



# Annual Report

2015/16



Our logo is a leaf from the *Ficus religiosa* (Sacred Fig), a tree found across the countries of South Asia. It symbolises social, cultural, religious and ecological benevolence, embodying a shared geography. This intrinsic commonality, cutting across political boundaries and identitarian constructions, provokes intriguing curiosity about the ties that bind this complex region. In amplifying this, our logo ties the Centre to LSE's motto: *Rerum cognoscere causas*, 'to know the causes of things'.

The height and breadth of the *Ficus*, along with its dry season-deciduous nature, gives it its innate popularity in South Asia – as provider of shade from the scorching sun in the summers, and warm, filtered sunshine in its winters. Its density and strength make it a nesting paradise for several kinds of birds, and its leaves provide fodder for two of South Asia's most important pack animals, the camel and the elephant.

The bark, leaves and figs of the *Ficus* have several medicinal attributes, and are used in Ayurvedic, Yunani and other alternative medical knowledge-systems, helping to treat open wounds, inflammations, ulcers, asthma, and digestive and heart ailments.

Its popular names include *arani*, *ashvattha*, *bo*, *bodhi*, *bodhidruma*, *beepul*, *esathu*, *pimpal*, *pipal*, *ragi*, and *shuchidruma*, amongst many others.

The logo has been designed by Oroon Das.

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# INTRODUCTION

Dr Mukulika Banerjee, *Director*

The establishment of the South Asia Centre at LSE on 1st June 2015 marked a milestone in the 100+ year-old relationship that LSE has with the region.

In its very first year, the SAC has forged greater and more substantial links between South Asia and all aspects of LSE, and has marked a step-change in the School's engagement with the region, taking further its internationalisation strategy and outreach. The setting up of the SAC (with other regional centres), marked a strategic decision by the School to consolidate and highlight the research undertaken by LSE academics, to put South Asia at the centre of global debates and also to act as a 'lightening rod' for renewed fundraising efforts for the School. The SAC is part of the Institute of Global Affairs and works with the IGA, other centres and disciplinary departments to develop a programme of research, public engagement and impact.

LSE's long-standing association with South Asia continues to be close, vibrant, and productive. The relationship dates back to the historical links formed in 1912 when two of the School's main founders, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, visited various cities in the Indian subcontinent. A number of prominent South Asians, including Abul Fateh (Bangladesh), B R Ambedkar (India), K R Narayanan (India), Sher Bahadur Deuba (Nepal), and Maleeha Lodhi (Pakistan) were educated at LSE and many recent graduates continue

to maintain strong links with the School. Honorary fellows from South Asia include former Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, and Nobel Laureates Professor Amartya Sen (India) and Professor Muhammad Yunus (Bangladesh), among others.

Over the last two decades, South Asia – comprising Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka – has emerged from its 'third world' status to becoming an economic powerhouse, playing a fundamental role in the strategic balance of power in the world. The several daring policy changes effected by its governments have been matched by the excellence and contributions of its citizens in different spheres, making South Asia the focus of interest in the rest of the world. An important outcome of this has been the development of academic engagement on new terms of interrogation, examination and parity.

Currently, the teaching and research of over 75 academics at LSE relates to South Asia, meeting the highest standards and rankings of social science research in their respective disciplines across the world. Taken together, LSE's combination of strengths on South Asia is unique and the SAC is very well placed to advance an agenda

for engagement that is contemporary and inter-disciplinary, and which integrates knowledge of the region with scholarship in different subjects and on varied issues. Engagement with South Asia also offers profound new opportunities for thinking about global issues such as environment and climate change, financial regulation, democracy and cultural 'modernisation'. There are several research scholars and faculty at LSE who apply the best of social science thinking to the most urgent and important issues in the region such as gender equity, urbanisation, governance, poverty reduction and infrastructure. Individuals and programmes also maintain long-term institutional and intellectual partnerships with the region and conduct collaborative research projects, conferences and visitorships.

The SAC will complement existing research and training programmes to build on and enhance LSE's historic relationship with South Asia by expanding LSE's world-class research. Its principal aim is to enhance exchange and mutual understanding between academics at LSE and government and policy makers in South Asia, thus helping in pulling together the various strands of research to direct attention towards the biggest challenges facing South Asia today, and its impact and relations with the world as a whole. Its distinctiveness will be particularly associated with the application of the great disciplinary strengths in the social sciences at LSE.

The SAC's engagement with South Asia also reflects LSE's deep commitment to creating evidence-based research for wide public engagement and to offer findings that can have practical outcomes and inform public and social policy. Research into issues that affect the largest and most vulnerable sections of society have played a central role in the School's research agendas across disciplines. Specialist faculty of LSE, alongside Research Fellows and PhD students spread over 25 departments, institutes and centres continue to generate new and cutting edge inter- and multi-disciplinary research projects that create insights into South Asian society, its prospects for change and its relationships with the world. There exists still a worrying lack of understanding outside the region of an area rich in history and achievement and whose future will shape the world. LSE's unrivalled expertise, consolidated through the SAC's various activities, will ensure that it contributes to providing new understandings and research based policy analysis. The impulse of the research initiatives of the Centre will be driven by and anchored in the challenges confronting the world today, which cannot be sensibly understood without understanding the South Asian region and its place in the world. In addition, the SAC will also look to developing new agendas of research and multi-disciplinary collaborations to address important thematic issues like governance and democratic standards; the role of civic virtue in public life; the importance of partnership and public institutions and South Asia as an emerging global force.

