

Report on the Panel Discussion: “Politics under Gen Next Leaders”



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**Live Event on ZOOM/MMA Facebook/
Live IBC/YouTube**

Panel Discussion on the theme

Politics under Gen Next Leaders

Panellists:

Mr Tejasvi Surya

Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha

Dr V P B Paramasivam

Member of Legislative Assembly, Tamil Nadu

Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam

Working President, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee

Moderator:

Ms Priyadarshni Rahul

National President, Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) &
Advocate - Supreme Court

held on Friday, 29 May 2020 at 6.00 pm

Partners:



Politics under Gen Next Leaders

Friday, 29 May 2020

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ZOOM/MMA Facebook/Live IBC/Youtube
Panel Discussion on

Politics under Gen Next Leaders

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Dr V P B Paramasivam

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Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam

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Event Partners:



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The Context

Around the world, there is growing interest in youth and politics. More young people take part in local community campaigns and other political activities than ever before. There is belief now, that the youth can change the world through politics by becoming actively, meaningfully and substantially involved.

In the post independent era, Politics as an institution in India, has undergone a number of changes. Politicians now are expected to work with inclusive and constructive attitude. The advent of technology has narrowed the gap between the politicians and common people and so, the leaders are bound to be both answerable and accountable in a responsible manner.

The MMA -KAS online discussion held in association with ORF and Next Gen political Leaders (NGPL) addressed various questions within contemporary and historical contexts related to young people's political participation, such as:

- ♣ What does 'politics' and political participation mean to young people?
- ♣ How and why do young people choose to participate (or not) in politics and democracy?
- ♣ How is the landscape of young people's citizenship and political participation evolving?
- ♣ How can youth be encouraged to participate more widely (and deeply) in various forms of political engagement?
- ♣ How do they catch up with the senior experienced politicians in the world's largest democracy?
- ♣ How can the young political leaders be part of governance at various levels and function efficiently?
- ♣ Can the young political leaders dominate independently?

Programme Overview

Madras Management Association (MMA) in collaboration with **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung** (KAS) presented a panel discussion on the theme, “**Politics under Gen Next Leaders**” through webinar at 6 pm on Friday, **29 May 2020**. ORF, NGPL and PreSense were the event partners. The distinguished political representatives on the panel were:

Mr Tejasvi Surya, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha from BJP

Dr V P B Paramasivam, Member of Legislative Assembly, Tamil Nadu from AIADMK

Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam, Working President, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee

Group Captain **R Vijayakumar**, Executive Director, MMA welcomed the participants.

Mr Peter Rimmele, Resident Representative to India of KAS delivered the introductory remarks. **Ms Priyadarshni Rahul**, National President, Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) and Advocate, Supreme Court moderated the panel discussion.

A Q & A session was scheduled where viewers could send in their questions through SMS/WhatsApp/Zoom. This was moderated by Group Captain (retd) R Vijayakumar, ED, MMA and the panellists answered the questions during the programme. At the end of the Q&A session, Mr R Vijayakumar proposed the Vote of Thanks and the event concluded at 8.00 PM.

In view of the social distancing restrictions due to COVID – 19 and keeping in view the safety and well-being of our members, the event was conducted live on ZOOM and also livestreamed on MMA Webcast, YouTube and Facebook. The proceedings were watched live by 19,749 viewers.

Profile of the Speakers

Mr Tejasvi Surya

Tejasvi Surya was born on 16 November 1990 to Rama and L.A. Suryanarayana, who had previously been Joint Commissioner of Excise. At the age of 9, he sold his paintings and donated the amount to the Army's Kargil fund. He was then awarded the National Balashree Honour in 2001 while studying at Sri Kumaran Children's Home, Thyagarajanagar. He later graduated from Bangalore Institute of Legal Studies with a Bachelor of Academic Law and an LLB. He is trained in Carnatic music and founded an NGO called Arise India, which works in the area of school education. He has previously written for IndiaFacts. Surya considers B. R. Ambedkar as an inspiration since childhood.



