



Asia  
Society™

India Centre

# Asia Society India Centre Winter Edition 2011

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## Message from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the Winter 2011 Edition of our quarterly newsletter. At the India Centre and across the world, Asia Society has been working to build a nuanced understanding of emerging trends and issues that impact the Asia-Pacific region. This newsletter provides a glimpse of some of these programmes and initiatives.

From leading figures such as Dr. D Subbarao, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, and Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize-winning economist, to critical issues including the safety of civil nuclear development in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear leaks, this past quarter Asia Society has been continuing to present key personalities and significant topics that impact Asia.

Do visit our website ([www.asiasociety.org](http://www.asiasociety.org)) for access to our events calendar, our blog and other exclusive web content. You can find interviews, videos, podcasts, virtual exhibitions and a range of other features for news and insights. Follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/AsiaSociety](http://www.twitter.com/AsiaSociety)) for highlights on our upcoming events and news from across the region.

## Quick Links

[www.asiasociety.org/centers/india](http://www.asiasociety.org/centers/india)

[www.facebook.com/AsiaSocietyIndiaCentre](http://www.facebook.com/AsiaSocietyIndiaCentre)

<http://twitter.com/#!/AsiaSocietyIC>

## Upcoming Events

[www.asiasociety.org/events](http://www.asiasociety.org/events)

15 October

*Rama and the Demon King: An*

*Ancient Tale from India*

A children's book reading as part of our *Adventures of Asia* series

Kitaba Khana, 11:30am, Mumbai

8 November

*Poor Economics and Fighting*

*Poverty*

With *Esther Duflo* and *Abhijit*

*Banerjee*, authors of *Poor*

*Economics: A Radical Rethinking of*

*the Way to Fight Global Poverty*

Bombay Stock Exchange, 7pm,

Mumbai

If you are not already a member of Asia Society, we do hope you will consider joining us- it is with your support that we can sustain quality programming. Please see our membership form for information on how to become a member, and feel free to contact us with any questions: <http://www.asiasociety.org/support/membership/india>.

Our next newsletter will reach you in January 2012. Until then, we look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming programmes.

Bunty Chand  
Executive Director  
Asia Society India Centre

## InspirED Education Conference



On September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, 500 educators from across and beyond India gathered in Mumbai for the second annual InspirED conference, a two-day event for educators and stakeholders in education, focusing on standards K-10.

After a successful conference last year that brought together hundreds of educators for a series of workshops, panel discussions and presentations around the theme of innovation in education, InspirED 2011 explored how to drive positive transformation in education. With over 40 workshops to choose from, the conference presented some of the leading minds in shaping positive transformations in education today.

These included Steven Farr, author of *Teaching as Leadership* and Teach For America's Chief Knowledge Officer; Norman Atkins, Founder and CEO of Teacher U and Founder of Uncommon Schools in USA; Madhav Chavan, President and CEO of the Pratham Education Foundation; and Umesh Malhotra, Founder and CEO of Hippocampus Learning Centres. Educators from across the country and from a range of schools — from rural to urban, and private to government-run — engaged with each other and leaders from the education field.

InspirED offered workshops in four strands, which when coalesced, provides a holistic approach to achieve positive transformation in education- academic achievement, pathways to opportunities, values and mindsets, and student interests and aspirations.

Anthony Jackson, Vice President of Education at Asia Society and Head of Asia Society's Partnership for Global Learning, presented on *Educating for Global Competence* at the conference. He expressed an urgent call for schools to produce students that actually know something about the world- its cultures, languages and how its economic, environmental and social systems work. To learn more and to read the book, *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World*, visit <http://asiasociety.org/education/partnership-global-learning/making-case/global-competence-knowledge-and-skills-our-student>.



Anthony Jackson, Vice President of Education at Asia Society, at InspirED

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To learn more about the conference, visit [www.inspiredindia.in](http://www.inspiredindia.in)

### Ashis Nandy on Asian Cosmopolitanism

On September 8<sup>th</sup> 2011, Ashis Nandy, Director of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies and Chairperson of the Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures, joined the India Centre for a discussion on *Another Future for Asia: A Useless and Doomed Analysis of an Idea*. Nandy was joined in conversation with Kumar Ketkar, Senior Journalist and Editor-in-Chief of Divya Marathi.



Nandy explained that a different form of cosmopolitanism exists in Asia, wherein people living in diverse communities learn to accept "the otherness of others," instead of striving to become idealized global citizens who shed all prejudices and perceived differences.

Nandy explained that at the beginning of the 20th century, Asia was seen by Westerners as a land of savages and that it was the "white man's burden" to bring civilization to them through colonialism. That image of Asia was shaken partly because of Japan's success at Western-style development, which in turn started to seem more approachable to other Asian societies. As other countries followed suit, trying to climb "the inclined plane of history," less developed countries were seen as lying further behind on a linear trajectory of progress.

