

think!

VARIETY

STORIES FROM A CHANGING WORLD



THINKING HEADS

GURU COOL With his appointment as dean of an Ivy League college, Soumitra Dutta is only the latest to join the burgeoning club of Indian-origin intellectuals heading global academic institutes



SUNIL KUMAR (43)
POSITION: Dean, University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

BACKGROUND: Born in Bangalore, he was on the faculty of Stanford University's School of Business for 14 years. He says, "I was admitted to the Indian Institute of Science and went there because I didn't want a job. In time, I fell in love with academia."

PLANS: "My most important objective now is to enhance and broaden the impact and reputation of the school."

ON INDIA: "Indians in the US clearly bring a strong global perspective. The strength of the Indian education system creates advantages."



VIJAY GOVINDARAJAN (62)
POSITION: Earl C Daum 1924 Professor of International Business at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College.

BACKGROUND: "Deeply influenced" by his formative years in India (including winning the President's Gold Medal for standing first in Chartered Accountancy exam).

PLANS: "I want to continue my work on reverse innovation - any innovation that starts in poor countries and then moves to rich countries."

ON INDIA: "Companies have plenty of ideas but the real problem is translating ideas into action."

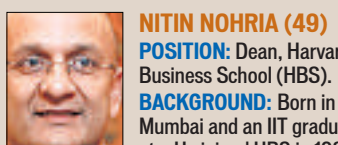


NIRMALYA ACHARYA (51)
POSITION: Professor of Marketing and co-director of Aditya Birla India Centre at London Business School.

BACKGROUND: Accepted in the Northwestern PhD program by Philip Kotler and then moved to IMD Switzerland.

PLANS: "The issue I am currently contemplating is how MNCs have to transform to meet the challenge of emerging markets."

ON INDIA: "Indians who have lived in multiple countries demonstrate a flexibility to adapt across cultures which is essential for MNC talent."



NITIN NOHRIA (49)
POSITION: Dean, Harvard Business School (HBS).

BACKGROUND: Born in Mumbai and an IIT graduate. He joined HBS in 1988 and became HBS's 10th Dean in July 2010. He is the second dean, of the possibly the most prestigious business college, in the world born outside the United States.

PLANS: "To give MBA students a dose of real-world experience, HBS is introducing its biggest curriculum change in nearly 90 years."

ON INDIA: "When I started teaching at HBS, it was difficult to find Indian or Chinese case studies. Today, we have 80 cases on Indian companies. This is impacting our curriculum as well."



VILAYANUR RAMACHANDRAN (60)
POSITION: Director, Center for Brain and Cognition, University of California, San Diego.

BACKGROUND: He has been described as the Marco Polo of neuroscience by Richard Dawkins. Been awarded with the Padma Bhushan and listed by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

PLANS: "The research I do is often opportunistic - here's some strange thing, let me pursue it. But I'm interested in higher functions in the human brain."

ON INDIA: "What people overlook is the fact that a great deal of science originally comes from India."



JAMSHED BHARUCHA (55)
POSITION: President, Cooper Union, New York

BACKGROUND: Mumbai-born Bharucha, was a Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Dartmouth College till 2002, went on to become the Provost of Tufts University, before joining Cooper Union, the New York-based school, last year as its President.

PLANS: "In cognitive neuroscience, the key issue is to be a better understanding of consciousness."

ON INDIA: "It is a huge advantage to have a mastery over two cultures. It allows us to think globally, and to bring in the best features of East and West as we innovate."



ARUN NETRAVALI (65)
POSITION: Former professor of MIT and Columbia university. Managing partner of Omni Capital Group, LLC

BACKGROUND: Born in Mumbai, Netravali did his graduation in Electrical engineering from IIT Bombay and MS and a PhD from Rice University in Texas. He has published widely in the field of digital communication.

PLANS: Pioneer in HDTV, he is setting up a \$250 million venture capital fund to invest in start-up US telecom companies.

