



“India and Singapore: Where do we go from here?”

May 19th, 2015 | The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi



The year 2015 commemorates 50 years of bilateral relations between India and Singapore and the session would reflect on the longstanding relationship and the way ahead. At this juncture, two key questions persist: where does Singapore feature in Indian Prime Minister Modi's effort in amplifying the geostrategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region; and how can the two countries and the region benefit from India's "Act East Policy" in areas such as urban planning, skill development, sanitation and water management?

Reflecting over these issues on the sidelines of the Ananta Aspen Centre's India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue, **Professor Tommy Koh**, Co- Chair, Indian Singapore Strategic Dialogue and Ambassador-At-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore; **Ambassador Gopinath Pillai**, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore and Chairman, Management Board, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore; **Mr. Jamshyd Godrej**, Co- Chair, Indian Singapore Strategic Dialogue and Chairman of the Board, Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Limited; **Dr. C Raja Mohan**, Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation and **Dr. Nitin Desai**,

Former Under-Secretary General, United Nations deliberated on the contours of the bilateral relationship.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Koh lauded India's role in the region. "Singapore believes that the new government under Modi will succeed in elevating the growth and we intend to participate in initiatives like Clean India and Smart Cities. We are living in a moment of history where regional order is in a flux. India has an important role to play in bringing new order in Asia and Asia Pacific. India needs a more balanced economy, and it cannot succeed without a manufacturing structure," **said Prof. Koh.**

Amb. Pillai asserted, "India's concentration must be on building economic structure. India should try and do things in transparent manner. This should be emulated from Singapore."

"Amid the rise of China and emerging maritime disputes, the region is looking at India to play a larger role. But is it ready to be around to create a balanced structure in the region? If India wants to play a larger role in South China Sea, it would need Singapore's help to do so," **said Dr. Mohan.**

Emphasising the improved investor confidence in India, **Mr. Godrej said,** "Economic climate has definitely improved. We can overcome legacy issues to attract more investors into the country."