The SAC also makes a concerted effort to explore the region as a whole, defined not only by contemporary political borders and its constituent countries but also by historical frontiers of culture, language, trade and topography. These factors determine the contours of contemporary developments, be they strategic issues played out on the Indian Ocean, trade across the Central Asian plateau or the sharing of food, music and ideologies of religion and politics across national boundaries in the region. The SAC will pursue new and innovative ways in studying the region and flows of people, ideas, goods, natural resources like rivers and mountains that connect it and link it with the wider context of Asia. It aims to build on and enhance this historic relationship by leveraging and linking more of LSE's world-class academic strengths in its disciplines into examining issues of urgency and relevance in the region.

### **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SAC**

The School has made an initial investment in the establishment of the SAC for a period of 36 months. The SAC will need to become financially sustainable by July 2018, and is developing a multi-pronged, and focused plan for ethical fundraising along with the School's Fundraising office. The SAC will need to cultivate a critical, dynamic, varied and distinct profile – all at once – to make itself sincerely attractive to donors, who will support the Centre.

“All activities of the Centre focus on public engagement and impact, capacity and skills development, and the creation of a global platform to engage with South Asia – whose particularities constantly challenge conventional social science thinking about the region.”

## SOUTH ASIA

From the start, our engagement has been two-way, taking the Centre to the people, and inviting people from across the board to events at the Centre focusing on issues of contemporary interest in the region.

As such, the Centre has followed the twin approach of visiting different countries in the region to reach out to members of the academic community and beyond, alumni, and simultaneously organising events in London.

In the first year, the SAC has been associated with two key initiatives that aim to create conversations across national borders in the region:

### THE PARTITION MUSEUM

The Centre is Academic Advisor to the first museum of memories of the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. The Partition Museum (under the auspices of The Art and Cultural Heritage Trust), housed in the historic Town Hall in Amritsar in Punjab, is the first time that any museum in the subcontinent will collect and archive people's memories of displacement and settlement following the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 by



## Partition Museum, Town Hall, Amritsar

15.10.47  
Original copy at Chuni Lal Bhatia under Card No. 27.

REFUGEE REGISTRATION CARD

Registration No. 103/1/14

Camp or city. Kanpur

Name Chuni Lal Bhatia

Father's Name Dewan Chand

Religion. Hindu Signature Chuni Lal Bhatia

Other member of the family:

	Adult	Children	Total
Male.	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Female.	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Total.	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>

Original home ;  
Province United Provinces Distt. Guzrat  
Tehsil Guzrat Village Guzrat

Signature of issuing Officer. \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Issue 11/10/47

KANPUR

REFUGEE REGISTRATION CARD OF CHUNI LAL BHATIA, KANPUR (INDIA), 1949 © THE PARTITION MUSEUM

the British. The museum will exhibit personal, everyday items of refugees on both sides of the 'Radcliffe Line', alongside papers and photographs of the time, and – most importantly – the first-of-its-kind archive of audio recordings of memories.

As Academic Advisor, the Centre works with the Museum to organise seminars and workshops, develop content, and advise on a range of academic issues including preparing texts, curating tours, etc. The museum is due to be inaugurated on 1st November 2016. This project has been initiated by Lady Kishwar Desai, along with a group of advisors.

## THE DSC PRIZE FOR SOUTH ASIAN LITERATURE

In November 2015, the Centre hosted the announcement of the shortlist for the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for 2016. The jury for the award was chaired by the veteran BBC journalist for South Asia Mark Tully, and included Karen Allman, Neloufer de Mel, Syed Manzoorul Islam, and Dennis Walder. The shortlisted titles for the award in 2016 were Raj Kamal Jha's *She Will Build Him a City*; K R Meera's *The Hangwoman*; Neel Mukherjee's *The Lives of Others*; Anuradha Roy's *Sleeping on Jupiter*; Akhil Sharma's *Family Life*; and Mirza Waheed's *The Book of Gold Leaves*. The final winner was announced at the Galle Literature Festival in Sri Lanka in January 2016, and the prize was awarded to Anuradha Roy.



Established in 2011, the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature awards US\$50,000 to the winner(s) of a work on South Asia Literature, written either in English or in regional languages (translated into English). As the most prestigious and generous prize in South Asian literature, it has provided a global platform and raised awareness of the literatures and cultures of the region, and winners have gone on to publish internationally. Previous winners include H M Naqvi from Pakistan, Shehan Karunatilaka from Sri Lanka, Jeet Thayil and Cyrus Mistry from India, and Jhumpa Lahiri from Britain.

The DSC Prize is managed by Manhad Narula, an LSE alumnus.

# PAKISTAN

The SAC organised the first-ever official visit by a serving LSE Director to Pakistan in February 2016, visiting Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

The Director and President Craig Calhoun led a delegation comprising Mukulika Banerjee, Nilanjan Sarkar, and Adnan Khan, accompanied by alumni Fayeeza Naqvi (Co-Founder & Chairperson, Aman Foundation) and Ali Jameel (CEO, TPL Trakker Pvt Ltd).

The trip was very successful, its highlight being a meeting with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif, and the consequent announcement of a proposal to establish a Jinnah Professorial Chair in Pakistan Studies at LSE funded by the Government of Pakistan to mark 70 years of Pakistan's independence in 2017. The announcement was welcomed by everyone, and was covered extensively by the media in Pakistan.

Members of the delegation also met several others in the government, including Hon'ble members of the Senate, Special Adviser Mr Sartaj Aziz, Chairman of the Pakistan Higher Education Commission Professor Mukhtar Ahmed, amongst others. The Centre submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for current officers of the Pakistan Foreign Service to spend 6 weeks at LSE as part of the Centre's commitment to work with governments in the region to build capacity. It proposes for an officer to be based at the SAC, and to develop research ideas based on their diplomatic experience along with interacting with



#### FROM ABOVE

LSE DELEGATION IN PAKISTAN, KARACHI, FEBRUARY 2016; EMRYS SHOEMAKER, MARC-ANDRÉ FRANCHE AND MAHVISH SHAMI AT A PANEL DISCUSSION ON 'YOUTH BULGE' AT LSE, APRIL 2016

academics and students to enrich their experience of being spokespersons of their government to a varied crowd.

