

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION  
SAUL/ZILKHA ROOM

INDIA TODAY:  
A CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

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**PARTICIPANTS:**

**Welcoming Remarks:**

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**Remarks:**

HARSHAVARDHAN NEOTIA  
President Elect  
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**Moderator:**

TANVI MADAN  
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**Featured Speakers:**

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Member of Parliament, All India Trinamool Congress  
Lok Sabha

GAURAV GOGOI  
Member of Parliament, Indian National Congress  
Lok Sabha

KALVAKUNTLA KAVITHA  
Member of Parliament (Telangana Rashtra Samithi)  
Lok Sabha

BAIJAYANT "JAY" PANDA  
Member of Parliament (Biju Janta Dal)  
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JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA  
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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. MALONEY: Good morning. Can I have your attention, please? Good morning. Is this mic working? Good morning. Hello? Can you hear me? I'd like to call the meeting to attention this morning.

My name is Suzanne Maloney, I'm the deputy director of the Foreign Policy program here at Brookings, and I'm very pleased to welcome you here at Brookings, and I'm very pleased to welcome you here today, and welcome our delegation and our speakers.

I'm here on behalf of Bruce Jones, our vice president who, unfortunately, has been tied up in another meeting. But asked to extend his warmest greetings to the delegation as well as to all those of you who come out to join us today for this very important discussion. It's been a very interesting and exciting time for India-U.S. relations, with quite a bit of high-level engagement going on, in recent weeks in particular.

We had the visit of Prime Minister Modi to California and New York and his bilateral meeting with President Obama. We've also seen the U.S.-India strategic and commercial dialogue with both the U.S. Secretary of State, and the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, welcoming their counterparts from India to Washington for a number of high-level meetings. And so it seems perfectly fitting and appropriate to see the two of the world's largest democracies are engaging, not simply at the Executive Branch Level, not simply between private sectors and on a people-to-people level, but to see greater contact and engagement between the legislators of these two great countries.

And so we are very pleased to welcome the distinguished group of Indian Members of Parliament here today, from different parties in different parts of the country. On behalf of Brookings I would like to extend a very warm welcome to them, to Mr. Panda who is chairing the delegation; Ms. Ghosh, Mr. Gogoi, Ms. Kavitha, Mr. Scindia.

The delegation is here as part of an event organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, FICCI, and their Annual India-U.S. Forum of Parliamentarians. We've collaborated with FICCI a number of times over the years in organizing a U.S.-India strategic dialogue, and we would like to welcome from FICCI both as President Elect, Mr. Harsh Neotia; as well as

the Secretary General, Dr. Didar Singh.

We are delighted to host this event on Indian politics and policy here, Brookings has made a commitment to the study of India and U.S.-India relations, here, in Washington through our India Project, as well as through our Brookings India Center in New Delhi.

My colleague, Tanvi Madan, will moderate the panel discussion, but before that I would like to turn the microphone over to Mr. Neotia.

MR. NEOTIA: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of FICCI I would like to thank Brookings for inviting us to this wonderful Panel discussion this morning. FICCI has been privileged to organize or to be able to organize this parliamentary forum to visit the U.S. almost every year for the last 13 years. It has been our humble endeavor to try and build a Track 2 level of diplomacy between the two countries to understand each other better. To get the legislators from both the countries to interact more closely at an informal level, if I may use the word, and try to understand the issues that the two major democracies of the world face, the challenges and the opportunities.

What is really interesting is the relationship has gone very far. We have seen a lot of uplift in the engagement between the two countries, and I think we are moving towards a very, very solid partnership which, hopefully, will endure for a very long time to come. There will be issues, we are two very prominent democracies, there are many voices as you all know in every democracy, and these voices need not always have similar ideas.

There will be issues where we will converge, there will be issues where we'll diverge, but it's important to have an atmosphere of trust between the two countries, and between its people and its public representatives, so that we can talk to each other without feeling that we are holding back. And with that openness and with that element of trust we hope that we can have a better understanding of each other, and therefore develop various businesses, various policies that conducive to mutual growth and development of peace in the world at large.

I feel particularly honored today to be here, with perhaps one group of some of the brightest political leaders in our country, they are all fairly young, and yet they are clearly the future of India tomorrow and you will see them in many, many more important positions in the years to come.

With these few words, thank you very much for being here in such large numbers, and I'm sure this Panel will not disappoint you. They are known for their forthright views, they come from different parties, and they are extremely articulate. So I, too, am looking forward to the interaction as much as you are. Thank you very much.

MS. MADAN: Welcome to all of you. Just before we start I want to request if you could please put your phones on silent, and if are tweeting, as you can see, our hash tag is IndianPolitics. Also just to note, the video and audio of this event will be available in the next couple of days, it will be on our website.

Over the last decade-and-a-half, as we've heard from both Suzanne and Mr. Neotia, multiple administrations have, in both the U.S. and India have worked to develop this bilateral U.S.-India relationship, and the two countries have had some amount of learning to do about each other. One thing that each side has become much more aware of than they were before, is how much, what happens domestically in each of the countries, really does and can affect the bilateral relationships; sometimes for good and sometimes for not so good.

And since what happens in India doesn't stay in India but affects the U.S.-India relationship, but also global issues broadly. If you think about issues, for example, like global trade, or climate change, or even kind of other multilateral issues and issues in the region as well. Since that's more true today than ever before, we have a great Panel of Members of Parliament to provide their perspectives on the U.S.-India relationship; developments within India, but also how they see different issues in parts of the world.

I'll do brief introductions just so you have a sense of who is at the table. You have more details, biographies, and of course there is always Google, if you want to know much, much more.

To my right is Mr. Baijayant "Jay" Panda, who is Chair of the delegation. He is an MP from the Biju Janta Dal, and from the State of Odisha. To my left is Mr. Jyotiraditya Scindia, a Member of Parliament from Congress, and from the State of Madhya Pradesh. To his left is Arpita Ghosh, who is a Member of Parliament from the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal. To my right is Ms. Kavitha, Ms. Kalvakuntla Kavitha who is a Member of Parliament from the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, from India's

newest State of Telangana; and to her right, is Mr. Gaurav Gogoi from the Congress Party, from the State of Assam. Mr. M.J. Akbar was supposed to be here, unfortunately could not travel to the U.S., he had another commitment, but I'm sure we will have a very engaging discussion.

Mr. Panda, I'd like to start with you, and ask you, you have been here now a few days, but also you've been traveling to the U.S. for a while. What is your perspective on the State of the U.S.-India relationship, and how India is seen in Washington?

MR. PANDA: Well, there's been a complete c-change in the relationship since the 13 years that this forum has been formed, you know, the India-U.S. Forum of Parliamentarians, which is bipartisan has been coming annually, and there's a complete c-change. As you rightly mentioned; three administrations on each side, Prime Ministers Vajpayee, Singh, and Modi on the Indian side, Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama on this side, have worked to make it happen.