Surya was an active member of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and was even the General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM). He had actively contributed to the Bharatiya Janata Party campaign for the 2014 Indian general election and in 2017 he helped organise the BJP's 'Mangalore Chalo' rally. He then led the Digital Communications Team of Karnataka BJP during the 2018 Karnataka Legislative Assembly election. As a lawyer, he had represented many BJP leaders like Mahesh Hegde (editor of Post-Card News), Pratap Simha (MP from Mysore) and had helped lawyer Ashok Haranhalli in defending cases filed against B.S.Yeddyurappa. He has been mentored by R. Ashoka and V. Somanna while his uncle, Ravi Subramanya is a senior leader of the BJP and an MLA representing Basavanagudi.

The Bangalore South Lok Sabha constituency was governed since 1996 by former minister Ananth Kumar until his death in 2018. Tejasvi Surya was chosen to contest for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections from this constituency over Kumar's wife, Tejaswini Ananth Kumar, due to his previous work. He won the elections by defeating B.K. Hariprasad of Congress by 3,31,192 votes, making him the youngest MP to represent the BJP, after having assumed office at the age of 28 years.

Surya took oath as an MP in Kannada on 17 June 2019. In June 2019, he requested the central government to reverse its 2014 decision to remove the requirement of

knowing the local language in the recruitment for banks. On 10 July 2019, during the Zero Hour, Surya requested the Home Minister Amit Shah to extend the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to Karnataka, citing the increasing influx of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in his state. When a holy site was vandalised in Hampi, Surya raised the issue in Parliament, urging the government to ensure better security for the country's sacred monuments. He sought to know whether the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare would ban electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), including e-cigarettes.

In October 2019, Surya expressed his concern over the short term for the city's Mayor. He urged the Chief Minister of Karnataka to draft and pass an exclusive legislation for Bengaluru, the Nava Bengaluru Act, to replace the Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1975.

During the COVID-19 pandemic in India, Surya launched a Bengaluru South coronavirus task force, which included free home delivery of essential goods, emergency medical assistance and mobile COVID-19 testing kiosks.

Dr V P B Paramasivam



Dr V P B Paramasivam is a Member of Legislative Assembly elected from Vedasandur constituency of Tamil Nadu state representing All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

His father V P Balasubramanian was a senior politician and a deputy speaker of Tamil Nadu assembly from 1985 to 1988. Paramasivam is an orthopedic surgeon who specializes in the field of Sports Medicine. He was working in government hospital before he joined politics.

He is an environmentalist. He planted more than 1,00,000 saplings in his school days participating in a 'Tree Plantation Challenge.' He was handpicked by the then Chief Minister J Jayalalitha to contest the 2016 Tamil Nadu assembly elections.

Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam



Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam (born 6 July 1978) is an Indian politician and businessman. Kumaramangalam was born in Kongu Vellalar Community, Chennai in 1978. He attended Don Bosco School in Egmore until age six, when he moved to Delhi when his father, Phanindranath Rangarajan Kumaramangalam won the Salem parliamentary seat. In Delhi, he attended Springdales School after which he moved to DPS R.K.Puram. On completion of his schooling, he attended Illinois Institute of Technology where he graduated with Bachelors in Engineering in Computer Science.

In 1999, he returned to India to start his own venture, an early private internet service provider, Sampark Online. He received funding from angel investors in Santa Monica and India and corporate investors including telecom manufacturer Alcatel and France Telecom. Subsequent to this venture, he worked in start-ups before consulting with AT Kearney. He then joined a small group of technologists in ICICI Bank in 2002 where together they created the roadmap for ICICI Bank's technology adoption.

In 2004 he joined MIT Sloan School of Management to pursue an MBA in entrepreneurship and finance. He was among three awardees in his class of the McKinsey Scholarship at Sloan School of Management. At Sloan, he chaired the India-China investment conference and led a small team of students to win the Regional Kauffman Venture Capital Investment Competition. He worked with Nokia Ventures to explore investments in new technologies and after graduating, joined Microsoft as a product manager.

In his five years at Microsoft, Mohan had four jobs, working in product marketing, product planning and product implementation, all on the Windows

Phone and iPhone platforms. He was judged in the top 1% of all employees in both technical and marketing roles.

