



Editor's Note

Organization for Diaspora Initiatives has initiated several academic activities and network to promote the diaspora research. Several international organizations have already initiated contact both formally and informally with the ODI to promote diaspora activities in varied fields of academic: gender, regional diaspora, international relations, comparative studies etc.

The Diaspora Studies Journal brought out by the ODI enters its second year successfully. The journal has been widely appreciated for its quality and coverage of various diaspora issues.

This issue of Newsletter has a wide range of coverage i.e. international news, conference and calls for paper, books...etc. which diaspora scholars find useful.

ODI Newsletter

**July-September 2009
&
October-December 2009
Vol.1, No 3 & 4**

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- **International Diasporas**
- **Indian Diaspora**
- **Seminar/Conferences**
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Organization for Diaspora Initiatives (ODI) is working to understand the status and role of diasporic communities across the globe— both in domestic and international context. It maps the emerging roles, networks and operations of different Diasporic communities as a resource in the international civil society space as well as in the host and the home countries. ODI specifically focus on Indian Diaspora as the main thrust of research.

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Institutional News

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Ethiopia: Diaspora Investment Bond Enhances Economy

Investment in their home countries by migrants from Africa is contributing to economic growth on the continent. This business development has caught the attention of African governments, development agencies and the world's largest cash-transfer company, Western Union Company, which are working to facilitate such investment.

Liesl Riddle, a scholar of diaspora studies at George Washington University in Washington, said Ethiopia leads sub-Saharan Africa in opening its economy to

investment by emigrants. The term "diaspora" historically has referred to the dispersion of Jews, but in recent years it has come to include the dispersion of any group of people to areas outside their traditional homeland.

"Ethiopia is growing its economy in large measure due to the constant pressure that the Ethiopian diaspora puts on the government. The Ethiopian government has recently opened an investment promotion agency. ... It is a one-stop shop for the Ethiopian investor. You don't have to go to dozens of offices here and there to get your business established. It is a clearer, more transparent type of system," she said.

In recent years, Ethiopia has had one of the best performing economies in Africa, growing at an annual rate of close to 8 percent.

The 1.5 million Ethiopians who are living in other countries are estimated to send about \$1 billion in remittances to the eastern-African country annually, according to Access Capital Services, an Ethiopian financial advisory company. Access Capital has worked with another Ethiopian financial company, Precise Consult International, to attract diaspora investment through annual Ethiopian business conferences in New York or Washington since 2006.

New Greek Leader to Tap Diaspora

Greece's socialist leader, George Papandreou has promised a 100-day plan to tackle Greece's financial and economic crisis and the social malaise that generated deadly riots last winter. "Part of my identity is being a Greek of Greece and a Greek of the

diaspora," The US-born leader, was educated in Sweden, Britain and Canada, and is a Harvard fellow. His closest aides include English-speaking Greeks born and brought up in Africa, America and Australia. He is himself more comfortable speaking English than Greek.

Nigerian Diasporas Remit \$10bn in 2008

Nigerian Diasporas remitted \$10 billion in 2008, indicating a 10 per cent increase to amount remitted in 2007 says a World Bank report.

The \$10 billion inflow represents 4.7 per cent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) and puts Nigeria at number six among the top ten recipients of migrant remittances in the world. Other countries in the top 10 category in the descending order are India, China, Mexico, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Bangladesh, Egypt and Vietnam.

The report shows that despite the global economic meltdown which peaked in 2008, remittance to Nigeria by migrant workers have been increasing steadily in the past six years from \$1.2 billion in 2002 to \$9.98 in 2008.

This improvement according to the World Bank is due to the fact that remittance flow to Nigeria is diversified in terms of destinations. "With Nigerian emigrants in sectors such as healthcare that have been less affected during the current crisis than cyclical sectors such as construction."

Globally, remittances rose from \$385 billion to \$444 billion while remittances flow to

developing countries rose to \$337 billion from \$289 billion.

The World Bank report also indicates that while remittances are expected to fall in 2009 due to the biting effect of the global crisis, the decline would be less than expected, with remittances to Nigeria declining slightly to \$9.58 billion in 2009.

Rwanda: Diaspora to Convene in December

Kigali-The Diaspora General Directorate (DGD) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is organizing a major Diaspora convention, expected to take place in December this year, a ministry official told The New Times.

"This will be the biggest in terms of participants because projects like the One Dollar Campaign and the Diaspora Mutual Fund have significantly impacted on the visibility of the Diaspora in Rwanda than ever before," Masozera, the ministry official said.

Masozera noted that the Directorate will mobilize more than ever before, for the upcoming event which will be taking place for the ninth time since 2001.

"We plan to carry out more vibrant mobilization than ever as well, for example, we are going to create an ad-hoc website for that," Masozera says, noting that this year's event will involve more than mere discussions.

The convention is likely to kick off either on 26 or 30 December.

Rwandan Diaspora associations are organized under a non profit umbrella

organization, the Rwanda Diaspora Global Network (RDGN), a coalition of millions of Rwandans living World over.