But a lot has also changed in the world, a lot has changed in the geopolitics all over the world but particularly in Asia, and on top of that economic conditions have changed dramatically throughout the world, particularly impacting the big engines of the economy, not only in Asia, like China and India, but Europe, Middle East and the U.S. itself, ad all of this has played to pushing our two countries together, and if you go back to what Prime Minister Vajpayee said when the relationship got its first big fill in many decades in the late '90s, was that the U.S. and India are natural allies.

And that's true, because the two largest democracies have a lot in common, but it's ironic that we didn't understand each other's systems very well. To give you one example when the Civil Nuclear Deal was being negotiated 10 years ago, it was amazing how little understanding there was in India about how the legislative process worked here, on The Hill, and equally how little understanding there was on the American side, that just because a Prime Minister signs on something it still needs to go through Parliament and get support.

That has changed a lot and I can cite instances as we go along about how things have changed. As Mr. Neotia was pointing out, we will never always agree on everything, but friends don't have to always agree on everything, we do have a commonality of interest and even more important than that, we have a commonality of underlying philosophies, which help keep us together. And finally what I

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would like to say is that, I see a great deal more, a number of people for instance, both in the administration, and in the Think Tanks, and out there in the media and other places, who are more familiar with India today.

MS. MADAN: Thank you. Mr. Scindia, we've talked about administrations on both sides, including your government doing a fair amount of developed relationship and bringing it to the point that it is today, in the U.S. one of the clichés, and we always say it's cliché because it's true, is that there is bipartisan support for India and the U.S.-India relationship. Is there a broad consensus about -- across party lines, about the U.S. role in Indian foreign policy and about foreign policy in general? Can we say that there is a foreign policy consensus in India, or are there issues, major issues on which there are divergences?

MR. SCINDIA: Well I think as a country, I think we stand united in terms of our outlook towards the world, but certainly I think it would be facetious to say that on every single issue the foreign policy thinking is the same. The Congress Party for example has its own thinking vis-à-vis our relationship with the U.S., with Pakistan on multiple issues, and I think that independent viewpoint is also extremely handy in a pluralistic democracy. And so is the case here in the U.S. I think in a healthy democratic viewpoint it's also to be able to agree that we disagree is extremely important.

Having said that, I think I would like to second what Jay said in terms of the India-U.S. relationship. I think besides the fact that we are "natural allies" I think also it's important to put in place the fact that our Diaspora which is 25 million across 110 countries has a done a lot in terms of bringing the world closer to us, and bringing us closer to the world.

So I think that has also given a greater (inaudible) to our relationships internationally. Surely India is a market for the world, we auger for greater amounts of investment to come into India. Our trade relationship with the U.S. has reached new heights with a \$106 billion. I think even from an investment point of view we would like to see that expand going forward, and I think it's in the mutually beneficial interest of both countries to make sure that that happens.

MS. MADAN: Thank you. Ms. Kavitha, I want to take this to the regional and state level, how is the U.S. seen? What would, from a state leader's perspective as well, and you are obviously at

the center, would have that perspective, what would a state like Telangana, for example, want to see?

There's been a fair amount of engagement including visits to places like China and India, what would you like to see from the relationship, and how was it seen from the Telangana perspective?

MR. KAVITHA: Not only from India's perspective, as you rightly said, India is a Federal structure so is the U.S. and now the scenario in India has changed in a sense, earlier on, states in India were very much dependent on the Union Government, starting from the financial aid, to take any decisions, but now after the 19 -- Manmohan Singh regime where we opened up fairly, all the states independently have become very powerful in terms of economy, so we all have enough amount of money, and we are, per se, dependent on Central Government for everything.

So we can today states take independent decisions also. Apart from that, in practical terms, the majority of the decisions are made at the state level, approximately about 70 percent or relations are made at state level. So India as a country, India's relationship with U.S. matters, as much as U.S.' relationship with each and every Indian state, practically each and every Indian state is the size of a country in the -- Europe, or even bigger.

Pradesh is probably two or three countries put together, so in that sense -- and India also is very diverse, each state, my friend Gogoi is from Assam, I'm from Telangana, but our common language is either Hindi or English. I don't understand Assamese, he doesn't understand Telugu, so that is as diverse as we are. So it is important for countries like United States to engage with each of Indian states to understand their culture, to talk to them, to understand their natural resources, their opportunities and explore it. It is good for the business in U.S., it is good for the business in U.S., it's good for governments in U.S., and it is in the larger interest of the world order is what I feel.

And one of the points I wanted to make, you know, as an exchange to what Jay has said, it is interesting this time of relationship between India and U.S., particularly with the latest Iran Deal, what surprised many of us was, you know, although, despite the opposition from the Palestine -- from Israel we have -- the United States went ahead and made a deal with, you know, push forward that was positive with the deal for Iran.

So that is the entire world today is waiting for. Despite of differences with Pakistan, or

despite of, you know, difference with various issues, it should engage with each country individually and every relationship will be mutually exclusive so U.S.' relationship with Pakistan should be mutually exclusive when it talks about U.S.' relationship with India. So that is what we are looking forward, and that paradigm shift in the United States' thinking I believe will only bring about more world order today, and that is why there is this greater momentum in India-U.S. relations also is what I feel. Thank you.

MS. MADAN: Mr. Gogoi, Ms. Kavitha mentioned differences, and we've heard about divergence as well, but generally these days, they do tend to talk about more the optimistic side of the picture. What, in your perspective, are kind of some of the differences or the tensions that might be the subject of concern in the future or create tensions that will strain the relationship somewhat, or could?

MR. GOGOI: Well thank you very much, Tanvi. And first of all, it gives me great pleasure to be here at the Brookings Institution with all of you. It's a very interesting question that you've asked because we should be careful to not get carried away by this wave of optimism, and the wave of eye-catching headlines, and really focused on what diplomacy is, which is nuts and bolts and trying to secure and advance as strategic interest.

And in the strategic phase we are seeing a lot of cooperation between India and the U.S., specifically in the Indi-Pacific Ocean, and we are seeing a lot more joint exercises, military exercises, we are seeing an exercise taking place in Malabar between India, Japan and the U.S. We are seeing naval exercises in which India, U.S., Japan, Australia might take place, and while this is fair enough to kind of ensure that the Maritime Security concern of many countries in that neighbor is addressed, I think it is also important to identify how can we deepen this cooperation.

And to deepen the cooperation in the maritime neighborhood, one thing that I think the U.S. needs to do is to focus on greater defense cooperation in terms of naval warfare. We've seen that in terms of supply of naval reconnaissance, or naval equipment, or naval radar, submarines, carriers, U.S. defense companies seem to be a bit impatient with the kind of procedures that are there in the Indian defense procurement scenario. We understand that the defense procurement takes time, but at the same time, you know, India is a big defense purchaser, India believes in coproduction and manufacturing of defense.



So, we would like the American defense companies to (a) prioritize on naval equipment naval reconnaissance, the recent order of Chinook and Apache helicopters are quite good, but we would advise this cooperation to move towards the naval side as well; and, again for American companies to be a bit more patient, and understand the hurdles that there are on the Indian side as well.

