

## ASHIS NANDY (India)

Born in 1937, Ashis Nandy is an Indian political psychologist, a critical social theorist, and a leading social, cultural and political critic in contemporary times. He is Chairperson of the Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures. Part of the 2008 list of the Top 100 Public Intellectuals Poll, Nandy had received the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize. His Publications include : *Alternative Sciences, At the Edge of Psychology, The Intimate Enemy, The Tao of Cricket, The Illegitimacy of Nationalism, The Savage Freud and Other Essays in Possible and Retrievable Selves, An Ambiguous Journey to the City, Time Warps, Time Treks, and Traditions, Tyranny and Utopias*. Nandy has edited two books; *Science, Hegemony and Violence*, and *The Secret Politics of our Desires*, and co-edited *The Multiverse of Democracy* and *The Future of Knowledge and Culture: A Twenty-First Century Dictionary, Exiled at Home, Return from Exile*, and *A Very Popular Exile*, in four volumes. Nandy's works have been translated into a number of languages.



## SHYAM SARAN (India)

Shyam Saran is a career diplomat. He was born in 1946. Since joining the Indian Foreign Service in 1970, he has served in several capitals of the world including Beijing, Tokyo and Geneva. He has been India's Ambassador to Myanmar, Indonesia and Nepal, and High Commissioner to Mauritius.



Subsequent to his retirement, he was appointed Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Indo-US

Civil Nuclear issues, and later as Special Envoy and Chief Negotiator on Climate Change.

Saran holds a post-Graduate degree in Economics. He speaks Hindi, English and Chinese and is conversant in French.

## TARA GANDHI BHATTACHARJEE (India)

Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, the daughter of Late Devadas



Gandhi and Late Smt. Lakshmi Devadas Gandhi, was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April in 1934 in New Delhi. She is the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, wife of late Dr. Jyoti Prasad Bhattacharjee, a leading economist, is the Vice-Chairperson of Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti and Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. Gandhi Smriti is the site of martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi for truth and non-violence.

Tara feels it to be a great honour for working in Gandhi Smriti & Darshan Samiti. "I have spent the last four months of Gandhi's life with him in this house. This place takes me back to the era when I was a witness to time in the Birla House (Gandhi Smriti) as a 13 year old", says Tara.

### **SYED MANZOORUL ISLAM (Bangladesh)**



Dr. Syed Manzoorul Islam is Professor of English at the University of Dhaka, and an award winning fiction writer. He is also an art critic and has curated Bangladesh art exhibitions in UK, India and Iran. He has been a Fulbright Scholar and spent a semester teaching at the University of Southern Mississippi at Hattiesburg,

USA in 1989.

Dr. Islam's areas of special interest include Shakespeare, Modern Poetry and Fiction, Literary Theory, Postmodernism and Post-Colonialism and Translatology. He is a noted column writer and a contributor to leading Bangla dailies (*Prothom Alam*, *Somokal*) and writes on political and social issues. He is also an occasional political analyst for the BBC.

Dr. Islam was a member of the jury of the Commonwealth Writers Prize in 1989 (Eurasia Region) and a jury for the 2008 Asian Art Biennale in Dhaka.

### **JAYA JAITLEY (India)**

Jaya Jaitly born in Kerala, graduated in English Literature from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.

She lived in Jammu and Kashmir for over 12 years working with local crafts people to enhance their skills and earnings. From 1978-88 she worked as Design and Marketing Consultant for the Gujarat



Government in handicrafts and handlooms.

She is the Founder-President Dastkari Haat Samiti, a nationwide association of crafts people. It trains, promotes and organizes its members for better marketing through innovative strategies. Part of this work involves bringing together artisans of India with counterparts in different countries. Workshops have been held with Pakistan, Vietnam, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Nepal.

She is responsible for the creation of Dilli Haat, a well-known and popular marketplace enabling sustenance of traditional livelihoods and cultural heritage. She has created unique artistic Crafts Maps that document all the crafts and textiles of India. These were presented as major exhibitions of India's crafts culture at London, Frankfurt, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Chennai.

She worked with a major trade union, and joined active politics in 1984. When the Samata Party was formed by a section of the Janata Dal in 1995, she was appointed National General Secretary, Spokesperson and finally the President in 2000.

She has published five books on handicrafts and one as selected writings on crafts, women's empowerment and social and political issues.

### **SHIV SHANKAR MENON (India)**

Shivshankar Menon hails from Ottapalam in Palakkad district of Kerala and did his MA in History from Delhi University.

Menon started his career with 1972 batch of the Indian Foreign Service.



He had a stint in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) as an Advisor to the Atomic Energy Commission, continued through his posting in Vienna, and to Beijing. His last position in China as Ambassador was significant as it marked improvement in Sino-India relations, the high point

being the visit of then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Menon has also served as Ambassador to Israel, and High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Pakistan in the last decade. He was appointed Foreign Secretary in 2006, and is currently the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister.

Milestone in his career was the Indo-US Nuclear Deal, for which he worked hard to convince NSG nations to get a clean waiver for nuclear supplies to India.

Married to Mohini Menon, and has a daughter and a son. His mother tongue is Malayalam. Also speaks Chinese and German. He has managed to keep up his interests in Classical Music and the Himalayas.