In 2011, Mohan returned to India to enter politics. He then worked as a youth Congress office bearer for five years, first in the district and then as a state general secretary. He began working in his constituency on youth sports, water conservation and education. He became President of the Salem District Athletics Association and in 2017 was appointed President of the Tamil Nadu Professionals Congress. He is one of the working presidents of Tamil Nadu Pradesh Congress Committee. He serves as President of All India Professionals' Congress-Tamil Nadu and member of All India Congress Committee.

Ms Priyadharshni Rahul

1. Advocate practising in Supreme Court of India
2. National President, Next Gen Political Leaders
3. Executive President, Sansad Ratna Awards Committee
4. Deputy Editor, Presence e-magazine
5. Briefly worked with TIMES GROUP and an under Ministry of Commerce NFP
6. Youth Ambassador of India to United Kingdom, deputed by the Ministry of Defence (NCC-First Naval Cadet ever in Indian history)
7. Received President Award from APJ Abdul Kalam for Bharat Scouts and Guides
8. International Award, Duke of Edinburgh
9. Best Achiever Award, by Anita Bose Pfaff, D/o of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose
10. First Girl ever in the rank of Senior Cadet Captain in NCC, Tamil Nadu
11. History of first Naval cadet to lead Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands at the Republic day Parade, New Delhi,
12. Fought elections in Madras Christian College and won the post of Women Convener (the only woman post) with a massive majority
13. Topper in Political Science, Masters in Psychology and LLB.



Mr Peter Rimmele

Peter Rimmele is currently the Resident Representative to India of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

He has a First Law Degree from Freiburg University, as well as a Second Law Degree from the Ministry of Justice Baden-Württemberg, Germany and a M.A. in Geography.



After working as a jurist, judge and lecturer, he took public office as Ministerialrat, Head of Division at the State Ministry of the Interior in Saxony, Germany, from November 1991 on until 2000. There he first served in the Police and Security and later in the Local Government Department. On behalf of the German Foreign Ministry he served in East Timor as Registrar General, Head of Civil Registry and Notary Services (UNTAET), and became later the principal Advisor for Governance Reform for GIZ (German International Cooperation) to the Ministry of Administrative Reform and the Anti-Corruption-Commission of the Republic of Indonesia, where he served for 7 years. He then moved to Rwanda, also as Principal Advisor Good Governance/Justice Program. Earlier he was Resident Representative Lebanon, Director of Rule of Law Program Middle East North Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Panel Discussion on “Politics under Gen Next Leaders”

Key Statements



- Our foundation (KAS) believes in the next generation. They have a right to make their voices heard. But we also firmly believe in the value of experience and tradition- **Peter Rimmelle**, Resident Representative to India of KAS.



- Getting the best out of young politicians is the biggest challenge today. Many youngsters look at politics with skewed opinions. We want to tell them that Politics is another dignified profession - **Priyadharshni Rahul**, National President, NGPL and Advocate, Supreme Court



- Social media can help in amplifying one's work. But it cannot substitute brick and mortar work on the field and physically reaching out to the people - **Tejasvi Surya**, Member of Parliament from BJP



- Young aspirants to politics should read a lot and be familiar with parliament and assembly proceedings - **V P B Paramasivam**, MLA from AIADMK



- Politics is a mix of Economic Capital, Political Capital and Social Capital. We need serious reforms to address the economic barriers for entry to Politics - **Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam**, Working President, Indian National Congress

Key Takeaways

The following **Key Issues** were discussed focussing on young political aspirants:

- ♣ Does family legacy matter in politics?
- ♣ Can politics be a full-time activity or should one have a profession or business to fall back upon?
- ♣ What is the role of social media in boosting a politician's fortune?
- ♣ How important is image building, to succeed in politics?
- ♣ Do parties identify the right people and train them?
- ♣ How relevant are past leaders in today's context?
- ♣ How will Covid-19 impact Indian political scene?
- ♣ How can we make parties more democratic?
- ♣ Can young politicians take India forward?