But here is a concern that -- another concern that I would like to highlight, is that while the U.S. is pulling India towards, you know, strategic cooperation over the Indo-Pacific Ocean, we are outside, we are getting outside of our immediate neighborhood in terms of, you know, venturing out further into Southeast Asia, the U.S. also needs to be concerned with our -- India's strategic concerns with our Western neighbors, and our immediate neighborhood.

So we feel that there is the cooperation that is taking place and the military cooperation that is taking place, between U.S. and Pakistan, is an area of concern. I think there has been a growing evolution in the understanding of Pakistan factors, state factors, or non-state factors, and its relationship, and I think that India's concerns with our immediate neighbor on our west, and security concerns should be highlighted as well. And I find that the U.S. can step up its diplomatic engagement and diplomatic pressure.

Going forward I understand that the U.S. is engaged in working with Pakistan in order to ensure a safe and stable Afghanistan, but as the U.S. troops will withdraw from Afghanistan, I think U.S. is also interested in building a stable and democratic society, and that's an area, that's an objective where India can play a tremendous role, because we have the experience of building a stable and democratic society. We have the experience of building institutions such as free court, higher education, looking at free press, building a constitution, conducting free and fair elections.

So, if the U.S. is built -- is interested in building a stable and secure and a democratic Afghanistan, then it will require India's own experience, and India's help. So I find that that's another area where we can deepen our strategic cooperation, both on our immediate west and the western neighbors as well as in Southeast Asia.

MS. MADAN: Thank you. Moving towards the eastern kind of neighborhood, Ms. Ghosh, we recently saw the landmark, India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement signed. How is this seen in

West Bengal?

MS. GHOSH: Actually we are always interested when earlier, you know, this (inaudible) government when it was in -- came forward, then also we were interested, but now this has been finalized, and the present Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj, she has gone to real detail, and we want -- I think Bangladesh and West Bengal, we were waiting for this for a long time, and my constituency especially, I'm highly interested because it is surrounded by Bangladesh, so now the many openings that are there in terms of business, and this thing.

So, we are really looking forward to this that how the relationship grows up, and in between this U.S.-Hindu relationship -- India relationship, we are all interested. And as you know in Bengal there were different political party for 34 years, and we have come only four-and-a-half years or so, and the scenario is changing in Bengal, and we are looking forward to this relationship, and we are highly interested that, how this relationship goes on, and as Kavitha said, we all are interested that the states, because states are now having different powers, you know, they can -- could do a lot of things.

So we are really interested that how this relationship goes on and in future, states will be -- how states could be, I mean, I'm incorporated into it. Central government and the state government is to collaborate particular, as you know it is a federal structure in India, and one of the things that's very interesting in India and the U.S., that we are really a big democratic (inaudible), and as Gogoi said, I think everybody said, that we have -- may have some different opinions, but finally, we, all of us from India side, and I think from the U.S. side, everybody is looking forward to this relationship as it could build, we are really hopeful about it. Thank you.

MS. MADAN: Mr. Panda, to the, kind of, slightly bigger neighbor to the east and north, China, there is a lot of curiosity here about how India, and not that people think it's a monolithic view, but how China is viewed in India across the board, whether is concerns, whether it's cooperation. How would you see, both, kind of how the relationship is seen now, but what potentially could be areas of cooperation or competition in the future?

MR. PANDA: In one word, pragmatically. A longer answer, we obviously have tensions with China, we have a border dispute, we've had a war with them, in 1962, but also at the same time,

over the last 20 years or so, China has become our single-largest trading partner. So we recognize the fact that we live in that neighborhood, our policy towards China, cannot be like that of America, which doesn't live in that neighborhood, which has other options.

So pragmatic is the correct way to define how we deal with China. Now we welcome Chinese investment in India, but with certain caveats, because there are certain industries where we have restrictions in place, such as the telecoms industry. At the same time we have a huge deficit, trade deficit with China. This growth of trade has essentially happened with export of raw materials from India, such as iron, ore, and import of finished goods from China.

And there is a clear recognition in India that that has to change. So, just like we have discussions with the U.S. or with the EU or in multilateral forums, we have trade discussions in China, for greater access to Indian industry, such as the services sector, such as information technology to have better access in China.

China of course has tremendous access to the funding and the other resources necessary to build infrastructure, and India's infrastructure which has traditionally lagged behind is today beginning to catch up in a big way over the past 10 or 15 years, and Chinese companies are going to be playing a very big role in that.

The one other aspect which gets a lot of attention is the geopolitics of Asia, particularly the Indian Ocean. Now China having presence in countries like Pakistan and Sri Lanka, by developing ports, and also with the kind of actions it is taking in the Indian Ocean that has an impact on countries like Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, these are all relevant to both Indian interests as well as American interests. So the Malabar exercise that my friend, Gaurav Gogoi, was referring to is something that has happened for some years now, and that brings together many of these countries to work jointly on ensuring the freedom of movement of goods, and other normal rules of international transactions being maintained.

So, in summation I would say that India's view about China is that it is a great power in the making, or maybe already there, and we have to deal with it, and we all have to deal with it, and we all have to play a role to ensure that its impact on all of our countries is beneficial to both sides.

MS. MADAN: Ms. Kavitha, are states like Telangana looking to and engaging with China as well for investment at other countries. Could you talk a little bit about how states are now engaging in foreign policy as well through visits and other approaches?

MR. KAVITHA: We can't, per se, engage in foreign policy, that has to be a federal subject, and also the amount of loans for investment that we get from different countries, again, are subject to federal scrutiny and certain limitations are set on the states, but at the same time our states of course can venture out, of course can, you know, bring about our own industrial policies, our own energy policies, our own natural resources which are there available abundantly in all or our states.

We can project them and ask for investors like states in India have been competing with each other to get better businesses, states in India have been competing with each other to get better, you know, World Bank rankings and Economic Forum rankings, and it is a very good-spirited competition happening in India.

But there are certain, of course, restrictions apart from the foreign policy we can engage in any kind of business that can happen, and attracting investors to build the infrastructure in the states has been a primary concern, because as we all know when it comes to sharing of money between central and state governments primary responsibility of Union Government is not there in the infrastructure, major other issues are there.

So, infrastructural funds we've been sorting out from China, in terms of building more roads, more projects, more railway projects. So in that sense I believe every state will now go forward to seek investments from everywhere, not only China. We've come to U.S., we went to U.K., we are now exploring Dubai also. So anywhere where we can get investment from, to build our infrastructure that is where we would be interested in.

MS. MADAN: Mr. Scindia, don't kind of the -- not just investment but the economy broadly, there's been a lot of discussion about needing -- that India needs 10 percent growth, or 9 to 10 percent to not just create jobs but also provide the funding for the social welfare system that there is in place. Do you think that's true? What can take India to that level of growth? And also since -- as you were the Power Minister in the previous government, on the energy side, where is India looking to for -- to

actually meet the huge number, amount of energy needs that it will require over the next few decades?

MR. SCINDIA: Well, your first question with regard to growth, I think it's important to understand the American story and what is the American story, it's not like the U.S. grew at 8, 9 percent in blips, but the beauty of the American story is that the U.S. grew at 3, 3.5 percent but grew compounding that 400 years, which is what has transformed the U.S. into a global power.