However, acknowledging and debating the past, according to Nandy, is a way of criticizing a theory of progress that developed countries used to justify atrocities committed in more "backward" countries in the name of progress. Rather than following the same path of development as the West, Nandy argued for the possibility of "another Asia," where there is increasing room for people to exist within distinct communities while accepting mutual differences.

The challenge Asia faces, then, is to have the capacity to host a range of populations — "radical diversities," in Nandy's words — who can also live and work together. As Nandy sees it, that presents a different concept of dissent, wherein borders must be crossed not only outside, but also within.

This programme was part of Asia Society India Centre's *Future of Asia* Series, in partnership with the Mohile Parikh Center.

To watch video highlights of the programme, visit <http://asiasociety.org/countries/traditions/ashis-nandy-asian-cosmopolitanism>.

### UN General Assembly Week at Asia Society New York

As world leaders came to New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly in September, Asia Society's New York Centre hosted key figures from the Asia region—Mongolia's President H.E. Tsakhia Elbegdorj, Bhutan's President H.E. Lyonchhen Jigme Y.

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Thinley, Bangladesh's Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Philippines' President Benigno Aquino III, and USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah.

The four Asian heads of state, though coming from disparate countries and backgrounds, spoke about freedom, justice, accountability and respect for human rights as essentially linked to democracy. For video highlights, visit, <http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/video-new-york-asian-leaders-link-economic-and-social-development-democracy>.



Philippines' President Benigno Aquino III, Bangladesh's Prime Minister H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Bhutan's President H.E. Lyonchhen Jigme Y. Thinley, and Mongolia's President H.E. Tsakhia Elbegdorj

To learn more about each of these programmes and to watch the programme videos, visit <http://asiasociety.org/policy/governance/global/asian-leaders-spotlight-asia-society>.

## Asia Society Hong Kong's New Centre Building Opening in February 2012



Asia Society is thrilled to announce the opening of its new space in Hong Kong in February 2012, and would be delighted to have friends of Asia Society attend the launch events.

This project has involved the conservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive re-use of a group of four former British military buildings in Admiralty. Known as the Explosives Magazine, the site was constructed in several phases from the 1850s to 1910s, and used to produce and store explosives and munitions. Over time, the vulnerability of the above-ground structures to aerial attacks made the site obsolete. The Explosives Magazine was subsequently used for miscellaneous government storage and workshop functions before it was abandoned in the 1990s.

The new space will include a museum, a film and performance theater, a large function room, a café, a gift store, and meeting rooms.

The conceptual design for the project was developed by award-winning architects Tod Williams Billie Tsien & Associates after a world-wide competition.

Contact [asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in) for information about attending events for the launch of the centre in February 2012.

Watch a video on the new centre at <http://asiasociety.org/video/centers/introducing-new-asia-society-hong-kong-center>.

## Asia Society India Centre Staff

- Priyanka Bhuyan  
Project Coordinator  
[priyankabhuyan@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:priyankabhuyan@asiasociety.org.in)
- Bunty Chand  
Executive Director  
[buntychand@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:buntychand@asiasociety.org.in)
- Komal Hiranandani  
Programme Assistant  
[komalhiranandani@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:komalhiranandani@asiasociety.org.in)
- Moomal Mehta  
Senior Business Development Officer  
[moomalmehta@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:moomalmehta@asiasociety.org.in)
- Rachna Shah  
Office Manager  
[admin@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:admin@asiasociety.org.in)
- Pooja Varma  
Senior Programme Officer  
[poojavarma@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:poojavarma@asiasociety.org.in)
- Phone: +91 22 6610 0888  
Fax: +91 22 6610 0887

## Tagore: The Last Harvest- In Commemoration of Tagore's 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary

In commemoration of Rabindranath Tagore's (1861–1941) 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary, Asia Society New York's Museum launched *Rabindranath Tagore: The Last Harvest*, to celebrate his work in visual art, an area of creative influence that has been surprisingly underrepresented in remembrances of his legacy. The exhibition comprises more than sixty works on paper produced by this versatile and prolific visionary, drawn from three collections in India.

The exhibition is curated by Dr. R. Sivakumar of Visva Bharati University and is co-organized by the National Gallery of Modern Art, Ministry of Culture, Government of India and Asia Society Museum, New York.

To explore the exhibition, visit <http://sites.asiasociety.org/tagore/>.