The delegation also met several prominent business leaders, who showed interest and support in the SAC's commitment to develop a Pakistan programme at LSE, and our ambition to make it the global hub of all Pakistan-related research. The SAC is currently developing further ideas of engaging Pakistan's philanthropic business community in the development of the Centre's vision for Pakistan over the next few years.





LSE DELEGATION WITH HON'BLE PRIME MINISTER MIAN NAWAZ SHARIF, 22 FEBRUARY 2016

We also visited several higher education institutions – both old and new – in Pakistan, and interacted with students and academic faculty. In Islamabad, Craig Calhoun addressed a gathering of students and faculty in the Department of Economics, Quaid-i-Azam University, which was followed by an animated Q&A in the presence of Vice Chancellor Javed Ashraf. In Lahore, we visited Lahore University for Management Studies (LUMS) and met members of the Governing Body along with faculty members, and discussed research agendas; this was followed by an interactive lunch meeting with students. And in Karachi, the delegation visited Habib University, and the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), met faculty and students, and discussed research and teaching agendas.

The delegation's most rewarding meetings were, as always, with the alumni in all 3 cities where we attended receptions hosted by the individual alumni chapters. The SAC is committed to reaching out to alumni and building relations with them, and involving them in our work as we proceed with developing our activities in the region.

At LSE, we welcomed the Hon'ble Chairman of the Senate, Mr Raza Rabbani in November 2015, who spoke to an invited audience about building a strong, democratic and prosperous Pakistan over the next decade, and High Commissioner H E Syed Ibne Abbas in February 2016 to meet and speak with students and alumni. Other hugely successful and well-attended events were a discussion with Omar Hamid on his 2 novels, *The Prisoner* (2013) and *The Spinner's Tale* (2015), moderated by our Pakistan Advisor Huma Yusuf in March 2016; and a panel discussion on Pakistan's 'Youth Bulge' including Marc-André Franche (LSE alum and UNDP, Pakistan) and Emrys Schoemaker (LSE), moderated by Dr Mahvish Shami (LSE) in April 2016.



**PAKISTAN @ 70: LSE PAKISTAN SUMMIT 2017**

10-11 APRIL 2017 IN KARACHI  
WITH PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON THE CONSTITUTION OF PAKISTAN, ART AND MODERNITY, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, PHILANTHROPY AND INSTITUTION BUILDING. SPECIAL LECTURE BY PROFESSOR DAVID GILMARTIN ON 'INDUS AND ITS PEOPLES'.

# INDIA

The SAC visited India twice in the last year, and the Centre has had several kinds of engagements with the government, academic and business community.

## STUDENT VISIT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The Government of India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in association with the High Commission of India, London, organised a week-long study trip for a delegation of 50 research students as part of the celebrations to mark the 125th Birth Anniversary of BR Ambedkar, architect of the Indian Constitution. The students were hosted by the South Asia Centre; Ambedkar is an alumnus of LSE, being enrolled first for a Masters, followed by a PhD in Economics, between 1916-22.

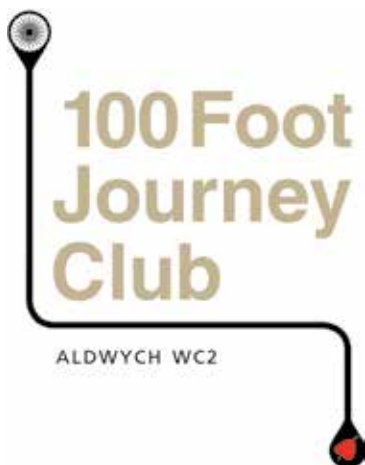
The students visited London in two groups in October-November 2015. They attended lectures specially commissioned for their visit; used academic and research facilities at the LSE library; visited the House of Lords, the Royal Observatory, Gray's Inn, Ambedkar's residence on King Henry Road, went on a river cruise; and spent a day in Oxford.

The Centre organised 2 special exhibitions for the visits: one from the LSE archives relating to Ambedkar, including a signed copy of his published PhD *The Indian Rupee: Its Origins and Its Solution* (1923) gifted to his tutor Professor Edwin Cannan; and another at the British Library where documents relating to Ambedkar, held by their India Office (including an original copy of his passport), were displayed.

An important objective of the trip was to make the students aware of issues of social inequality, injustice and discrimination in contemporary Britain. Professor Mike Savage and Dr Lisa McKenzie from the International Inequalities Institute (LSE) delivered lectures on class inequality in contemporary Britain; other lectures were by Lord Bhikhu Parekh, on contemporary British politics; and Professor Javed Majeed on the Indian constitution. The first group of students participated in a Q&A session with the Rt Hon Virendra Sharma, MP for Southall, at the House of Lords; and the second group's visit coincided with India's Constitution Day when they heard a special lecture on the Indian constitution by Lord Meghnad Desai.



STUDENT DELEGATION OUTSIDE 10 KING HENRY ROAD, NW3 — B R AMBEDKAR'S RESIDENCE WHEN HE WAS A STUDENT AT LSE, NOVEMBER 2015



## THE '100-FOOT JOURNEY CLUB'

The '100-Foot Journey Club' — which marks, almost literally, the distance between India House and LSE — is a collaborative initiative between the High Commission of India and the South Asia Centre, established in March 2016. The Club hosts academic events of mutual interest, building on our commitment to work with governments to impact public consciousness through informed knowledge. All events of the Club focus on India, or on India in relation to the wider world — and there is a conscious attempt to curate interdisciplinary events focusing on issues of contemporary relevance and concern in India today.