So the secret for India's recipe as well, is not necessarily 9 to 10 percent growth, maybe sequentially for a year or two, but it's really to be able to explore that power of compounding, and India has been able to do that over the last decade or two decades, suffice to say that in the last decade we've grown at a compounded growth rate of close to 7.4 percent on an annual basis.

And the CAGR for the decade before that was close to about 6.3 percent. So we've already had two decadal growth rates of almost 6.5 percent on average in India. And the key challenge for us is not probably to hit that 9 percent, 10 percent figure for a year or two years, but even if you grow at 7, 7.5 percent, but you grow that for the next 20, 25 years, you'll see a transformation in the social and economic structure of India, and that really has to be any government's goal, and I think that is convergence on that.

With regard to how important is that growth, extremely important, because at the end of the day like any company, you've got to balance your P&L and your balance sheet, and therefore, and therefore imperative is really to make sure that growth trickles down, and you make sure that more people are part of that growth curve. Then that has to be funded from greater revenues accruing, and that can only come if you have greater benefits of growth. On your second question which is with regard to -- What was your second?

MS. MADAN: Energy.

MR. SCINDIA: -- on energy. That is a huge area of concentration for our country. We today have in place close to about 265 gigs of power. We will need close to 400 gigs by 2020, and that number is going to grow exponentially by 2030, India's demand is going to be close to 800 gigs. Now where is that power going to come from? Predominantly today we have thermal which supplies close to 65 percent of our portfolio. We would like to have diversification which is why the concentration on

renewables the concentration on solar, and which is why we are putting into effect a huge renewables policy, renewables are close to about 40 gigs out of our portfolio of 265 gigs.

And that has to go forward, but clearly for the near term, thermal is our only solution because that's where you get the quickest ramp up in terms of putting that power capacity in place. Not only your generation, but also transmission, we were able to, in the last government, connect the southern grid which allowed for close to about 200 gigs of power supply across our country.

But we need to be able to grow our transmission lines thereby providing a commonality between where generation is accruing and where the demand dips, and that's going to be only possible if we grow that possibility of transmission lines which is something which has also received great impetus from successive governments.

MS. MADAN: Mr. Gogoi, there's a fair amount of regional disparity on the economic side, between different parts of the country, one of the aims that governments have had over the -- central governments have at least have talked for a number of years, is integrating the part of the country you are from, the northeast. How much progress has been made in that regard and what would you like to see done in terms of more -- in terms of integrating the region; but also creating kind of a sustainable growth there as well?

MR. GOGOI: Well, Tanvi, this points to a very interesting, and a question which is close to my heart, I represent the northeast part of the country, and if you were to know that during the British-administered India days, that part of the country was one of the most vibrant parts of the Indian economy due to the supply of tea, wood, teak, as well as oil, and the kind of connectivity that was there between Calcutta, Assam, Myanmar, and then going on to China, that entire region was an area where a lot of economic growth was happening.

Now as a result of partition and with the creation of East Pakistan, that physical connectivity dipped, and therefore the supply of tea, wood, oil, just became that much more expensive because now you could not go via Sylhet or via Bangladesh which you used to do earlier, you had to now go via the Chicken's Neck. So the higher transport cost just made a lot of these industries unviable, and kind of -- also maybe have created a disconnect in our national economic planning.

I mean fast-forward to the '70s, '80s, '90s, two decades of political instability and violence led to development slowing down and law and order breaking down. And as a result of which the economic -- this region which was one of the economic powerhouse during the 1940s became a region which was slower, had a lot of development challenges, and socioeconomic challenges, and as -- I mean coming back, coming as close to the late 1990s, '98-'99 when the outsourcing boom and the IT boom was taken in India, and India was starting to grow at 6 percent, the region was growing at 2 to 3 percent.

Now, coming back to 2014 over the last decade, political stability has ensured that there is law and order, there is focus on development, there's focus on infrastructure, basic infrastructure such as roads, public services such as education, healthy, has benefitted and has improved by leaps and bounds. As a result of which, now, that region is now slowly emerging to be a very important part, and when India was growing at around 6 to 6.5 percent in 2008, 2009, that region -- the northeast region was growing at 9 percent.

So, India is -- you know, this region is the new emerging market of India, it's where all the FMCG goods are going, it's where the luxury transports are going, and as the previous government had started, projects which will connect India with Southeast Asia through roads such as the India-Asia Trilateral Highway, connecting India, Myanmar, Thailand. As Myanmar opened up, then India Myanmar transport projects are going via the northeast as well through the Kaladan Multi-Modal Project.

So, again we are seeing this region being used as a bridge for connecting the rest of India with Southeast Asia over road, over rail, as a result of which we see a lot more goods being transported through this corridor, and we would see, you know, warehousing and logistics-based industry, improving. So I think that that this region is very important, it's growing forward, political stability is a very good thing.

And lastly, when we talk about the Look East or Act East Policy, the only way India can actually have physical corridors with Southeast Asia for transport of goods, is if it invest in Northeast India, and that is something that, you know, we are trying to emphasize in Delhi as well, for the center to invest in, in northeast and, you know give more public funds, so that we can improve our infrastructure in order to meet India's aspiration of the Act East or/Look East Policy.

MS. MADAN: Speaking of Delhi, a subject that D.C. is no stranger to political gridlock, Mr. Panda, you no doubt have heard from a few people that there's not just -- many people consider a lot of -- a fair amount of political gridlock here, but we have concerns about it, or watch for it in India as well, more because of the economic picture. What is your sense of, are we going to see, for example, in the upcoming winter session, do you expect it to be a productive session? What do you think people should focus on, if not that? Do you think there's too much focus on that aspect and there's not enough attention paid to what's going on, say with the states on kind of administrative issues, et cetera?

MR. PANDA: I forgot to pack my crystal ball on this trip, but I will attempt, I will stab at some of that. Yes, like you said, democracies, particularly, large diverse big ones are no strangers to taking more time than other countries which are not democracies in resolving policy issues. You've seen that here on The Hill, we've seen that back in Parliament in India. One of the key aspects of a democracy, as opposed to -- You know, a few years ago you used to have this discussion here about the Washington consensus versus the Beijing consensus.

The difference is of course, we have checks and balances, and in our system we have checks and balances, of which many people sometimes have difficulty understanding, which is that just because a government has a big mandate, and forms the government, doesn't mean that it can pass all legislation, because in the Upper House, for instance, it does not have a majority.

So this calls for reaching out across the aisle, this calls for give and take, this calls for political negotiations, and clearly that has not been happening adequately, more of that needs to happen. We have seen Bills passed and one of the other things that happens is a one-sided representation. When the monsoon session in India got washed out and the big Bill got stuck, that dominated the news.

What has not dominated the news is that the previous two sessions, saw, perhaps the highest productivity in a decade, and several important legislations which had been stuck for a long time, did get passed.