ON INDIA: A Padma Bhushan awardee wants to bring outsourcing Ito the world of start-ups in technology and telecom.

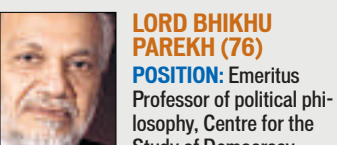


RAGHURAM RAJAN (43)
POSITION: Eric J. Gleacher Distinguished Service Professor of Finance and the Charles M. Harper Faculty Fellow; served as the youngest, first non-western chief economist at the International Monetary Fund.

BACKGROUND: Way back in 2005, he forecast the current recession at a gathering of economists.

PLANS: To try and understand our world better. And hopefully use that understanding to change it a little for the good.

ON INDIA: If India can pull off the ongoing experiment in democratic growth, it will be seen as one of the signal events of the 21st century.

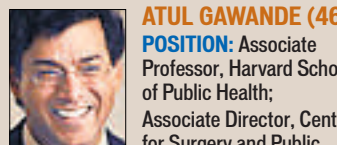


LORD BHIKHU PAREKH (76)
POSITION: Emeritus Professor of political philosophy, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Westminster University.

BACKGROUND: Born in rural Gujarat. He went on to teach at LSE and chaired the Runnymede Trust on the Future of Multiethnic Britain

PLANS: Currently finishing a book, titled "Understanding India" - a collection of essays dealing with "questions no one is talking about."

ON INDIA: "We are a society that is restless and full of problems, our mind is intellectually alive, whereas the society in UK is settled. We bring new perspectives."



ATUL GAWANDE (46)
POSITION: Associate Professor, Harvard School of Public Health; Associate Director, Center for Surgery and Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston.

BACKGROUND: A surgeon and author of non-fiction and a analyst of the healthcare sector in the US. He was senior advisor to the Department of Health and Human Services during the Clinton Administration

PLANS: "My research focus is on reducing deaths, complications, and disparities in surgery in the US and abroad."

ON INDIA: "The Kolkata hospital fire is terrible evidence that even the richest Indian sites haven't learned patient safety."



MAHENDRA GUPTA
POSITION: Dean of Olin Business School at Washington University in St Louis since 2005.

BACKGROUND: Graduated from Bombay University in Statistics and Economics and did his PhD in accounting from Stanford University.

PLANS: "Building on the success of our experience in Europe and China, we will make Olin a global leader in executive education and programs," he says.

ON INDIA: St. Louis has a very large Indian community that comes together often and allows us to keep up with our culture. My kids in many ways have a better appreciation of Indian culture than their cousins in India because they have to work at it."



SIR PARTHA DASGUPTA (69)
POSITION: Frank Ramsey Professor Emeritus of Economics, St John's, Cambridge University

BACKGROUND: After graduating in physics from Delhi University, Dasgupta studied at Cambridge before taking up teaching assignments at the LSE, Cambridge and Stanford, US. He coined the term "inclusive wealth" to show how conventional measures of wealth - primarily GDP - fail to capture natural capital or environmental assets.

ON INDIA: Heading the expert constituted by the Indian government to calculate a green Gross Domestic Product - a GDP adjusted for environmental costs.

The appointment of Soumitra Dutta as the head of the Ivy League business school of Cornell University is one more addition to elite club of Indian-origin intellectuals and thinkers occupying positions of importance in international institutions in the US and UK.

Madeleine Stumpton, policy analyst at Migration Policy Institute (MPI), Washington, attributes this growing number of Indian intellectuals to the growth of the Indian economy and its gradual opening up that has provided opportunities to Indian immigrants. "It's part of a broader success story of Indian immigrants," she says.