The Club's activities were inaugurated with a public lecture by Raghuram Rajan (Governor, Reserve Bank of India, 2013-16) where he spoke about rethinking the global monetary system.

Other events included a conversation with S Y Quraishi (former Chief Election Commissioner of India), and further events are being planned.



RAGHURAM RAJAN, GOVERNOR OF THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, AT LSE, MAY 2016



## PRACTITIONERS-IN-RESIDENCE

As part of the SAC's commitment to be involved in capacity-building initiatives, we have formalised an arrangement with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India to host a serving officer of the Indian Foreign Service for 6 weeks at the Centre. The Officer will meet and engage with academic faculty, scholars, and students, attend events, deliver talks, use library resources, and spend time reading and writing a paper on a mutually agreed topic of interest. The purpose of this scheme is to give officers the opportunity to take a break from their active service for a short period, and bring their own practical experience to bear on academic knowledge and expertise and widen their horizons through a personally-informed engagement within a world-class academic institution — the perfect combination for a capacity-building programme.

## LSE INDIA SUMMIT 2016 GOA, 28-30 JANUARY

The SAC organised the first-ever LSE India Summit in Goa on 29-31 January 2016, sponsored by 'Difficult Dialogues'. The purpose of the Summits is to bring international and local experts on the same platform to debate and discuss topics from the grassroots as well as through comparative and applied knowledge. Central to it is the participation of the audience, who are given ample time to ask questions and seek clarifications. The 3-day event included panel discussions on India's Relations with the Middle East; Global Finance; Civil Society; and Infrastructure. Participants included Talmiz Ahmad, Rukmini Banerji, Erik Berglof, C Uday Bhaskar, Lisa Bjorkman, Nicolas Blarel, Craig Calhoun, Shubhranshu Choudhary, James Crabtree, Vidhya Das, B Toby Dodge, Meera Devi Jatav, Devesh Kapur, Priyanka Kotamraju, Darryl Li, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Partha Mukhopadhyay, Nasser Munjee, Sam Pitroda, Adam Roberts, Nicholas Stern, Siddharth Varadarajan, and Yogendra Yadav.



SERBIAN POLITICAL ACTIVIST SRDJA POPOVIC AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE 'LSE INDIA SUMMIT', GOA, JANUARY 2016



A special highlight of the Summit were 2 evening lectures: one on non-violent forms of political protest and activism by the Serbian political activist Srdja Popovic, and the second on trading relations between the Arabian Sea and China by the award-winning author Amitav Ghosh. The Summit also included an exhibition of rare documents on the monetary history of India from the archives of the Reserve Bank of India.

# difficult dialogues

**The SAC will hold an LSE INDIA SUMMIT every year.**



## FROM ABOVE

NOVELIST AMITAV GHOSH AT THE LSE INDIA SUMMIT DINNER TALK, GOA, JANUARY 2016; IT GURU SAM PITRODA IN CONVERSATION WITH SONALI CAMPION, GOA, JANUARY 2016



**INDIA @ 70: LSE INDIA SUMMIT 2017**  
29-31 MARCH 2017 IN NEW DELHI WITH  
PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON CORPORATE  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, INDIA'S  
FOREIGN POLICY, THE CONSTITUTION  
OF INDIA, WATER SECURITY, AND  
QUANTITATIVE DATA.

## 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF DR B R AMBEDKAR

The Centre marked the birth anniversary of B R Ambedkar, father of the Constitution of India and leading political thinker, on 14th April 2016 at LSE. Director and President Craig Calhoun, Deputy High Commissioner Dr Virander Paul, Director Dr Mukulika Banerjee and others from LSE and the High Commission of India paid their respects to Dr Ambedkar. Dr Ambedkar is one of the most illustrious alumni of LSE, having enrolled here in 1916 to study a Masters and thereafter for a PhD. The SAC also relocated the bust of Dr Ambedkar gifted by the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisations of the UK in the Atrium of the Old Building, from its previous obscure location in Clement House.



DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER VIRANDER PAUL AND MEMBERS OF THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA WITH DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT CRAIG CALHOUN AND DIRECTOR MUKULIKA BANERJEE IN FRONT OF THE AMBEDKAR BUST IN THE LSE ATRIUM, APRIL 2016

## OTHER EVENTS

Through the year, the Centre hosted several events with distinguished speakers at LSE. A complete list is printed at the end of this report; highlights included

- a conversation between Nobel Laureate and one-time LSE faculty Professor Amartya Sen and Professor Nicholas Stern on Sen's latest book *The Country of First Boys*.
- a global Google Hangout analysing the Bihar Vidhan Sabha election results in 2016, including Milan Vaishnav (US), Jeff Witsoe (US), Manisha Priyam (India), Sarthak Bagchi (India), Neelanjan Sircar (India), Giles Vernier (India), James Manor (UK) and Louise Tillin (UK).
- a conversation between Shobhana Bhartia, Chairperson and Editorial Director at HT Media Limited and Dr Mukulika Banerjee, debating the sensitive relationship between the media and politics in contemporary society.
- Professor Sumathi Ramaswamy delivered the Centre's first Anniversary Lecture on 31 May 2016, "India is Indira, Indira is India." M. F. Husain and the Aesthetics of India's Emergency, June 1975', which looked at India's avant garde modern artist late M F Husain's complex oeuvre at the time of Emergency in India in 1975-77.

# BANGLADESH

Deputy Director Nilanjan Sarkar visited Bangladesh in January 2016, to renew contact with the alumni, meet stakeholders, government officials and business leaders, and visit research centres and foundations, to talk about the SAC and discuss its vision for Bangladesh.