So, then finally to come to your questions, will anything happen in the winter session? I think the government is finally recognizing that it needs to do a lot more to reach out across the aisle and there is talk that the winter session will be called a little ahead of time, perhaps a week or 10 days ahead



of time to give them enough time to do all of that, to reach out, to talk behind the scenes, not just talk at each other. Nevertheless, none of us can give you a clear answer as to whether some of these pending - - I mean, some will clearly pass, but whether the big ones that everybody is looking at will they pass in the winter session or not, we can't say that.

But I think the picture is clearly not as negative as the media has portrayed it. You can see the impact in terms of the FDI that India is attracting, the run rate today is at double the rate of the recent past. The growth rate has gone back up to the decadal average that Jyotiraditya Scindia was talking about, and hopefully it can go up further again. On certain indices, such as the World Economic Forum, they issue an annual index of the ease of doing business and competitiveness.

So on the competitiveness index India has gone up 16 spots in this year's annual report released last week compared to the year before. These are all good signs, and I would say that I am cautiously optimistic, that if the government does indeed do all these things reach out across the aisles, spend more time, trying to give and take and work out an acceptable option on some of these big bills we could see more traction sooner rather than later.

MR. SCINDIA: Can I just add on, Tanvi, to what Jay said?

MS. MADAN: Sure.

MR. SCINDIA: I think it's extremely to understand, in addition to what Jay has said, that when you are in government it's extremely important to be transparent, accountable, and speak too, as opposed to speaking at to other political parties. And I think that is the responsibility of government. The last year-and-a-half as a responsible opposition, as Jay has said, parliament has not function 70, 80, 85 percent of the time, but 120 percent of the time.

We have passed almost 45 to 50 legislations. Also please keep in mind, that all work of government is not necessarily through parliament, what needs to be passed through parliament is legislation and financial -- bills of a financial nature. But a lot of work is outside of government, building roads, we built a number of airports, your railway system, social sector projects, all of this is outside the ambit of parliament and can carry on nevertheless.

And I think the key challenge for India, is necessarily, according to me, not the political

system. The challenge for India lies in her ability to execute in the good sense of the word, right. And I think the charm really lies in being able to deliver on that, because that's what India, today, is crying out for. Quality execution in a timely manner, projects not getting delayed, and I think that is the most important ingredient to be able to deliver on that high negative growth rate.

I think the opportunities that India faces today are tremendous, but the challenges the industry faces are also tremendous. It's important to have a secular environment, to be able to maintain that social fabric which is very key to each and every one of our souls. And you can only experience that growth rate if you are able to maintain that social cohesive unity which today, in certain quarters, certainly is under threat, so I think it's important to keep all those factors in mind when we look at the possibility of India growing at 7, 7.5 percent in the future.

MS. MADAN: Ms. Ghosh, one of things that we've been hearing about, on kind of some of the execution side, to actually get things done, my colleague, Steve Gunn often comes in and says, implementation on (inaudible), but from more of a state perspective, we've heard the term competitive federalism, corporative federalism, whichever way you want to see it, but that even some of these kind of Bills that we've talked about the implementation has to be done at the state level. How do you see issues like the Land Acquisition Bill, Labor Reform, all the goods and services tax, which is another piece of legislation that many people here are watching?

MS. GHOSH: Actually, the thing is this Land Acquisition Bill regarding the land acquisition or Labor Reform, you know, India is a kind of country which we have almost 40 parties, so they have different opinions, all of them, so they have different opinions, all of them, they must be having different opinions, and you know the state politics is a bit different from the -- essentially when we come to the -- come to Delhi, that's a bit different I believe.

And the mindset is also a bit different in case of West Bengal, I always personally feel the mindset is a bit different. I mean, we are there in left regime for a long time, so a mindset a bit different, that is to be changed. In case of acquisition and all, what we have said that is -- that everybody saw that all the parties, almost all the opposition parties, they had a -- they said that that bill cannot be passed, and the government finally they -- finally they changed their mind.

The thing is that in case of implementation, in land acquisition case I can tell you, it's implementation, it's up to the state government, majorly, it's up to the state government, so leaving up to state government is the best way out. And as Kavitha was saying, that mostly the -- we actually pass the bills and all in central government gets in the parliament, but the implementation part goes to the -- generally it goes to the state.

So they need some collaboration, and in case of this GST, there are a few things that definitely, in the you (inaudible), there is a different draft, and now it's a different draft. But we are very hopeful, all of us, that maybe, we don't know, invent a session where they will do the past or not, but we are very hopeful and we are forward to it, because in case of -- because in our state it's very useful, and we are looking forward to it, because we are actually, we are looking forward to some business.

You know, industries to come and GST is one of the most important aspect is there, lying there. So, in case of implementation, it's always, state has to collaborate with the government, central government, but the major part is having -- with the state government and I think, personally, that now is competitive or cooperative or federalism model you were saying. This is coming up very well, I mean, all the states, they are really the one to implement whatever the Bills passed, or whatever decision-making by the parliaments, they all want to implement it as fast as possible, in their respective states.

So we are very hopeful about India's progress as Jyotiraditya was saying, we are really hopeful that the growth continues, so as we, all of states all the states are really implementing mode, so I believe that will grow.

MR. KAVITHA: If I can just quickly add?

MS. MADAN: Sure. Mm-hmm.

MR. KAVITHA: To just be clear. I'm also on the Parliament Committee for Commerce, so when the Prime Minister announced two very big flagship programs, Make in India Digital India, there is a huge talk about it from the 15 months or so. But many of the businesses also, felt that was a little bit of disjoint in terms of getting it implemented, and going or taking it forward. So I would just like to highlight the fact that, you know, the parliament apart from shouting, you know, or just staying out of the parliament, or all that (inaudible) that we are famous to do.

Apart from that we also work very seriously on the committees, because I'm on the Commerce I'm also on the Sub-Committee, we created a Sub-Committee to specifically work on the ease of doing business factor. So, India as a country, how do we make sure, or how do eliminate the redundant steps in terms of making it easy to do the businesses for various houses, is what we are also working on.

Apart from that, the majority as Arpita had just now mentioned, majority gets implemented in this state as well. So, do you know, if the Central Government has 30 percent to do, the rest of the implementation, the rest of clearing the land, giving the power, giving the water, making sure all permissions are in place, it's the state's job.

So, right now, I could also highlight one more flag, that Mr. Modi was one of the few Prime Ministers who had highlighted the word of, you know, cooperative federalism. He said, I was the Chief Minister, so I'll work with all the Chief Ministers and make all the states function (inaudible), that is what he said, in his election campaign, we really hope that he lives up to it. Just still looking forward to some very positive steps from the Prime Ministers in terms of many internal changes also, I'm hopeful that will also happen soon.

MS. MADAN: Mr. Scindia, another key actor in terms of implementation as a bureaucracy, does the structure need either expansion, reform, is it a facilitator, or is at the moment also a little bit of an obstacle in terms of getting some of these done as you've said, in terms of implementation?

MR. SCINDIA: You know, the bureaucracy is always the receiving end of lack -- I've been a member of parliament now for 15 years, and I've heard this all the time. I couldn't disagree with the statement more than with all the stings at my company. The bureaucracy is -- I certainly believe is a huge treasure trove for a country. But like any other organization it needs leadership, and if you have enlightened leadership, empowered leadership, if you have very clear targets that you have set for yourself and your team, then you and your team will work according to those targets.