The significant points expressed by the panellists are summed up below:

Mr Tejasvi Surya (BJP):

- ♣ The influence of family legacy in Indian politics is a worrisome factor. It offsets a level playing field and becomes a barrier for young politicians.
- ♣ Politics has many variables and very few constants. To steer clear of the variables, one must have a consistent ideology and personal discipline.
- ♣ It is better to insulate one's profession or business from politics. Professional experience adds depth to a politician's performance.
- ♣ Social media can help in amplifying one's contribution. But it cannot substitute brick and mortar work on the field and physically reaching out to the people. One's work must speak.
- ♣ Young politicians must learn to make use of social media as a powerful tool to communicate.
- ♣ Politicians must also be aware of the pitfalls of the social media, fake news and such other traps.
- ♣ A politician should focus on groundwork rather than image building. Sincere work, honest drive and equanimity will help build the image of a politician.
- ♣ Politicians can learn from all leaders who made an impact on the polity, irrespective of their party affiliation.

- ♣ Politics is a great field to be in for youngsters. They are ready to take India forward.

Dr VPB Paramasivam (AIADMK):

- ♣ Young entrants to politics need not aim for a big start as an MLA or MP. They can start working from the panchayat level and grow up the ladder.
- ♣ Youngsters can handle challenges better than seniors through personal drive and usage of technology.
- ♣ Young aspirants to politics should visit libraries, read a lot and be familiar with parliament / assembly proceedings.
- ♣ Next gen politicians should not compare themselves with the seniors. They can however learn from experienced politicians, whichever party they belong to.
- ♣ Young politicians should work for welfare of the public who believe in them to deliver.
- ♣ Standard of education must be uniform throughout the country.
- ♣ Universal health care is vital.
- ♣ TASMAC Liquor shops must be closed down in a phased manner and the government is studying through an expert committee how it can be done.

Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam (Congress):

- ♣ Politicians need a combination of economic, social and political capital to sustain and they should have a high appetite for risk.
- ♣ A dynastic background cannot guarantee political success. It can at best give a bit of social and political capital. It cannot provide economic capital.
- ♣ Serious reforms are required to remove economic barriers to political entry of youngsters. State funding of elections should be taken up.
- ♣ Politics is a full time activity. One can have passive income to fall back upon but taking up a full time job other than politics will lead to problems in balancing both roles.
- ♣ Congress Party has a system of training and developing young politicians. But educational qualifications and training are not passports to electoral success. If one wins an election, he/she becomes qualified.
- ♣ If Covid-19 lasts longer, it will definitely impact electoral politics and the chances of parties.

- ♣ Job market is dwindling. Graduates can be given apprenticeship training as done in Germany.
- ♣ We need to live with Covid-19. Supply chains must be fully functional. We need to do more testing. Elders must be isolated and taken care of.
- ♣ People must shed their inhibitions to vote in an election. They should be educated about the parties and the candidates before they exercise their choice.
- ♣ Moving away from ideas and moving towards personality centred politics bordering on presidential style of governance seems to be the current trend, which is not good. All politicians must be given their due space. We should aim to devolve power to the grassroots- up to the panchayat level.

Welcome Address

Group Captain R Vijayakumar (Retd), VSM, Executive Director, MMA



Mr R Vijayakumar, Executive Director, MMA initiated the online panel discussion organised through Zoom webinar and livestreamed on MMA website, YouTube and Facebook. He listed out the series of MMA activities planned over the next few days to keep the members intellectually engaged and provide the policy makers with inputs for decision making.

Mr Vijayakumar extended a hearty welcome to all the viewers and the panel members

Mr Tejasvi Surya, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha from BJP, **Dr V P B Paramasivam**, Member of Legislative Assembly, Tamil Nadu from AIADMK, **Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam**, Working President, Tamil Nadu Congress Committee, **Mr Peter Rimmeli**, who is the current resident representative to India of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and the moderator **Ms Priyadharshni Rahul**, National President of NGPL and Advocate in Supreme Court.

He welcomed members of KAS, ORF and NGPL. He introduced the moderator Ms Priyadharshni Rahul. He also introduced Mr Peter Rimmeli, Resident Representative to India of KAS and requested him to deliver the introductory remarks.

Introductory Remarks

Mr. Peter Rimmеле, Resident Representative to India of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS)



Mr Peter Rimmеле welcomed all the participants. He delivered the introductory remarks and struck the right chord for taking the panel discussion forward.