The Indian success story of academics is long, but now thanks to globalisation, there has been a huge influx of CEOs and IT experts from India. The phenomenon has helped India endorse itself as a brand. A MPI study further says the recent trend has branded India as a source of well-educated and hard working professionals, rather than a poverty ridden country of "snake charmers". Also, besides the higher level of education, the study says, proficiency in English has helped in better integration with foreign societies.

Though, the number of Indians who had moved to the US between 1820 and 1900 was no more than 700, according to MPI, presently the country has 2.8 million ethnic Indians. There are 1.3 million in Britain and 1 million in Canada and a large number of low or semi-skilled Indians in Gulf countries. In developed countries, a significant majority of them hold a bachelor's degree.

While first generation Indians, highly skilled and distinct in adaptability to tough working conditions, have made their mark in management, academics and the IT sector, the second and third generation have raised the bar with their active presence in local politics, educational establishments and research centres in destination countries.

After globalisation and India's economic reforms, with all its shortcomings, Indians have been flourishing especially in the private sector. "India's soft power is its private sector entrepreneurs," says India-born UK parliamentarian, Lord Meghnad Desai.

Talk about India's global presence, and a comparison with China is hard to evade. A recent study by talent management firm, DDI says that about 60% or more of the Indian leaders are found to be more effective than their Chinese counterparts when it comes to excelling in critical skills required for successful leadership.

But, the magic of Indians in the private sector internationally has not really transcended domestically, especially in the public sector. "In the West, India is now regarded as a competitive tiger when it comes to the private sector. It is the public sector which fails India at every turn," adds Desai. But, the increased spending on research and higher education in India is showing results. "Rome was not built

in a day," says Director of Centre for Theoretical Physics in Jamia Millia Islamia, M Sami, who rose to prominence after his paper on 'Dynamics of Dark Energy' was included in the Nobel Prize committee document in 2011.

Many believe that while there is much focus on Indians in the West, intellectuals based in India are largely neglected. "The cumulative impact of the over focus on foreign institutions is to ignore people working wonderfully in different circumstances in India," says Pratap Bhanu Mehta, head of Centre for Policy Research, a Delhi-based think-tank. "There is also a disproportionate focus on business schools; the real Indian contribution is now in fields like mathematics, etc."

Ashis Nandy, Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, who was chosen among 100 public intellectuals of the world by Foreign Policy magazine in 2008, says Indians go overboard in celebrating the success of Indian-origin emigrants. "Have you ever seen the French, German or Irish taking so much pride in their second and third generation migrants as we do?"

Rather, the obvious observation, experts suggest, is that proud Indians have come a long way now to achieve international acclaim. Many constructive policies which are now seeing light in other parts of the world are actually the contribution of Indian thinkers and intellectuals who formulated our initial five-year plans. For instance, says senior fellow at the New York-based think-tank, Council on Foreign Relations, Jagdish Bhagwati, "The UNDP thinks it invented these concerns when in fact its advisers from our subcontinent simply reproduced these concerns and objectives from what we had been doing for decades."

A STUDY SAYS THAT 60% INDIAN LEADERS ARE FOUND TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THEIR CHINESE COUNTERPARTS

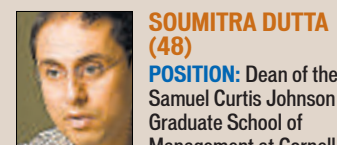
A 25 million strong Indian diaspora is a liability sometimes - in terms of brain-drain - and an asset at other times - for instance during market slowdown. The worldwide recession in 2008 complemented the positive trend for India. Another study by MPI shows that compared to others, Indians fared better during recession.

The trend is that once immigrants become stable in host countries, they contribute to their home country. As Stumpton puts, "Data is scarce, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the US-born children of immigrants have also begun to seek out opportunities in India in greater numbers."

— *Neyaz Ferooqee*

PROFILES BY YASHWANT RAJ, DIPANKAR DE SARKAR AND ANIRUDH BHATTACHARYYA

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SOUMITRA DUTTA (48)
POSITION: Dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell

BACKGROUND: After a computer science degree from IIT Delhi, a place he says, "Everyone in my class was a topper from their school." He headed for Berkeley, where he moved to business management.