So, the question that needs to be put out is really the capability of the team, in any government. I've had three ministries that I've personally worked with as Minister of Telecom and IT, as

Minister of Commerce and Industry, and lastly a Minister of Power. And I've had the good fortune of having wonderful teams in all three ministries, but if are able to set those targets, make sure that those deadlines are met, follow up on those deadlines like you would in any particular business that you are looking at, then you will achieve those desired results.

But any organization needs to be driven, and if you've got a good driver driving your bus, then you'll reach your destination. But if you've got a driver who doesn't know the difference between a clutch and an accelerator, and a brake and accelerator, then you are not going to start from the get-go. So I think having leadership that is committed, deadline-driven, and I think that's the change that India requires mostly.

If you have that, then implementation in any department cannot be an impediment. And I think the bureaucracy is an oft used excuse in the department of post, which is a department that is supposed to be qualified as one of the non-sexy departments. You know, we turned that that department around.

We did a BPR exercise, a business process restructuring exercise, for India Post, we repositioned it, we rebranded it, with Bosch Pandey, and I brought in McKinsey, and we did full BPR exercise, and today it's becoming more of a profit than a cost center. So, I think like in any organization, organizations need to be driven, and that driving had to come from enlightened leadership.

MS. MADAN: Speaking of change, Mr. Gogoi, one of the subjects that has got some attention, not least because, you know, it was often said, that it was the first Indian Prime Minister that India has had who was born after independence. But also, as your delegation shows, younger groups of members of parliament, but not just at the central level, or a state level, are coming up and taking over in politics, but also business and other fields as well. Do you believe there's a generational change in terms of the approach, whether it's towards the U.S., the foreign policy of the U.S., or kind of even issues like the economy and social issues?

MR. GOGOI: I agree with your statement I think there is a generational change, but that only reflects the state of our economy. When our economy was growing at 3 percent, 4 percent, the society reflected caution, the society reflected incremental aspirations, but as our economy is growing at

6 percent, 7 percent, you are seeing as society being that much more ambitious, you know, being more globally connected.

So I think the economy reflects on the state of our nation and the mood of our nation as well. But going forward, you know, we are talking about India's demographic dividend, and we are talking India being largely a country full of young people, and when we are talking about the aspirations of these young people you have to understand that one of the things that they are looking forward to is good jobs.

And here is where we are reaching conundrum, because in India the formal sector employs only 10 percent of our population, the majority of our population are engaged in livelihoods; whether they are a market vendor, whether they are a local rickshaw puller, or a local repairs person. So we have to find out how do we, you know, meet the demographic aspirations and create more productive and sustainable livelihoods as well as create more jobs, for our growing population as well.

And in order to address this issue we have to look at reforms within their education sector. We have to look at higher education reforms to kind of make sure that our young people who are passing out of colleges and universities, possess the right skills, the right aptitude, and the right set of knowledge which would make them productive citizens. Now in the field of education we've seen a lot of reforms over the last two decades, but those have been primarily focused in the early grade levels, in primary schools, secondary school.

So, as a result of which we've seen a spike in enrolment rates, we've seen more girl students are going to schools, we see a 10 percent jump in our literacy levels, we are seeing a drop in our out-of-school children, and I feel that, you know, we've really addressed the problem of access in primary and secondary education, but if you want to kind of make young people in colleges coming out with not only just degrees, but the right set of knowledge that they can be a valuable contributor to an Infosys, or to a JCB, then we need you to focus on our content, our curriculum, our teacher method, teacher training methods in higher education our testing mechanisms our examinations.

And where we would really need also the experience of what the U.S. has done in terms of community colleges, here it's not only the Ivy Leagues colleges which are turning out fantastic graduates, the State University of New York is doing great work. The community colleges are doing good

work, so that's the kind of model that we need to understand and learn from and thereby develop our own Indian roadmap for reforms in the higher education sector.

MR. PANDA: I wanted to add something to what Gaurav has said on this issue of younger generation coming up. The answer is, that in politics our demographics are an inverse of the demographic of the population as a whole. There are many more older, experienced politicians, at least elected ones, whereas if you look out there half our population is below the age of 25. Now we've had these moments before, 30 years ago when Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister, there was this same flash of a new generation of young politicians coming in.

What we do need is institutional changes, and I've written a lot about this in comparing what we are going through, being very similar to what the U.S. went through about 100, 120 years ago. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, you had the Gilded Age, you had very high economic growth rate, you had the rubber variance, we've seen a lot of that.

You also had the Progressive Era where you had political reforms, where the senate became directly elected instead of being elected from state assemblies like our (inaudible), where parties opened up beyond the Tammany Hall politics into much more transparent level playing field systems, where, people that didn't have old-boy network connections could get involved in politics.

We are seeing some of that happen in India today, we need more institutional changes to ensure that these moments don't just happen once every 30 years that they become -- politics becomes more reflective of public demographics.

MS. MADAN: Ms. Kavitha, the other aspect of this is kind of the role of women, both in society and politics, and could you say something about how you perceive, whether there is more space now for women in politics, not just as we've had a number of Indian Chief Ministers, and we've had an Indian Prime Minister was a woman, but kind of more broadly along the lines Mr. Panda was talking was talking about. Is there space across the board for women in politics; and if you could even comment, if you'd like, on kind of women's role in society and the economy as well?

MR. KAVITHA: I don't know, it is a little difficult to answer, in the sense we've had women President, and women were present in all the powerful positions in India, at a point of time. The

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Speaker of Lok Sabha was a woman, the Ruling Party President was a woman, and there were many Chief Ministers who were women, but then we couldn't prevent many crimes that were happening on women. You know, so women, few women being in power, will it really change everything? That's a real question.

Yes, women should be in power, women should be in very important positions in power, there is no doubt about it, but how much we, women, when we come to this particular position, advocate and the change the policies towards women's rights and making sure that women come on board like us. You know, few of us have chance here, but how do we get the rest of them with us is a very, very important factor. And unfortunately we couldn't do much.

When Madam Sonia Gandhi was there and Congress Party was powered in 10 years, she tried very hard to make sure that the Women's Bill get passed in the Rajya Sabha, but it didn't somehow, unfortunately it did not happen. So there are certain frameworks in which, you know, politics work. That is how it is world over, so irrespective of women being power, do all women get enough justice? Do all -- you know, can we prevent crime at all, you know, not happening on women? That is one aspect of it.

And that is a very negative view of looking at it, but the other way, what I would really prefer is, you know, for all the men also to talk about women's issues. All the men to take -- make sure that they participate in solving women's issues, and advocating for women's issues. I mean, what would happen if children had to speak for themselves, not possible, we speak for child right, so some men should also speak for women right, then only I believe we bring about a true change. A few women in position of powers will help, but that is not the end-all solution, is what I feel.