Untitled (Portrait of a woman with veil), 1934. Colored ink and opaque white on silk 35 5/8 x 23 13/16 in. (90.5 x 60.5 cm)  
Rabindra Bhavana, 00-1849-16

## Asia 21- Menaka Guruswamy and Laws for Progress

*The Asia Society India Centre supports over 80 Asia 21 Fellows with varied backgrounds in areas such as environment, film, business, health, and education. This space will feature a different Asia 21 India Fellow in each edition and highlight their organisations, initiatives, and projects. To learn more about Asia 21 visit [www.asiasociety.org/asia21](http://www.asiasociety.org/asia21). This quarter, we look at Menaka Guruswamy, a lawyer at the Supreme Court of India.*

Menaka Guruswamy practices law at the Supreme Court of India. Amongst other cases, she litigates against state-sponsored vigilante groups *Salwa Judum* in Chhattisgarh, argues a large constitutional case that seeks reform of public administration and the bureaucracy in the country, defended federal legislation that mandates that all private schools admit disadvantaged children and has challenged the constitutionality of laws that punish same-sex relations.



Menaka has worked at the Office of the Attorney General of India. She has also practiced law in New York, as an associate at Davis Polk & Wardwell. In 2006-2007, she taught at New York University's School of Law. Menaka has advised the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), New York and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), New York. She has most recently advised the Government of India on private security agencies and licensing of weapons. She also advises the Constitution-Making process in Nepal.

Her most recent publications include a piece on regulation of India's intelligence agencies titled 'Regulating the Gentleman's Game' and on Integration of Combatants and New Constitutionalism in Nepal.

## About Asia Society

Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia. We seek to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of arts and culture, policy and business, and education.

Founded in 1956, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and Washington, DC.

Charles R. Kaye, Chairman, Board of Trustees

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## Book Corner

*The Book Corner features two books in every edition of our newsletter that we believe would be of interest to our members. We feature both new releases as well as older books of relevance today, which engage themes relating to Asian countries.*

### Home Boy



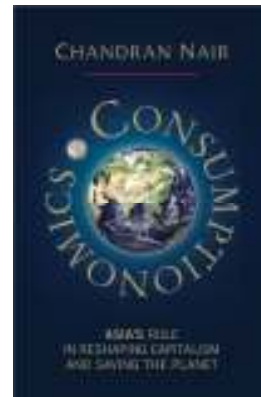
Written by Karachi-based author HM Naqvi, *Home Boy* is the story of three young Pakistani men in New York City at the turn-of-the-millennium: AC, a gangsta rap spouting academic; Jimbo, a hulking Pushtun deejay from the streets of Jersey City; and Chuck, a wide-eyed, off-the-boat kid, searching for himself and the American Dream.

In a city where origins matter less than the talent for self invention, the three Metrostanis have the guts to claim the place as their own. But when they embark on a road-trip to the hinterland weeks after 9/11 in search of the Shaman, a Gatsbyesque compatriot who seemingly disappears into thin air, things go horribly wrong. *Home Boy* is at once an immigrant's tale, a mystery, a story of love and loss as well as a unique meditation on Americana and notions of collective identity.

On July 9 2011, Asia Society India Centre hosted HM Naqvi in conversation with author and journalist **Namita Devidayal**. The programme was presented in partnership with Bungalow 8 and DSC. Learn more at <http://asiasociety.org/centers/india/hm-naqvi-coming-age-shadow-911>.

### Consumptionomics: Asia's Role in Reshaping Capitalism and Saving the Planet

The Western model of consumption-led economic growth cannot be replicated in Asia, according to author Chandran Nair. Instead, Nair offers an alternative paradigm for governments, business leaders, and academics to consider. He argues that economic policy needs to be realigned to avoid the catastrophic outcomes that could result from the relentless promotion of a consumption-led growth model in Asia, at a time when resource constraints are only too apparent. He calls for bans on some forms of consumption, re-pricing of resources, and for the state to play a bigger role.



Chandran Nair is the Founder and CEO of the Global Institute For Tomorrow (GIFT), an independent social venture think tank based in Asia. Its key goal is to guide corporations and their leaders on how to meet the challenges of doing business in Asia, with particular emphasis on the role of social investment, geo-politics, leadership development, business ethics, government and civil society.

On November 10 2011, Asia Society India Centre hosted Chandran Nair in conversation with Rama Bijapurkar, a thought leader on market strategy and consumer related issues in India. The programme was presented in partnership with the World Trade Centre and the All India Associate of Industries. Learn more at <http://asiasociety.org/calendars/consumptionomics-asias-role-reshaping-capitalism-and-saving-planet>.

## Mailing List, Membership, and More

For more information on the following, please email [admin@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:admin@asiasociety.org.in).

- Upcoming events
- Join the mailing list
- Individual membership
- Corporate Membership

If you would like to react, offer suggestions, or comment on any of the content you've read in this newsletter, we would be happy to hear from you. Please write to [asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in](mailto:asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in). We look forward to your active participation in the Asia Society India Centre community.

Thank you!