Malaysia Must Include its own Diaspora as well

There are no concise figures as to how many Malaysians are now living abroad. Some reports suggest that there are about 200,000 Malaysians living in the United States, 50,000 in Canada, 95,000 in Australia and more than 300,000 in Britain. Add to that the smaller number of Malaysians who are scattered all across the five continents. There are more than a million Malaysians living abroad today.

Many have done well for themselves. Among the more well-known overseas Malaysians are Professor Chin See Leang (a world renowned laser specialist at Quebec City's Laval University), Professor Danny Quah (London School of Economics) and Jimmy Choo (fashion designer, London).

They reluctantly gave up their Malaysian citizenship because Malaysia does not recognise dual citizenship, and the demands of their new homeland necessitated acquiring its citizenship.

India to Help Build Diaspora Monument in Trinidad and Tobago

The Indian government is willing to help in the installation of a monument at Trinidad and Tobago's Nelson Island where nearly 147,000 Indians arrived between 1845 and 1917 to work on the sugar plantations, a diplomat said.

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian

Affairs (MOIA) D.N. Srivastava on Monday said: `Whatever requests come to us for both the installation of a monument at Nelson Island, and the enhancement of the systems and facilities at the Indo-Caribbean Museum would be fully considered and supported.`

He was addressing a press conference jointly organised by the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) and the Indian High Commission at Gaston Court, Chaguanas.

Nelson Island was the main entry point for over 147,000 labourers who came here from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar between 1845 and 1917 to work on the sugar plantations and to rescue the failing agricultural capacity.

The Indo-Caribbean Museum is the only facility in the western world to preserve the instruments, religious texts, tools, jewellery, cooking utensils of the people who migrated from India.

Eminent Indian Diaspora to Gather for PBD in Delhi

India will once again invite eminent Indians living across the globe to encourage them to play a strategic role in shaping India's future development.

Delhi will play host to the annual meet, "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas", from Jan 7 to 9 next year, where seminars on nanotechnology and property will be held, and a slight shift from the regular investment-focused conferences.

"The nanotechnology seminar will bring together scientists, technologists, policy-makers and entrepreneurs from India and abroad on a common platform.

"The focus of the seminar will be on applications of nanotechnology in agriculture, energy and health-care," said Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA).

The seminar on property would discuss institutional arrangements to safeguard the properties of overseas Indians in India, as well as the modalities for credible investment avenues in the real estate sector, the minister added.

In 2003, India mooted the idea to host the annual event to create a platform for exchange of views and networking to persons of Indian origin who have settled all over the world on matters of common interest and concern to them.

For the first time, the 2010 conference would be web-cast in an interactive mode on the MOIA website and the ministry's e-magazine, to enable overseas Indians to witness the proceedings and interact with the ministry to express their views.

Indian Diaspora upset over Trinidad and Tobago National Awards

The Indian diaspora here is unhappy as only three people of Indian origin have received the Trinidad and Tobago National Awards this year out of total 20 recipients. Basdeo Panday, leader of the opposition, said that the National Awards have lost their importance and citizens do not have respect for them anymore. "The present system is based on patronage. We need to overhaul the system," he said.

Indian diaspora is the largest ethnic group of 43 percent of a total population of 1.3 million people.

Warner criticised the government of Prime Minister Patrick Manning over its failure to give an ethnic balance in its annual Independence Day Awards ceremony to mark this country's 47th Independence anniversary Aug 31.

Goa Diaspora Remitted Rs 800 crore in 2008

Goa received nearly Rs.800 crore (Rs.8 billion) in remittances last year from 56,000 emigrants settled abroad, an official study on Goan diaspora has revealed.

Goa Migration Study is a joint project by the state government's office of the Commissioner for Non-Resident Indian Affairs, the union Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Centre for Development Studies (CDS).

"Remittances are equivalent to 6.3 percent of the state's domestic product or 33 percent of the revenue receipts," S. Irudaya Rajan, professor with the research unit on international migration at CDS, said.

"At least 82 percent of the households used the remittances for daily subsistence. Nearly a third of the households used it for educational purposes. More than a quarter of the households deposited it in banks. One-fifth of remittances were used for building houses and purchasing land," said Rajan.

India yet to Tap Diaspora well, unlike China

India has only now begun to tap its 25-million diaspora in 130 countries to boost its

growth, unlike China that owes much of its economic miracle to the overseas Chinese, says a study released Friday.

"Indian companies have tapped into the Indian diaspora less well than the Chinese firms into the Chinese diaspora," says Tarun Khanna, professor at the Harvard Business School and a contributor to the study called The Global Indian Firm.

"Thankfully, this has started to change, with India's attention drawn by successes of Indians in Silicon Valley and, prior to the current meltdown on Wall Street, as well as in diaspora communities around the world," Khanna says. "But it is still early days in tapping this global resource."

According to Khanna, who has done several comparative studies on the two emerging economies, the post-1978 Chinese economic miracle was partly catalysed by overseas Chinese.

"Wooing the diaspora was a deliberate act that paid enormous dividends (to the Chinese). India, in contrast, shunned its diaspora. Mirroring these policy vacuums, Indian companies have generally not benefited nearly as much as Chinese companies had," says Khanna in his analysis.