MR. PANDA: Can I just add onto that, because I more with you, Kavitha that, you know, men need to speak up. And I think that's not only well said, but I think -- I mean look at India, right, you've got 1.25 billion people, you say that you are human resource basket to the world, in the decade to come; 70 percent of India is below the age of 35, 750 million people right. Two-and-a-half times the population of the U.S., one-and-a-half times the population of combined Europe.

So you roll out these data and the statistics, but the fact is that unless you empower 50



percent of your population, how the hell are you going to get there? And so I think empowerment of women is not something that is the need of the hour today alone, it is mandatory, and I have seen this, because I represent a rule of constancy, right, and I've seen this at the grass-root level. Rajiv Gandhi he instituted reform at the grass-root level, making sure empowerment of women in our local governance structure.

So you've got counselors that are women, you have (inaudible) members of the local rural area that are women; you've got Janapadas that are women, and they do an amazing job, and I really believe that to those men who say that women need to be kept at home, I think if a woman can handle a home she can handle your state, she handle your country she can handle your destiny, and I think we need to unleash that power, because unless you do that, you are not doing justice to your nation.

So I mean, this is a call for the nations' growth today, and another point I'd just like to add on what Tanvi raised about generational change, India doesn't need generational change. India needs a mindset change, that's got nothing to do with age. You can be a really young person, but really old in your thoughts, and you could be a middle-aged person and a really young person in your thoughts; right?

You need a mindset change, and I've heard so much of this rubric of, you know, the new generation, and the youngsters coming up, and I think to myself, you know, I don't know how long I'm going to last in that bracket, because I've got a kid who is going to college here in the U.S., and I'm 45 years old, right. And I think to myself, I mean it's got nothing to do with age, right, and you need to move away from that rubric. You need a mindset change, and that mindset change has to be evolved out of commitment dedication to goals, to values to missions.

And that's the other challenge for India, we've got to hold our models and our values very close to ourselves, because that's something that has been passed down to us from 2,000 years. We can't afford to lose that, because that's your soul, there is no point having a really fit body if your soul is corrupt. So I think that mindset change needs to come where a modern-thinking mind, but certainly with an old soul of keeping morals and values very close to your heart. And that's what I think India presents to the world in the years to come.

MR. KAVITHA: One thing --

MS. MADAN: Sure, please.

MR. KAVITHA: One thing I would like to add in case of women empowerment, I agree to all this, but I personally believe that we have to change internally, we have to change ourselves because the women empowerment. Women have to believe first that themselves. We don't believe in ourselves to some extent, and the men, women, everybody, I think internally we have to change ourselves otherwise these kind of crimes and whatever we are talking about, that won't be changed, that is what my feeling is.

MS. MADAN: We are going to turn to questions. If you could please wait for the mic, we'll take them in -- the questions in twos, if you could wait for the mic, identify your name and affiliation, and please keep your questions short, and make them questions and comments please. We'll start over here.

MR. EBINGER: Charles Ebinger, with the Brookings Energy Program. Mr. Modi has put forth a very vigorous climate action plan which is to be applauded for, but I'd like your thoughts on whether it's realistic because the growth in solar and wind are off the charts by anybody's imagination that they can be achieved within the time table, there's lots of talk about restoring forest cover, but we know to this, as we sit here today forests are being destroyed by illegal coal mafias. And I just was wondering from a wide variety of political parties that you represent on the stage whether you think this plan is a viable plan, or whether you think it needs some refinements down the road?

SPEAKER: I'm Shane McRyan. I'm currently retired but my family is in business in Bombay. And they have a lot of export/import business. So I was wondering what you think how DPP will impact India's growth?

MR. PANDA: Regarding the first one. I think is extremely important that big targets be set, and we have to understand the context, that we have hundreds of millions of Indians who do not have electricity, and even while they are being affected by climate change, they are demanding electricity today. And which is why when Jyotiraditya Scindia said that thermal is the immediate answer, we have to do it better. We've had a lot of complexity, which is why you refer to coal mafias and all, but it can be done in a better way, and I think we are working towards improving that system.

But there is no doubt that the future has to be towards renewables, and I think there are two factors there that we have to keep in mind. The factor is that number one is grid parity, because as long as it does need subsidies, you are always going to have the issue of, where the money comes from? What else has to be given up for the time being, while you allocate that money for this? And the news is, in the last 10 years you've had dramatic drops in the cost of solar, and approach grid parity.

Towards this I would like to say that Mr. Modi's meeting with Elon Musk is probably as important as any meetings he's likely to have in Paris, because if we can bring technology to bear, to bring down the cost of alternatives of renewables to grid parity, or at least close to grid parity, I think that would be the answer.

Regarding TPP, I'll be very frank, I don't understand the details of it very much, but what we have been hearing about, is that it could to some degree exclude India from many of these -- from accessing trade with many of these countries. We need to understand that better, but India is getting much active in many multilateral organizations in recent months. We've got involved in starting the BRICS Bank, the AIIB, getting involved in SCO, there is an effort to get India involved in APEC, but beyond that, I don't understand the details of TPP enough to comment on the impact on India.

MR. SCINDIA: Yes. I'm going to take a stab at the first question, with regard to targets, 35 percent by 2030 reduction in gross carbon print, right. As Jay has said, I think it's important we be able set goal target, for the devil lies in the details, right. Or even be able to execute on that front. And if you want to execute on that front, not only the thrust on renewables, more importantly the thrust on hydro, right? We forget about hydro. Hydro is close to about only 20 percent of our portfolio right now, and India has capability of almost 200 gigs of hydro.

My friend on my right, got to his area in the northeast, tremendous possibilities. We've got now a transition corridor that we are building across the Chicken's Neck which can get power from the northeast into India, we are going to sell power to Bangladesh, we are going sell power to Nepal, through their transition corridor, but we've got to look at hydro, and therefore the impediments that are in place, your ramp up and hydro is almost eight years for any project, which is ridiculous. You need to remove those impediments along the way.

With regard to power, the issues of power that Jay pointed out to, people forget about the fact that the biggest problem today is not power generation or transition, it's distribution, because your state electricity Boards are bankrupt, you've got almost 2.5 crores worth of debts that are due on those SEBs. We took out an FRP, the Financial Restructuring Program, we put in place the carrot and stick approach, it's yielding some results, but it needs to be looked at in detail, because every State Electricity Board has to be responsible, and if you, as the state government want to dole out a subsidy, and I said that Power Minister, and as a Former Power Minister I'm saying it again.

No one can stop you from doing that, and you should do that, but please do it on the balance sheet of your state government, don't do it on the balance sheet of the State Electricity Board. If that's a dole out make sure there's a check that goes out from your state government into that State Electricity Board, don't make those State Electricity Boards defunct, because that certainly is not going to correct itself.

You've also got to look at adaptation and mitigation; you've got to look at both ends of that stick to be able to make sure that you reach those targets of reduction of carbon footprint. So, it's not only in mitigation avenues that you need to look at, you also need to look at adaption avenues. The reduction in consumption, making sure that your peak power situation moves across the diurnal range of the day. Make sure that the cost of peak times is much higher so that go off to using much more power at non-peak hours.

So those are the metrics that you need to look at, and then again, look at executing and timelines to make sure that you are able to deliver. And it is possible, it is achievable, but the devil, as I said, is always in the details.