There were very useful discussions with various individuals – business leaders, academics and alumni – and an important part of the trip was to listen and learn from stakeholders in Bangladesh about the immediate concerns of the country, and possible ways in which the SAC may be able to engage with Bangladesh. The Centre is currently developing several new initiatives for Bangladesh, and has proposed the first-ever LSE Bangladesh Summit to be held in Dhaka in 2018, and is currently in conversation with stakeholders to make it happen.

Our Bangladesh-focused events at LSE generated tremendous interest from several quarters, and have drawn huge crowds. Of the two main events, in November 2015 Sanchita Banerjee Saxena (Director, Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley) discussed her new book *Made in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Sri Lanka* (2014) with David Lewis (LSE) on the labour market behind the global garments

and textiles industries; and Dr Nazia Hussein (LSE Teaching Fellow) spoke on gender and class among ‘New Women’ in Bangladesh in December 2015.

The Centre is currently working closely with the High Commission of Bangladesh in London to develop events and programmes, and is also in touch with several cultural and non-governmental organisations working on Bangladesh in the UK.



SANCHITA BANERJEE SAXENA, DIRECTOR, CHOWDHURY INSTITUTE FOR BANGLADESH STUDIES, UC BERKELEY AT LSE, NOVEMBER 2015



DAVID LEWIS WITH LSE ALUMNI IN DHAKA, NOVEMBER 2015

# SAC IN LSE

## WORKING WITH LSE FACULTY

The South Asia Centre has worked consistently to reach out and work with LSE faculty across departments and centres in the School. As a research centre, the Centre has been especially keen to showcase the strengths of LSE's faculty, and their expertise. Several faculty members have been invited as speakers, moderators or panelists at various events both at LSE and abroad. We have organised events with Erik Berglof (Global Affairs), Toby Dodge (Middle East Centre), Naila Kabeer (Gender Institute), David Lewis (Social Policy), Tirthankar Roy (Economic History), Mike Savage (Inequalities Institute), Nicholas Stern (Economics), and Lisa McKenzie (Inequalities Institute), Mahvish Shami (International Development), amongst several others.

Tim Aldcroft (Administrator) and Sonali Campion (Communications and Events Officer) are recording short film interviews with members of LSE faculty working on South Asia, which will be posted on the website in 2016/17. Also, a series of LSE-wide workshops involving faculty,

post-doctoral and doctoral researchers on six key research themes are planned.

## WORKING WITH LSE STUDENTS

A very important part of the Centre's mission to consolidate and establish South Asia focused activities at LSE is to support students in organising activities at the School. The Centre hosted the India Student Forum in March 2016 which included a series of panel discussions on topics of interest in contemporary India. The event was organised by the LSE-SU India Society with external funding; participants included Virendra Sharma, Sachin Pilot, Sambit Patra, Suhel Seth, Manish Sisodia, Kabir Khan, Anupama Chopra, Pratik Gupta, Atul Phadnis, Alnoor Bhimani, Rana Kapoor and Rajat Sharma. The Centre is currently working with the Pakistan and India student societies to organise the Student Forums in 2016/17.

In February 2016, the South Asia Centre worked with the LSE-SU Nepalese Society to host a round table discussion on 'Nepal after the Constitution', exploring what the impact of the long-awaited new



PANEL DISCUSSION ON 'NEPAL AFTER THE CONSTITUTION' IN PROGRESS, LSE, FEBRUARY 2016





Constitution will be on the nation, and where this Himalayan kingdom is likely to go from here. Sangita Thebe Limbu, LSE-SU Nepalese Society member and MSc student in the Gender Institute, chaired the event, with panellists Michael Hutt (SOAS, University of London), Mara Malagodi (City, University of London), Punam Yadav and Chandra Laksamba (Centre for Nepal Studies UK).



In June 2016, the Centre organised a day-trip for student members of the 'Amartya Sen Club' (Department of Economics) to visit Cambridge and spend the day with Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen at Trinity Hall. A group of almost 30 students spent the day with Sen: they were given a guided tour of the College, had a discussion about some of Sen's writings, and ended their trip with lunch hosted for them by Amartya Sen.

#### FROM ABOVE

MEMBERS OF LSE-SU INDIA FORUM'S ORGANISING COMMITTEE; H E SYED IBNE ABBAS ADDRESSING ALUMNI AND STUDENTS FROM PAKISTAN, LSE, FEBRUARY 2016; MEMBERS OF THE AMARTYA SEN CLUB WITH NOBEL LAUREATE AMARTYA SEN AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD BANK KAUSHIK BASU, TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, JUNE 2016



MEMBERS OF THE LSE AMARTYA SEN CLUB HAVING DINNER WITH AMARTYA SEN AND KAUSHIK BASU

## VISITING FELLOWSHIPS

Dr Tamara Relis joined the SAC as Research Fellow in 2016, for a period of 2 years. A Barrister & Solicitor in the UK and an Attorney in the US, Tamara is currently working on a new book project on human rights, access to justice and conflict resolution involving Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal and Bhutan. She has received a British Academy / Leverhulme SRG grant to advance this project.

Prior to this, Tamara was Research Fellow in the Department of Law (LSE), working on a monograph entitled *The Purchase of Human Rights: Standards and Legal Pluralism in the Global South*, which is

based on her postdoctoral research in 8 states in India, focusing on legal and lay actors' experiences in state courts, lok adalats and non-state justice mechanisms (panchayats, mahila panchayats, nari adalats) processing human rights violation cases of violence against women. Tamara has taught human rights law, non-state justice and legal pluralism, and evidence in New York (Touro Law Centre), and has been Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Columbia University Law School in New York.

The Centre is expecting Dr Laura Zimmermann from the University of Georgia (USA) as Visiting Fellow in 2016/17.