Indian Diaspora must Help Build a Great India

LONDON: President Pratibha Patil has urged the Indian diaspora around the world to help overcome the challenges presented by a resurgent India and help build a "great and dynamic" nation.

"You know the challenges that a resurgent India presents," she told prominent members of the Indian diaspora at a reception hosted in her honour in London.

Pointing out that the Indian diaspora across the world number some 25 million and those in Britain more than 1.5 million, she said: "We seek to interact directly and substantially with them".

"We must work in our individual ways to contribute to the objective of building a great and dynamic India which will be one of the mainstays of emerging global order," Patil told an audience of some 400 Indian-origin guests.

She lauded the diaspora in Britain, saying that although they formed two percent of population, they contributed 4-5 percent to Britain's Gross Domestic Product.

"Your hard work and industrious attitude have won you appreciation both in country of adoption and country of origin," she said.

The guests included Nobel-winning scientist Venkataraman Ramakrishnan, industrialists Swraj Paul, Srichand Hinduja, Raj Kumar Bagri, Nat Puri, Ghulam Noon and Kiran Bilimoria, politicians Navneet Dholakia (Liberal Democrat), Sailesh Vara (Conservative Party), Paramjit Dhanda (Labour) and Lord Adam Patel, leading academics and representatives from the worlds of business, medicine, charity and the arts.

Patil said it was fitting that the first engagement in her three-day state visit to Britain was the reception with members of the Indian diaspora.

She praised the contributions of people of Indian origin to the development of post-war Britain.

"When we hear the prime minister of Great Britain... mention the excellent treatment he personally received from an Indian-origin doctor in the National Health Service, we feel proud of all of you," she said.

Patil said the Indian diaspora was an important bridge between the two countries, pointing out that the architects of modern India -- Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhai Patel and B.R. Ambedkar -- had all been educated in Britain.

Education had now been identified as a major field of collaboration between India and Britain, she added.

Diaspora Cash fed Domestic Jihad

Late last year, four Keralites training with a Lashkar-e-Taiba unit in the Kupwara mountains, along the Line of Control in northern Kashmir, were shot dead by security forces.

And since the September shootout, the police in Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala have been scrambling to unravel the threads that tied Indian Mujahedeen groups in the south to each other and to the Lashkar.

But the investigations also show that the Indian Mujahedeen was fed and watered by transnational financial networks: networks linked both to diasporic Islamists living in West Asia and Pakistan-based organisations like the Lashkar.

From the story of Ernakulam-born computer engineer Sarfaraz Nawaz, who was expelled by the Oman authorities earlier this year, investigators have been able to understand the relationship between domestic terror and diaspora cash.

Conference

Call for Paper

South African Migration to the UK: Exploring Dynamics, Identities and Prospects 22-23 April, 2010 at University of Loughborough

This two-day seminar is being co-organised by Daniel Conway (Loughborough) and Charlotte Lemanski (UCL) with financial support from Centre for the Study of International Governance (CSIG) at Loughborough University. We are now inviting the submission of abstracts for papers to be presented at the seminar. Papers should address South African migration to the UK and might include issues such as: whiteness, diaspora, space and identity.

As this is a relatively under-researched area, this seminar is intended to serve as an initial space to share ideas and research findings, develop a network of researchers and identify future research agendas.

Please send abstracts of 150-200 words accompanied by your title, name and institutional affiliation to Charlotte Lemanski (c.lemanski@ucl.ac.uk) by 1 December 2009.

Jewish migration: voices of the Diaspora

23 to 27 June 2010, Istanbul, Turkey

The subject of the Fourth International Conference on Jewish Italian Literature (ICOJIL) will be the various Diasporas in the East and the West starting from an Italian perspective.

Organized by: Utrecht University
Deadline for abstracts/proposals: 20
December 2009

Website:

<http://www.fabula.org/actualites/article34451.php>

Contact name: Monica Jansen

**3rd Global Conference: Diasporas -
Exploring Critical Issues**

7 to 9 July 2010, Oxford, United Kingdom

This inter- and multi-disciplinary project seeks to explore the contemporary experience of Diasporas - communities who conceive of themselves as a national, ethnic, linguistic or other form of cultural and political construction of collective membership living outside of their "home lands." In particular, key issues to be addressed include: what are the defining characteristics of Diasporas and what distinguishes one from the other? What role do 'home' and 'host' cultures play in developing relationships between communities in a global environment? How new is the concept of Diasporas; does it capture new global realities or designate old phenomena in a new way?

For further details about the conference please visit:

<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/diversity-recognition/diasporas/call-for-papers/>

Book

Looking to reestablish his own Jewish identity, the author, a young Baltimore native who grew up alienated from his roots, makes up for lost time by embarking on a global trek that takes him to Jewish communities in Burma, Bosnia, Uganda, Iran, Cuba, Israel, and the American South.



The book highlights how isolated Jewish community preserves their culture "creating a culture of respect" with their neighbors, he concludes that "the greatest achievement of the Jewish people was not the long struggle for their own state but the richness of their Diaspora. The state of Israel was necessary, for the time being, as a haven."

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