PLANS: To focus on emerging markets - to bring more faculty and students from as Brazil, India, China and Indonesia.

ON INDIA: "India needs more internal reforms: clean leadership, collective ambition and the courage to make bold decisions. The Indian leadership needs to do more to ensure the economy doesn't stall."



ARVIND PANAGARIYA (59)
POSITION: Professor of Indian Political Economy, International and Public Affairs and Economics, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, New York.

BACKGROUND: Completed his Master's in Economics from University of Rajasthan in Jaipur, followed by a PhD programme in economics at Princeton University.

PLANS: "I plan to turn the Columbia Program on Indian Economic Policies into a permanent Center on Indian Economy at Columbia University."

ON INDIA: "Indians are a talented people and they compete well with the talented people world over including the US."

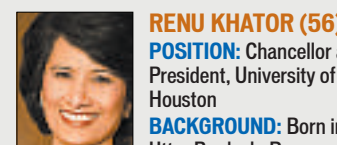


PRABHAT JHA (46)
POSITION: University of Toronto Director, Centre for Global Health Research, St Michael's Hospital, Toronto

BACKGROUND: Jha is among the leading scientists in the world who've had an impact on global health policy. Among his major research efforts has been the Indian Million Death Study (one of the world's largest studies of premature mortality).

PLANS: Jha wants to concentrate on extending the MDS to other nations and accelerating tobacco control globally.

ON INDIA: "India's open and argumentative culture makes any product that withstands these debates and discourse useful worldwide."



RENU KHATOR (56)
POSITION: Chancellor and President, University of Houston

BACKGROUND: Born in Uttar Pradesh, Renu Khator did her undergraduate at Kanpur University before emigrating to the US.

PLANS: "Only a small fraction of a public university's budget today comes from the public at large; however, we strive to serve students from all backgrounds."

ON INDIANS: "Indians are known and respected for their strength in education, in general, and in science education in particular. Indians excel in research, teaching and business. However, Indians, similar to Asians, have not been as successful in obtaining public leadership positions."



ARVIND SUBRAMANIAN
POSITION: Senior Fellow at Peterson Institute for International Economics

BACKGROUND: He A St Stephen's college graduate, Subramanian has written on growth, trade, development, institutions, aid, oil, India, Africa, and the World Trade Organization. Foreign Policy magazine called him one of the 100 most influential people.

PLANS: At a conference in Washington DC he proposed India should nurture Pakistan's economy as a way to bring peace to that trouble nation, and the region.

ON INDIA: "There is no doubt that over the next 10 to 15 years, India will start growing faster than China."



SIR VENKATRAMAN RAMAKRISHNAN (59)
POSITION: Group leader, Structural Studies division, Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge.

BACKGROUND: Born in Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu, to scientist parents who taught at the Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda. After graduating from the same university (and failing to win a place in any of the IITs), he moved to the US and was associated with a no. of universities. He was professor of biochemistry at Utah University before he moved to the UK.

ON INDIA: "My childhood and adolescence (in India) were filled with visiting scientists from both India and abroad."

ON INDIA: For the Library project, he sent 150 scanners from the US to the Noida and Kolkata branches of CDAC, and IIT branches at Hyderabad and Allahabad.

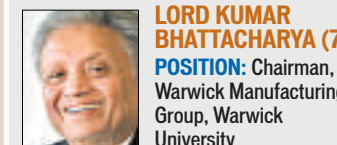


BHASKAR CHAKRAVORTI (52)
POSITION: Senior Associate Dean, International Business & Finance; Institute for Business in the Global Context and Center for Emerging Market Enterprises; The Fletcher School, Tufts University.

BACKGROUND: A former partner at McKinsey, and former member at the Harvard Business School. His journey started at the Delhi School of Economics.