## FOSTERING INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Centre is very keen to create internship opportunities for students in different countries in South Asia. Through its first year, the Centre has developed a two-pronged approach of developing contacts with reputed business leaders across the region, and working with LSE Careers to enable internship opportunities for students. In Spring 2016, the Centre mediated an internship opportunity in London with

TATA Communications; and Alexander Spalding (Department of Anthropology) spent 3 months at the Observer Research Foundation in the summer of 2016 working with their cyber security team, researching on a project on dataveillance and the dynamics of contemporary cyber-governance.

The Centre is currently in discussion with several business and community leaders across South Asia to develop internship opportunities in the coming years.



**FROM ABOVE**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
NILANJAN SARKAR WITH  
ALUMNI IN HYDERABAD,  
FEBRUARY 2016; ALUMNI  
RECEPTION IN LAHORE,  
FEBRUARY 2016; AND  
NILANJAN WITH MEMBERS  
OF THE RECENTLY  
ESTABLISHED NEPAL  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION,  
KATHMANDU, JULY 2016

## WORKING WITH ALUMNI

Our alumni are our most precious asset, and the Centre has received the strongest support from alumni wherever we have travelled. We have received logistical support, hospitality and affection everywhere: in Pakistan, we were accompanied on our week-long trip by alumni Fayeeza Naqvi and Ali Jameel, and were invited to alumni receptions in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi; in Bangladesh we were accompanied by Mushtaque Chowdhury and Imran Rahman, and were invited to an alumni dinner in Dhaka; in India, we have attended receptions hosted by alumni in Bombay and Hyderabad and have the long-standing guidance and hospitality of alumna Nasser Munjee.

And last, but certainly not the least, our amazing alumni in London have loyally and faithfully attended our events, engaged with us, brought ideas and shared experiences. As we go to press with this Report, the Centre is working with alumni in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. We continue to rely on the warmth and affection of our alumni to make the Centre a success in South Asia, and across the globe.

# DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

The SAC uses a range of digital channels to engage new audiences and develop ties with existing stakeholders.

We have established a strong social media presence in our first year, using platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Soundcloud to provide followers with regular updates about upcoming events, Centre news and new blog and multimedia content. South Asia @ LSE, the SAC blog, offers regular academic analysis on current affairs as well as a wide range of content relating to South Asia events at LSE and new publications in order to make research by experts on the region more widely accessible.

## SOUTH ASIA @ LSE

- Transitioned from 'India @ LSE' in June 2015 to reflect the expanded remit of the South Asia Centre
- Attracts an average of 13,000 hits per month
- Posts a wide variety of blogs including interviews, research articles, comment pieces, event summaries, photo blogs and book reviews
- Interview with Amartya Sen posted in November 2015 went viral and attracted over 75,000 hits in one week

Over the last year the blog has changed its name and considerably expanded its remit. From focussing predominantly on India and posting three times a week, South Asia @ LSE posts are now more

regular and cover two or more countries every week. We have had a variety of posts on Bangladesh covering topics from secularism, to domestic worker rights to climate change; similarly, posts on Pakistan have discussed the youth bulge, healthcare, geopolitics, gender and more. In May we ran a dedicated series on the anniversary of Nepal's earthquake with debates around aid and the reconstruction process. Posts are predominantly written by academics, researchers and alumni associated with LSE, though there are plans to expand knowledge exchange of the blog over the coming year and invite more contributions from external experts.

South Asia @ LSE is closely integrated with the Centre's events and posts a write-up or interview with the speaker after each event. For the India Summit in January 2016 the blog featured multiple interviews with panelists both before and after the event, as well as an 'in conversation' piece between speakers Srdja Popovic and Yogendra Yadav on non-violent protest. South Asia @ LSE also acts as a platform for increasing the reach of student events. For example, this year it featured an event post about the LSE-SU Nepalese Society's roundtable discussion on the new constitution, and two interviews to help promote the LSE-SU India Forum.

Sonali Campion (Communication and Events Officer) works closely with partners to increase the reach of posts. In 2015/16 we collaborated on two cross-blog series with the International Growth Centre, one on new Sustainable Development Goals and the other on tackling corruption. Other LSE blogs like Review of Books, Business Review, British Politics and Policy and Democratic Audit repost South Asia @ LSE content on occasion, and our posts have also been picked up by major media bodies such as Outlook and Quartz.



IMAGE CREDIT: ÁLVARO IBÁÑEZ

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- Established a dedicated Facebook page and attracted 1,500 Likes
- Twitter account transitioned from a dedicated blog handle to promoting the Centre as a whole and gained 1,000 new Followers
- 'Bihar Vidhan Sabha' Google Hangout video posted on new YouTube account in November 2015 attracted 1,500 views
- Interviews and videos recorded at the LSE India Summit and posted on Soundcloud/YouTube attracted over 300 listeners and 400 viewers respectively

## MOST POPULAR POSTS IN 2015/16

**"India is the only country trying to become a global economic power with an uneducated and unhealthy labour force"**

Amartya Sen interviewed by Sonali Campion and Taryana Odayar

**The Tamil Jains: A minority within a minority** by Mahima A Jain

**China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Towards a New 'Heartland'?** by Omar Alam

**India's Foreign Policy Challenges in 2015: South Asia** by Raj Verma

**The Bangladesh Paradox: In what ways has social progress been achieved despite poor governance and high corruption?** by Juli Qermezi Huang

- Maintained an e-newsletter offering a monthly round-up of South Asia Centre news, blogs and events to 900 subscribers

Social media plays an important role in the Centre's communications with stakeholders. The Twitter account, originally established in 2012 to promote the India@LSE blog, was rebranded to represent the Centre as a whole and now offers regular updates on SAC events, news and blogs as well as promoting events and opportunities from other organisations with a shared interest in the region (for example, the SOAS South Asia

Institute or Asia House). The Facebook page was launched in June 2015 and has gone from strength to strength, with hundreds of page Likes and regular interactions on individual blog and news updates. This is in addition to the high levels of engagement that SAC posts on the central LSE page attracts.