## **ASIF FARRUKHI (Pakistan)**



A translator, editor, fiction-writer, critic, he was born in 1959 in Karachi, studied medicine there, and later earned a degree in Public Health at Harvard University. He currently works as a public health physician for UNICEF in Karachi. He has, thus far, published six collections of short stories. His latest publications include *Fault*

*Lines: Stories of 1971* (co-edited with Niaz Zaman), and a volume of literary criticism *Alam-e Ijaa*. He is the founder editor of the Urdu journal, *Duniyazade*. He is associated with FOSWAL since more than a decade.

## **NAVDEEP SURI (India)**

Navdeep Suri is a member of the Indian Foreign Service since 1983 and currently heads the Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs. He has earlier served as India's Consul General in Johannesburg and as head of the West Africa Division.



Mr. Suri's first diplomatic assignment was at the Indian Embassy in Cairo, followed by a three-year stint in Damascus before a return to headquarters in New Delhi in early 1991 where he was closely associated with efforts to project India as an investment destination.

He moved to the Indian Embassy in Washington DC in 1993 and worked as the political counsellor there till his transfer to the position of Deputy High Commissioner at the Indian mission in Dar es Salaam in 1997. He worked at the Indian High Commission in London from August 2000 to August 2004 as the spokesperson and head of the Press and Information department.

Mr. Suri speaks Arabic and French, has a Masters degree in Economics and has written on India's Africa policy and Public Diplomacy and on the IT outsourcing industry. His translation of Pavitra Paapi, the classic 1930s Punjabi novel, has been published by Penguin as 'The Watchmaker'.

## **MOHAMMAD ISMAEL YOON (Afghanistan)**

Prof. Mohammad Ismael Yoon was born in 1967. He is M.A. in Literature from Kabul University. At the

moment, Prof. Yoon is Director of Cultural Affairs in ONSC and Professor of the Faculty of Literature in Kabul University, 1992.

Chief Editor of *Hillah* 1997-2005, *Shamshads* 1995 and *Kabul Puhantoon*, 1998. He has been Secretary of Joint Afghan-Pak Peace Jirga, 2007.



He has written 20 books about Literature, Cultural and Political Analysis, and other issues.

Numerous interviews of Prof. Yoon have been telecast from the National and International TV Channels about the Afghanistan Affairs.

### **JAWHAR SIRCAR (India)**

An exceptionally sensitive scholar of culture, intangible and tangible heritage of India, Jawhar Sircar is currently Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India. Born in Kolkata in 1952, Sircar has held several important posts in the Government of West Bengal. He was the Chief Electoral Officer of West Bengal and successfully conducted two



Parliamentary Elections. Jawhar Sircar is a keen student of history and sociology and authored "*The Construction of the Hindu Identity in Medieval Western Bengal – The Role of Popular Cults*". He is associated with many academic and cultural institutions, like the Centre for Archaeological Studies and the Asiatic Society. He is a Founder Trustee of the Kolkata Museum of Modern Art, and has been instrumental in organizing the Kolkata Film Festival and Kolkata Book Fair.

### **UDAYA NARAYANA SINGH (India)**

Udaya Narayana Singh is currently the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Visva Shantiniketan, Bharati University, where he joined as Tagore Chair in June 2009. He was earlier the Director of CIIL, Mysore (2000-09). A poet, playwright and essayist in Maithili and Bengali, he





taught Linguistics, English, Translation Studies and Comparative Literature at the Universities of Delhi, Baroda, Surat and Hyderabad between 1978 and 2000. He has published four collections of poems and twelve plays in Maithili and six books of essays and two poetry collections in Bengali, besides many translations and over 150 research papers in Linguistics and Sociology of Language. His recent publications include — *Translation as Growth* (2010; Longman), and *Sahityer Bhasha: Bhashar Sahitya* (2010). His poems in Maithili, *Madhyampurush Ekvachan* (2005), have been translated into English (2006), Tamil (2008) and German (2009); a play in Maithili—*No Entry: Maa Pravisha* (2008), and his forthcoming collection of poems in Bangla is *Esecho Eso Rat* (2011). At Rabindra Bhavana, he currently heads a team of editors to bring out *Kalanukramik Rabindra Rachanavali*, or a Chronological Compendium of Tagore's Works.

### **SYEDA S. HAMEED (India)**

Syeda S. Hameed is Member, Planning Commission, Government of India, Syeda born in Kashmir, has a Doctorate from University of Alberta, Canada, and MA from University of Hawaii, USA.



In the Planning Commission, Syeda is looking after welfare planning of Women and Children, Health, Voluntary Action Cell and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The states of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and the UTs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli are also under her charge. Was involved in the mid-term appraisal of the 10th Plan and the drafting of the 11th Five Year Plan. Currently she is also the Chancellor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, and Co-chair, Sub-group of Experts on the Jarawa, Vice Chairperson, National Board for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Syeda is the Founder Member of Muslim Women's Forum (MWF). Founder Trustee: Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA). Founder Member: South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR). Founder Trustee: Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation. From 1997 to 2000, she was Member of the National Commission for Women, Govt. of India.

A Padma Shri, 2007, and Al-Ameen All India Community Leadership Award 2006, Syeda's Publications include *They Hang: 12 Women in My Portrait Gallery*, *My Voice Shall be Heard: Status of Muslim Women*, *Mussaddas-e-Hali* (Ebb and Tide in Islam) Verse translation of Maulana Altaf Husain Hali's Magnum Opus consisting of 394 cantos.