Ram Madhav stressed the emergence of China as a Super Power. Communism, he said is breaking down in China and slowly China is rising like capitalist America. There was a

question answer session after Shri Ram Madhav's address. Questions pertaining to terrorism and the economic capability of China were asked and Shri Ram Madhav answered them all patiently.

**Shri Mahendra Kumar Kabra**, Chairman of the Vidyalaya Management Committee of Ram Ratna Vidya Mandir (RRVM), Keshav Srushti, presided over the function. In his address Shri Kabra said that schools should adopt the traditional Indian way of teaching and functioning. He proudly announced that RRVM had secured 100% results in 12<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes and there is a family-like relationship between the students and teachers. During the *Makar Sankranti* the students of the RRVM go out and distribute *til ladoos* to the poor setting the mark for social harmony and community service.

A **goodwill message** sent to the Vishwa Adhyayan Kendra by the **former Chief Justice of India Shri P.N Bhagwati** was read out by Prof. Indira Satyanarayan.

**Dr. Shantilal K. Somaiya**, the Chief Guest of the function, mentioned in his address that he also had visited China, and according to him the Chinese were not so much Communists as much as they were *baniyaas*. "The Chinese are very clever, very smart and above all they have great





economic sense” he said. China as a country has only one system and no Democracy he said. According to Dr. Somaiya, Democracy is the second best form of Government the first is yet to come. The world needs persuasion and logic not war he added. Shri Somaiya ji was optimistic when he mentioned that ultimately Bharat would succeed over China because we have '*Sanskriti*'.

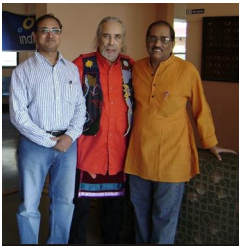
Gen. Secretary of VAK Shri Ramesh Subramaniam gave the vote of thanks. Two resourceful members of the VAK viz. **Shri Sandeep Singh** and **Dr. Satish Modh** were felicitated for their special contribution.

The function came to a close with the melodious rendering of *Ekta Mantra* by Ms Mridula Kulkarni. **Ms Mamta Vora** efficiently conducted the proceedings by being the MC.

The programme was attended by over 350 participants from a cross section of the society that included 22 students from IIT, 30 from Kalina Campus, 30 students from RRVN, about 35 students from other institutions and also representative participants from UK, Mauritius, Muscat and USA.

The exhibition '*From Chanakya to Chandrayaan – Our Global Vision*' that was on display was a special attraction for the students.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Int. Conference of Elders of Ancient Traditions**



The 3rd International Conference of Elders of Ancient Traditions was held in Nagpur from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

The theme of the Conference was '**Renaissance of the Ancient Traditions and Cultures: Challenges and Solutions**'.

Over 150 delegates from 35 countries representing 45 different traditions participated in the conference.

**VAK helped in receiving about 60 delegates and arranging their stay in Mumbai and also coordinating their pre-conference and post-conference tours in over 8 States.**

