

### Editor-in-Chief

Manish Chand

### Contributors

Amb. Kanwal Sibal

Amb. Anil Wadhwa

H.E Andre Aranha Correa  
do Lago

H.E. Hamza Yahya Cherif

Amb. Anil Triguanayat

Amb. Vishnu Prakash

Shakti Sinha

Srikanth Kondapalli

### Copy Desk

Shweta Aggarwal

Amrita Singh

V. Pathak

Meghna Dasgupta

### Marketing & Communication

Shweta Chand

### Editorial Office

TGII Media Private Limited,  
III A/35, Sector 3, Vaishali  
Ghaziabad - 201010

### Printed and Published by

TGII Media Private Limited

### For advertising, reprint rights and syndication enquiries, contact

editor@indiawrites.org,

indiaandworld@hotmail.com

All rights reserved throughout the  
world. Reproduction in any manner  
is prohibited.

RNI No. 1306385/2017



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

# SHARING & SOLIDARITY IN THE TIME OF CORONA

The spectre of the novel coronavirus is haunting the world, unleashing a macabre dance of death of destruction across hemispheres. Over 200,000 people have died and more than 2 million infected with the killer virus in countries around the world. The death toll is getting updated 24x7, with no light at the end of the tunnel yet.

In such an apocalyptic moment, what role can diplomacy play? With nationalistic sentiments getting revived, will the pandemic lead to erection of new barriers and prejudices? Or, is it a call for a new kind of globalisation and multilateralism? These are urgent questions the world is currently grappling with, as each country in its own way tries to curb the pandemic. But at the same time, it's clear to everyone that the crisis of this scale and magnitude necessitates enhanced international cooperation and solidarity. The new strain of coronavirus is borderless and is brutally egalitarian as it has struck both rich and poor countries with a vengeance, albeit with varying degree of

intensity. In this Special Edition of *India and World* magazine, we encapsulate and chronicle some signature diplomatic initiatives by multilateral groupings such as SAARC and G20 where India played an important role in mobilising global cooperation to combat the pandemic. In this context, an insightful article by Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli highlights India-China cooperation in the wake of COVID-19.

Clearly, the world will never be the same even after the pandemic abates. But we should not allow the lethal virus to edge out all other issues from the global mindscape and strategic discourse.

### India's Trump Moment

Days before the pandemic struck, India hosted the largest ever public reception for a foreign leader as India and the US elevated their multi-faceted ties to the level of Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. India is no stranger to 'tamasha,' but even by Indian standards, the 'Trump Tamasha' was unsurpassed in its sheer scale,

dazzle and extravagance. The maiden visit of President Trump to India scored not only high on pageantry as he was accorded a spectacular welcome at the world's largest cricket stadium, but it also fleshed out contours of a tighter strategic connect between the world's oldest and largest democracies. Diplomacy acquired a strong personal flavour reflecting personalities of the two leaders as they lavished admiration and affection on each other, making personal chemistry central to the emerging new phase in the India-US relationship.

On balance, Trump's 36-hour visit had both transactional and strategic aspects. On the transactional side, the signing of defence deals worth \$3 billion and India's plan to buy more energy from the US foregrounded the two areas that will loom prominently in the India-US partnership in years to come. On the strategic side, the visit underlined the US' promotion of India as a major player in the Indo-Pacific and a net security provider in the region.

What made President Trump's visit to India unique was that despite no big-ticket outcome, it has been widely hailed as a success. In a maturing relationship, as Kanwal Sibal, a former foreign secretary of India points out, all high-level visits cannot always produce dramatic outcomes. "President Trump's visit to India transcended such transactional calculations by deepening trust and friendship between the two strategic partners," writes Mr Sibal in

his article "Decoding Trump's India Journey." In a similar vein, Dr Mukesh Aghi, the president of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF), says in an interview to IW that the visit was important in as much as it reinforced President Trump's assessment that a stronger India is good for the region and the world.

### Shaping India's Rise

It may sound a bit self-congratulatory, but we can justifiably take pride in highlighting multiple perspectives on India's ongoing rise as a global power and the kind of diplomacy that is needed to spur the rise of a new economically empowered India, with its unique voice and perspective on international affairs. The special feature on "Diplomacy for a New India," showcases influential viewpoints from India as well as from the resident diplomatic corps. In a speech on the India-Africa partnership, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla underlined that India's partnership with Africa is beyond strategic concerns and economic benefits. "It is based on the emotional bonds we share and the solidarity we feel," he said. In a big-picture view on "India's Development Diplomacy," T.S. Tirumurti, Secretary (ER), underscored the organic linkage between India's development and the world. "Just as India's development is good for the world as a factor for peace, prosperity and stability, we believe that the development of other countries, including our neighbours, is also good

for us. This is clearly visible in our choices and actions as we pursue cooperation with our partners," he said.

### Corona Diplomacy

This spirit of sharing and solidarity has animated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's approach towards mobilizing international cooperation to defeat the scourge of the pandemic. PM Modi was the first world leader to convene a virtual leaders' summit as he rallied the South Asia region together to jointly combat the coronavirus pandemic by announcing \$10 million COVID-19 Emergency Fund for the eight-nation SAARC. This fund has been operationalized, with many leaders of neighbouring countries availing of assistance under this fund. PM Modi also took the initiative to propose the G20 virtual summit to the Saudi chair of the 20-nation grouping. At the G20 summit, the Indian leader called for a new kind of humane globalization and closer coordination among the world's major economies to mitigate the financial crisis.

In the weeks and months to come, as a new world order emerges from the ravages of the coronavirus disease, India's call for placing the human being at the centre of globalization should find an increasing resonance and shape the collective response to the borderless pandemic.



**Manish Chand**  
Editor-in-Chief