He opened his remarks stating the political conundrum: How can young people be integrated into the political framework and their provocative ideas implemented, without causing unwarranted upheaval? “Most political systems and cultures reward seniority and experience. Rightfully so, to an extent,” he noted.

He observed that the struggle for political power becomes a generational conflict. “All over the world, in democracies and autocracies alike, no leader can ever hope to remain in office without the support or at least tacit acquiescence of young people, especially in a young country like India,” he said.

He pointed out that seniority brings wisdom and ensures that the demands and wishes of future generations are always in safe hands. He elaborated saying that both India and Germany are societies that rate experience highly, over youthful enthusiasm. He explained how Angela Merkel has ably led the German government for 15 years, with her government’s proven focus on fiscal responsibility and, about the economic policies of the Indian government shaped by senior politicians.

He also argued that there is a case to be made for outsider views, fresh approaches, reforms and youthful zeal. “The youth are much more sensitive to demands for change than those who have been in power for a long time.”

He cited the example of East-Germany in its last days. "There was a socialist party dominated by old men, who kept on rambling about the future of their moribund state, while the youth of the country had already taken matters into their own hands and changed the course of history."

On the perpetual conflict between young and old, Mr Peter Rimmeli suggested a way out - *a revolution of perception*. "The youth have a right to make their voices heard; they have a responsibility to do so. But we also firmly believe in the value of experience and tradition. So, let experience guide reformist zeal and age listen to reasonable demands."

He brought out the fact that we live in an age where dynamics of change are really high paced and because of which the generation gap is also shrinking. He expressed his sincere hope that the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation will be able to facilitate this inter-generational dialogue.

He concluded his address with the remarks that he was eagerly looking forward to hearing new perspectives from the panel of young and promising politicians.

Opening Remarks by the Moderator:

Ms Priyadharshni Rahul, National President, Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) & Advocate - Supreme Court



Ms Priyadharshni Rahul, the moderator explained the vision of Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) and said that it is an offshoot of Sansad Ratna Awards Committee. **Sansad Ratna Award** ("Gem of Parliament") is a private award established in 2010 by Prime Point Foundation and e-magazine PreSense to honour "top performing" Members of the Indian Lok Sabha, based on the suggestions given by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Former President of India. NGPL aims to motivate and develop young and enthusiastic politicians and those youngsters who are inclined to join politics. She mentioned about the number of programs NGPL is organising and underlined its close association with MMA for over two years.

The objective of this session, she said, is to provide a platform for young politicians where they can break their political barriers and inspire others who look at politics with skewed opinions, to believe that politics is another dignified profession. She added that getting the best out of young politicians is a huge task and that the panel will deliberate on the challenges and opportunities awaiting young politicians.

She introduced the panel members **Mr Tejasvi Surya**, MP, **Dr V P B Paramasivam**, MLA and **Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam**, Working President, TNCC and opened up the discussion.

Extract of the Panel Discussion



Mr Tejasvi Surya, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha

In his opening remarks, **Tejasvi Surya** touched upon the influence of family legacy in Indian politics and how it offsets a level playing field and becomes a barrier for young politicians.

Asked to comment if one should choose to be in a profession before entering politics, he said, “There are more variables than constants in politics. For a youngster, to depend on politics for bread and butter is a huge challenge. It is therefore better to be in a profession or business to insulate oneself from the vagaries of politics.” He stressed the need for a clear and consistent ideology and personal discipline to take on the adverse impact of the variables.

When queried about the influence of social media in boosting a politician’s chances and strategies for increasing the number of followers, he said, “Social media can help in amplifying one’s work. But it cannot substitute brick and mortar work on the field.” He added that social media is a powerful tool which politicians must definitely make use of, to communicate effectively and reach out to large number of people.

However, he warned about the pitfalls of social media. “On social media, one day they will praise you sky high and on the next day, they will dump you down the sewer,” he said and advised politicians to maintain equanimity. He referred to Prime Minister Modi’s talk to the young and upcoming politicians in his party in which he would mention about two types of leaders- one who pursues ‘siddhi’ (enlightenment) and the other, ‘prasiddhi’ (fame). Those who work for the former will progress steadily while latter category will flatter to deceive.