PLANS: To develop the next generation of global leaders with 'contextual intelligence.'

ON INDIANS: "The ability to speak English and the willingness to travel/work in any part of the world is an enormous asset and is key to India's 'soft power'."



LORD KUMAR BHATTACHARYA (71)
POSITION: Chairman, Warwick Manufacturing Group, Warwick University

BACKGROUND: After IIT Kharagpur, he left for Britain as he says, "the day I finished my graduation". Became UK's first professor of manufacturing.

PLANS: With Britain re-balancing its economy, WMG has been asked to play a central role in industrial development strategy.

ON INDIA: "There's no shortage of top quality Indians in America. In science and technology, to be a leader the competition is fierce. Indians do brilliantly but they need more confidence."

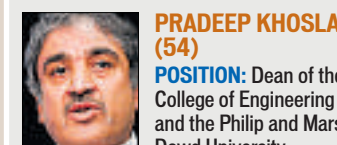


JAGDISH BHAGWATI (77)
POSITION: Professor at Columbia University and Senior Fellow in International Economics at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York.

BACKGROUND: Among the most celebrated economists globally not to have won the Nobel Prize in that field. He continues to be a thought leader.

PLANS: "I am finishing a provocative book on Indian reforms with Professor Arvind Panagariya that shatters a lot of nonsensical myths that afflict our reforms."

ON INDIA: "Indian economists, and politicians, have long been interested in issues relating to human well-being something that the UNDP thinks it invented."

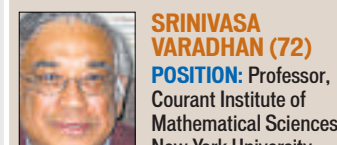


PRADEEP KHOSLA (54)
POSITION: Dean of the College of Engineering and the Philip and Marsha Dowd University

BACKGROUND: Professor at Carnegie Mellon University, Kharagpur alumni. He has been Program Manager at Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

PLANS: Have combined the two issues: increasing cost of education and internationalisation, and build a strategy helped in Portugal, Rwanda, and China."

ON INDIANS: "One of the advantages that Indian (and all immigrants) bring is the ability to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity, and the ability to take risks."



SRINIVASA VARADHAN (72)
POSITION: Professor, Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences, New York University.

BACKGROUND: He completed his undergraduate at Presidency College in Chennai and then spent four years at the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata.

PLANS: "What I expect over the next few years is to work with my students, develop some new ideas."

ON INDIANS: "One big asset Indians have is English. That makes the transition easier for us. Today students who come, mainly from the IITs, are a selective group and do very well here. On the flip side, most of them emphasise mainly on technology."

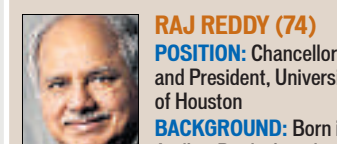


RAKESH KHURANA (41)
POSITION: Professor of Leadership Development, Harvard Business School

BACKGROUND: He grew up in the borough of Queens, New York but has made his mark in Cambridge, Massachusetts as a critical thinker.

PLANS: "Almost all my research is focused on trying to understand the process by which society selects its leaders particularly business leaders."

ON INDIA: "Being an outsider gives you a perspective. Growing up I felt I had my foot in the American world and its aspects of popular culture and values about competition and achievement and then at home, I felt I was in India."



RAJ REDDY (74)
POSITION: Chancellor and President, University of Houston

BACKGROUND: Born in Andhra Pradesh and studied in Chennai. He completed his PhD from Stanford University.

PLANS: His speciality is artificial intelligence and he is currently excited about a Universal Digital Library, a US-India-China project to scan and make available for free a million books online. Also working on developing unmanned cars to check on terrorists.

ON INDIA: For the Library project, he sent 150 scanners from the US to the Noida and Kolkata branches of CDAC, and IIT branches at Hyderabad and Allahabad.