Multimedia content is playing a growing role in our communications. In November, the Centre held a global Google Hangout to discuss the Bihar Vidhan Sabha election results immediately after they were announced which was live streamed and recorded so the video could be made available immediately after then event, which was particularly important as the discussion was so topical. At the India Summit the SAC team produced five podcasts and shot six short videos with speakers which were uploaded to the Centre's Soundcloud and YouTube accounts. The Centre plans to expand its multimedia offering over the coming year.

Events are regularly live-tweeted so that those unable to attend can follow the discussions in real time. We also Storified our most popular events this year, offering a social media overview even before the event podcast or write-up was available. As the Centre produces so much content, we also send monthly newsletters summarising our latest activities to keep subscribers up to date.



MINISTER OF STATE FOR UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENCE  
JO JOHNSON IN CONVERSATION, LSE, JUNE 2016



TAMIL JAIN WOMEN, FROM OUR BLOGPOST BY MAHIMA A JAIN, DECEMBER 2015

# ADVISORY BOARD

**Nasser M MUNJEE** (Chair, Advisory Board) (LSE BSc Econ 1971-74; MSc Econ 1974-75) is Chairman of Development Credit Bank, and Tata Motor Finance Ltd., both in India. Nasser is also on the Board of 15 public companies, and is involved with several others as Chairman, Member of the Board or Trustee including ABB Ltd, HDFC Ltd, Britannia Industries, Jaguar Land Rover plc, several Tata companies, and the City of London.

**Craig J CALHOUN** is President of the Berggruen Institute in Los Angeles, CA since September 2016. Prior to this, he was Director & President of LSE (2012-16) where he remains Centennial Professor. He has also been President of the Social Science Research Council in New York (1999-2012), and University Professor at NYU (2004-12).

**A Mushtaque R CHOWDHURY** (LSE MSc Demography 1978-79) is Vice Chairperson of BRAC, Dhaka where he started his career more than 40 years ago. He was the founding Director of BRAC's Research & Evaluation Division, was previously its Executive Director, alongside serving in several international organisations including The Rockefeller Foundation (2009-12) and the UN, taught at Columbia (2002-04), and was MacArthur Fellow at Harvard (1992-93).

**M Ali JAMEEL** (LSE BSc Accounting & Finance 1991) is CEO, TPL Trakker Pvt Ltd in Karachi. He has previously served as Chief Executive of Jahangir Siddiqui Executive Bank (1999-2001), has held several advisory posts in the Pakistani

IT and telecom sectors, and serves as Director, Executive Director and Non-Executive Director of several companies. He is an Associate Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales.

**Mehli K MISTRY** is Director of M Pallonji Group of Companies with interests in shipping, logistics, leasing, insurance, investment and finance, based out of several cities across the world. Mehli works out of Dubai, London and Mumbai.

**Fayeeza NAQVI** (LSE BSc Econ 1982) is Co-Founder and Chairperson of Aman Foundation, a private philanthropic trust headquartered in Karachi; in 2015, she was awarded the BNP Paribas Grand Prix award in recognition of her humanitarian work. Fayeeza was previously founding Director of Saharay Welfare which oversaw the disbursement of funds to deserving NGOs in Pakistan, and is currently Trustee of the British Asian Trust.

**Ratan N TATA** is a businessman, philanthropist, investor and Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, the holding company of the Tata Group, the Mumbai-based global business conglomerate. He has been awarded the Padma Bhushan (2000) and Padma Vibhushan (2008) by the Government of India, and The Honorary Knight Cross of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (2014) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his lifelong services to business and community.

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# FACULTY ADVISORY GROUP

**Harry BARKEMA** (Professor of Management and Chair, Research Committee) is the founding Director of the Innovation Co-Creation Lab, which explores how to design innovative teams, innovation communities around websites, science parks and corporate campuses, and successful business model innovation in close cooperation with companies.

**Maitresh GHATAK** (Professor of Economics) is an applied microeconomic theorist with a focus on economic development. Ghatak's recent work on India analyses land acquisition and compensation policies in West Bengal; continuing preference for intra-caste marriage; and welfare beneficiary attitudes toward cash and in-kind transfers.

**Naila KABEER** (Professor of Gender and Development) has research interests in gender, poverty, social exclusion, labour markets and livelihoods, social protection, and citizenship. Her publications include studies on Bangladeshi women and labour supply decision-making, the impact of social mobilisation and microfinance South Asia and social justice in relation to the MDGs.

**David LEWIS** (Professor of Social Policy and Development) has a research focus on Bangladesh's politics and society, particularly on how the country has been impacted by four decades of international development policies. He has worked extensively on the roles of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society actors in South Asia—mainly in Bangladesh but also in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

**Mahvish SHAMI** (Assistant Professor in International Development) works on patron-client relationships established between peasants and their landlords with a focus on Pakistan. Mahvish is currently exploring the types of collective action projects peasants undertake in villages with varying levels of connectivity.

**Siva THAMBISETTY** (Associate Professor in Intellectual Property Law) has a research interest in the intellectual property protection of biotechnological inventions, bioethics, and comparative patent law. She has written on the implications for India's pharmaceutical industry of the Supreme Court decision to uphold the grant of the first compulsory license on a patented drug; India's death penalty and criminal justice system; and accessibility legislation in India.

**Rajesh VENUGOPAL** (Assistant Professor in International Development) has primary research interests in the political sociology of development and violent conflict, particularly with reference to South Asia. He has researched and written on post-conflict reconstruction, nationalism, development aid, private sector development, and liberal peacebuilding. His recent publications on Sri Lanka explore the politics of market reform during conflict, post-conflict economics, and military fiscalism.