On tips for building one's image, he said that in politics, unless a product is good, no amount of image makeover will help. If the person has dedication, passion and equanimity, naturally his stocks will go up. He quoted a verse from Bhagavat Gita which espouses one to maintain equanimity in success and failure.

He was emphatic in saying that youngsters will have a big role to play in Indian politics and taking India forward, blended with guidance from senior leadership. "For a long time, people had been confusing maturity with seniority. It is wrong. Even young people can be matured and far more responsible," he stressed and quoted his own Lok Sabha election experience. "My campaign team had a bunch of youth – all in the 20-something age group. Everyone said that it's a recipe for disaster. But I won by a record margin."

When asked about the influence of Mahatma Gandhi in his life, he said many leaders including Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar and others have made a huge influence in his life. "Politicians can learn from all the leaders who made an impact on the polity, irrespective of their party affiliation and timeline," he suggested.



Dr V P B Paramasivam, Member of Legislative Assembly, Tamil Nadu

Mr Paramasivan, in his opening remarks said that young entrants to politics need not necessarily aim for an MLA or MP's post. They can start working from the panchayat level and gradually move up the ladder. He corroborated from the experiences of his own party men. "In AIADMK, our late Chief Minister J Jayalalitha had established a culture that anyone in the party, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, economic status and family legacy can grow in the organisation, if he/she is committed and performing."

As a young politician, does sitting with political veterans and stalwarts in the Assembly, unsettle him? "No," he replied firmly and added, "I have been elected by nearly a lakh of people. They have reposed their confidence in me and that gives me the courage to face the Assembly. In fact, I could get more funds for my constituency than many seniors." He said that youngsters can handle challenges better than seniors through personal drive and usage of technology.

He advised young aspirants in politics to visit libraries, read a lot and be familiar with Parliament / Assembly proceedings, party history and ideology. "You should be willing to learn from seniors, even if they belong to the opposition party."

He batted for universal health care, ensuring uniform quality of education across the country and phased closure of government run liquor shops.



**Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam,
Working President, Tamilnadu Congress Committee**

In his opening remarks, **Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam** differed with Mr Tejasvi Surya on the impact of family legacy in electoral politics. He said that politicians need a combination of economic, social and political capital. Family legacy can help a candidate in getting some social and political mileage. But that alone will not suffice, he contended.

According to him, economic capital is a major barrier for entrants to politics. He argued for removing this barrier through state funding of elections and electoral reforms. At present, election commission imposes limits on the election expenditure of a candidate. This, he said, is highly impractical and should be scrapped.

He regretted that power is now getting more and more centralised. The reverse should happen, he pleaded. “Presidential form of governance is not good. We should move towards devolution of power right up to the panchayat raj,” he said.

“Political entrants should have a high appetite for risk,” he felt and said that politics is a full time activity. He suggested that passive income would help young politicians to fall back upon in case one ends up in financial trouble pursuing politics. “Balancing a full time profession / business and politics can be extremely challenging,” he cautioned.

Asked if Congress party identifies the right people and trains them, he said that the youth Congress has a system in place and conducts training for political aspirants. He however dismissed suggestions on making educational qualifications or training as mandatory for political entry. “If you contest and win an election, you become qualified. It is as simple as that,” he said.

"We are moving away from ideas and towards personality oriented politics which is not good for the nation. Every politician should be given his/ her space. We should be open to ideas and practise the art of compromise," he expressed.

He singled out people's reluctance to vote in elections as a malaise facing our system. "Many are not even interested in knowing about the parties and the candidates who contest. This is unfortunate and must be remedied," he pleaded.

Q &A : Answers to Viewers' Questions

Mr R Vijayakumar, ED, MMA anchored the viewers' Q&A session. Answers were given by M/s Tejasvi Surya, V P B Paramasivam and Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam:

Q: As a first-generation politician with a very good academic background, what is your advice to young politicians coming from similar background?

A (Tejasvi Surya): Be financially independent so that you can contribute to the system and you are not a parasite on it; Have an impersonal goal driven by a consistent ideology; Maintain equanimity; Have a strong risk appetite; Your sense of purpose should be larger than your personal ambition. If these can be imbibed in you, you can inspire so many people through politics.