MS. MADAN: We'll take a question from the back, in the middle, over there.

SPEAKER: Thank you. My name is Graham Garg. I retired from The World Bank recently. And you rightly -- it is an issue of leadership and execution and implementation. In that context the question which I want to pose to your, is about the quality of our elected leadership. From what I hear and read, maybe a third to quarter of the elected politician in India, including the parliament are indicted for a serious crimes, including murders, rapes kidnapping, fraud. And what do you think is happening,

why are these people getting elected, and what can India do to put more sanity into who represents as our elected representative? Thank you.

MS. MADAN: We'll take a couple of more questions over here?

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm Lalil Jah, from PTA (Inaudible) of India. What's our take on Prime Minister's engagement in the world? He's said to be the most traveled Prime Minister of India. You people also travel, quite a lot globally, so what do you think? Is it okay for you, or is it another Prime Minister, as someone has said?

MS. MADAN: We'll, take one more. The gentleman -- Yes, the gentleman over there at the back?

SPEAKER: Hi. My name is Sadak Maira. I appreciate that you brought up the idea of mindset changes that need to happen in India regarding women's rights. I just wanted to know what on the State level, can happen to protect the rights of LGBTQ communities, and everyone talks about a change of mindset but how do you actually do it?

MS. MADAN: I don't know who wants to --

MR. SCINDIA: Okay, I'm going to try and answer the two questions, one on the issue of tainted leaders or people who are elected. At the end of the day, you are the world's largest democracy, and probably the most robust democracy. That being said, I think it's important, and successive governments have committed themselves that those who have cases against them, there needs to be a time-bound process through which that is resolved.

And there are cases in point in the last three or four years, where some of those cases have been resolved and some people have not been allowed to fight a future election. So I think things are on amend, we'd like to see that delta be much more rapid, but I think the signs of making sure that the process is much more thorough, is in place.

With regard to the question on the Prime Minister's trips abroad, we are here today representing the country, but having said that I must say this, that there's nothing wrong with traveling abroad, but at the same time you've got to deal and be omnipresent with regard to the issues that are confronting millions and billions of people back home. And I think if you are able to balance both those

things, nothing like it, but if you are not then that's a travesty. Enough said.

SPEAKER: I'll just talk about the second question which is on India's engagement with the world over the last 15 to 16 months, and we've seen that there's been a surge in positive image of India. And there's been an excitement within the Diaspora community in various parts of the world. It's a positive sign, it's a sign to be expected as well when there's a newly elected government and one that has come after, you know, the world's biggest election.

There would be an excitement and fervor that we will see when the new Head of the State is traveling on. But as we -- as what my friend, Jyotiraditya Scindia, alluded to earlier, that the devil lies in the details, so we are -- you know, there's been a lot of personal chemistry between the two leaders of the United States and India, but there are trade concerns that we must address, and we are talking about India innovation and entrepreneurs, one of the innovation and entrepreneurship that we are seeing in India, it's in the pharmaceutical industry.

We are seeing a lot, like genuine pharmaceutical innovators, medicine companies, and they are having issues with related to entry, their entry in the American market. No issues related to packaging, with labeling, now those are the kind of results that we want to see after camaraderie or greater connection between the two countries that will resolve those kinds of issues.

India is an agrarian economy, a lot of the states depend upon food exports, but we are seeing issues related to the export of Basmati rice, export of mangoes and apples, because of, you know, different rules and norms of the American food industry, and the Indian food industry. So those are issues that we hope that resolved and as a result, and an outcome of all these visits. So till that time, it is very good in terms of building that atmosphere for negotiations, atmosphere for greater dialogue.

But it is here, these are the issues that we need to address, and again, at the same time while we are, you know, working and engaging with the world, and we are getting announcements from China and Japan, about, you know, their pledges to invest in India. You know, we are about billion-dollar investment and million-dollar investments. We need to see those investments coming in. Those announcements need to be converted into reality. So are we following up on that, and making sure that other countries, you know, hold up to their commitments? And at the same time, you know, the focus of

foreign policy over the last decade had been to look at immediate neighbors, and develop better ties with our neighbors.

And we've seen that, you know, somehow with the recent exercise of the Constitution being framed in Nepal with the political situation in Maldives, with our negotiation positions in Pakistan. So we need to focus -- there seems to be a lot more work that we can do, diplomatic skill that we can bring to the table. So while the personal chemistry and the image of India is surging ahead, we need to ensure that those result in strategic outcomes which advance India's own interest. Both of its commerce, if its society, as well as neighborhood.

MR. PANDA: The second question I think has been dealt with in detail. I'm going to add a little bit to what (inaudible) said on the first one, and the third one. Regarding cleaning up our politics, again I'll refer you to the process that this country went through when I talked earlier about the Progressive Era, a lot of stuff happened and it took 20, 30 years, 40 years for that to clean up.

It's beginning, it's happening in India already, a very important Supreme Court judgment two years ago, which, for the first time made it impossible for convicted members to continue in Parliament, even if they are convicted at a lower court. So you've had very important politicians today excluded from Parliament, as a result of that judgment.

There is a lot of civil society activism you can Google, there's an organization called ADR, that's doing enormous work in this, and many others. And many of us are championing the cause inside Parliament, many others outside Parliament. You will see this process go forward better representatives in coming years.

About LGBT rights, now the same courts which have ruled repeatedly in a very liberal way in most cases, have a mixed record on LGBT rights, but what I expect is not immediately any sort of sweeping legislation or sweeping judgment, but they cruise here and there, leading perhaps to some kind of a sweeping legislation or judgment sometime down the road.

So, I'll give you one example. The courts have given some very supportive judgment in some specific cases, and in Parliament the Upper House passed the Transgender Rights Bill, which is the first Private Members Bill to pass Parliament in 40 years, and it is now being move in the Lower House,

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I'm one of the persons who is moving it. The government has also given an assurance that they would bring a Bill for Transgender rights. So we can hope for certain breakthroughs like that on various fronts, and I'm hopeful, because we -- I think India in my mind has a great breadth and depth of liberal values. And I'm certainly hopeful in our lifetimes to see much better legal protection for these rights.

MS. MADAN: Ms. Kavitha, any final comments?

MR. KAVITHA: On the political cleaning up question. I believe it is the primary responsibility of the political parties to decide if we have to let these people contest or not. You know, after the political party decides and lets him fight an election, then that's a different story, the vulnerability matters, money matters, everything else matters. But primary infiltration I believe should happen at the political party levels who decide to give tickets to these candidates.

So that way I believe it is a first step to go ahead and start the process. But of course otherwise electoral reforms in India have been also pending for a long time, so there are many advocates for the reforms, in the electoral process as well, so I believe that will also help to an extent. But on the whole it was wonderful to be here, and I really hope that the India-U.S. relation will definitely step up and we will see more tangibles in the near future. Thank you so much for having me here.

MS. MADAN: We've run out of time. Our guests have a number of meetings back-to-back after this. Thank you all for coming. As I've said the audio and video will be available online later. Thank you, again.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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