# EVENTS

## 29th May 2015

**Book launch:** *Flood of Fire* (2015)

Speaker: Amitav Ghosh

Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

## 13th October 2015

**In Conversation:** 'The Role of the Media in Indian Public Life'

Speakers: Shobhana Bhartia (*Hindustan Times* Group) and Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

## 24th October 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'Social Inequality/Injustice in Britain'

Speaker: Mike Savage (LSE)

## 28th October 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'UK Parliament: The House of Lords'

Speaker: Rt Hon Mr Virendra Sharma

## 29th October 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'Contemporary Politics in India and Britain'

Speaker: Lord Bhikhu Parekh

## 30th October 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'The Constitution of India'

Speaker: Javed Majeed (King's College London)

## 6th November 2015

**In conversation:** *The Country of First Boys* (2015)

Speakers: Amartya Sen and Lord Nicholas Stern (LSE)

Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

## 9th November 2015

**Global Google Hangout:** 'Bihar Vidhan Sabha Election Results 2015'

Speakers: Sarthak Bagchi (Leiden University), Manisha Priyam (National

University for Educational Planning and Administration, Delhi), Pranav Gupta, Neelanjan Sircar (Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi), Milan Vaishnav (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), Giles Veniers (Ashoka University), and Jeffrey Witsoe (Union College, Schenectady)  
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

## 24th November 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'Social Inequality/Injustice in Britain'

Speaker: Lisa McKenzie (LSE)

## 26th November 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'A Revolutionary Act: The Making of the Indian Constitution'

Speaker: Lord Meghnad Desai  
Chair: Prashant Pise (High Commission of London)

## 26th November 2015

**DSC Book Prize Shortlisting Announcement**

Speakers: Karen Allman, Mukulika Banerjee, Syed Manzoorul Islam, Neloufer de Mel, Manhad Narula, Surina Narula, Mark Tully, and Dennis Walder

## 27th November 2015

**Public Lecture:** 'The Language of the Constitution of India'

Speaker: Javed Majeed (King's College London)

## 27th Nov 2015

**In Conversation:** 'Made in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Sri Lanka'

Speakers: Sanchita Banerjee Saxena (University of California at Berkeley) and David Lewis (LSE)

Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

**11th February 2016**

**Round table discussion:** 'Nepal After the Constitution'

Speakers: Michael Hutt (SOAS, University of London), Punam Yadav (LSE), Chandra Laksamba (Centre for Nepal Studies UK), and Mara Malagodi (City, University of London)

**16th February 2016**

Reception for H E Syed Ibne Abbas, High Commissioner of Pakistan and LSE Pakistan Alumni and students

**18th February 2016**

Reception for the High Commissioner of India H E Navtej Sarna.

**16th March 2016**

**PhD Research presentation:** 'Of Housing and Politics: Mapping political opportunities for mobilising in Bangalore, India'

Speaker: Swetha Rao Dhananka (University College London)  
Chair: Taneesha Mohan (LSE)

**18th March 2016**

**Book Discussion:** *The Prisoner* (2013) and *The Spinner's Tale* (2015)

Speaker: Omar Hamid in conversation with SAC Pakistan Advisor

**18th March 2016**

**Film Screening** in partnership with the LSE SU Pakistan Development Society: 'Azad and Jinnah: A Political Rivalry in Later Colonial India'

Speaker: Amor Sohal (Oxfrod)  
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

**19th March 2016****Public Forum**

LSE SU India Forum organised supported by SAC

Speakers: Alnoor Bhimani (LSE), Anupama Chopra (Film Critic), Pratik

Gupta (FoxyMoron), Rana Kapoor (YES Bank), Kabir Khan (Film Director), Sambit Patra (Bharatiya Janata Party), Atul Phadnis (What's On India), Sachin Pilot (Indian National Congress), Suhel Seth (Counselage India), Manish Sisodia (Aam Aadmi Party), Rajat Sharma (India TV), Rt Hon Mr Virendra Sharma

**27th April 2016**

**Public Lecture** co-hosted with the IGA: 'People Power: how non-violent strategies are shaking and shaping the world'  
Speaker: Srdja Popovic (CANVAS, Belgrade)  
Chair: John Chalcraft (LSE)

**28th April 2016**

**Public Discussion:** 'Youth Bulge or Bomb? Harnessing the Potential of Pakistani youth'  
Speakers: Marc-André Franche (UNDP Pakistan) and Emrys Schoemaker (LSE)  
Chair: Mahvish Shami (LSE)

**10th May 2016**

**Public Lecture** - 100 Foot Journey Club: 'Rethinking the Global Monetary System'  
Speakers: H E Navtej Sarna (High Commissioner of India, London), and Raghuram Rajan (Reserve Bank of India)  
Chair: Erik Berglof (LSE)

**13th May 2016**

**Public Conversation** - 100 Foot Journey Club: 'The Wonder that is Indian Elections, Challenges & the Way Ahead'  
Speaker: S Y Quraishi (former Chief Election Commissioner of India)  
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

**31st May 2016**

**Public Lecture:** "'India is Indira, Indira is India.'" M. F. Husain and the Aesthetics of India's Emergency, June 1975'  
Speaker: Sumathi Ramaswamy (Duke University)  
Chair: Mukulika Banerjee (LSE)

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# THE TEAM



**Mukulika Banerjee**

Director



**Nilanjan Sarkar**

Deputy Director and  
Development Manager



**Sonali Campion**

Communications and  
Events Officer



**Tim Aldcroft**

Administrator



**Huma Yusuf**

Pakistan Advisor





**SOUTH ASIA  
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