Q: Is Gandhi still relevant in your generation?

A (Tejasvi Surya): No doubt someone like Mahatma Gandhi remains extremely relevant. But I would like to add. Not just Gandhi, but all political leaders who made significant impact on the country's polity at different points in time are all relevant. We may have differences with what Pandit Nehru did but we cannot negate everything that he did. As mature political leaders, we must be candid enough to admit the contribution of all political leaders. Take what is good from them and juxtapose that on what is relevant today. Some of what Gandhi said – for example, his opposition to industrialisation may not be relevant today. But his espousing ahimsa, moral leadership and rural development have universal appeal and value.

Q: How will Covid-19 impact Indian electoral scene?

A (Paramasivam): I don't think Covid-19 will have impact on electoral chances of parties. The central government and the states have all done well in managing the pandemic. They have given their best. The states have followed the guidelines issued to them. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, the screening at the airports started immediately after the Wuhan virus cases were detected. There is no need to politicise the pandemic management. Maybe the way elections are conducted can change.

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam): It will depend on how long the pandemic will last. If it stays for too long, it will affect the way political meetings are conducted and campaigning is done. Social media will be actively used by politicians for their digital campaign. I would love to see how Bihar elections will be conducted in October 2020.

Q: Given a choice between elevating the lives of crores of people and getting a permanent seat in UNSC, which one will you prefer?

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam): Obviously, the first one. I understand the geo-strategic impact of the second choice, but at the moment all multi-lateral institutions have lost their importance.

Q: In a vibrant democracy like India, how can we make the parties more democratic?

A (Paramasivam): I don't think legacy is always bad in politics. Talking of democracy, my party AIADMK practices it fully. When Madam Jayalalitha was alive, anyone could become an MLA, MP or a Minister without any barriers restricting them. That gave the cadres enough drive to work for the party.

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam): I agree with Paramasivam about the opportunities for the cadres in AIADMK. But I won't term them as a democratic tradition. It is centralizing power in one hand. Another thing I have observed in the regional parties –both DMK and AIADMK. One could lose an MLA or MP election and still contest for a municipal / panchayat election, contended on the opportunity to serve people. You can't think of such a scenario in both the national parties – Congress or BJP.

A (Peter Rimmeli, KAS):



I agree with Mohan when he said that politicians need not spend their entire life in politics. Also, it was brought out during the discussion that sports are full of youngsters. I beg to differ. Behind the successful sportspersons, there are experienced mentors and coaches. So, a combination of young and the old is always ideal.

Q: How can we decentralise decision making and make it transparent?

A (Paramasivam):

When you are in a decision-making panel and there are many senior members, the juniors will feel constrained to share their thoughts. But if I were to be in that position, I will not hesitate to share my point of view with the seniors. The approach is important and not the ego.

Q: How can we remove economic barriers for entry to politics? Will state funding of elections help?

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam):

State funding definitely merits consideration but the devil is in the details. Elections in Tamil Nadu often happen with money distributed to voters in envelopes. Money, though, is not always a determinant for winning elections. I have seen candidates crowd sourcing their election money, spending just one tenth of what the opposition candidate spends and still winning hands down.

Q: Can you give two or three proposals to take the nation forward?

A (Paramasivam):

- 1) Ensure uniform quality of education throughout India
- 2) Universal health care should be put in place.
- 3) Tasmac (state owned) liquor shops must be closed down, in a phased manner.

We have appointed an expert committee to look into this and suggest how the government can generate funds in alternate ways.

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam):

I agree with what Paramasivam said. The state of Chhattisgarh is implementing universal health care. Today many graduates do not get jobs. We need to have apprenticeship programs built into the school / college education, like the models followed in Germany.

Q (Pankaj Madan, KAS):



It is good to see that India's future is safe in young hands. There is no such mechanism as shutting the door on the pandemic. The response has to be gradual and incremental. What would you advocate to control the pandemic, especially since Tamil Nadu is sailing in tough waters?

A (Paramasivam):

After lockdown 4.0, we cannot have a total lockdown. Except Chennai in Tamil Nadu, the other regions are under control. The district collectors and police are doing a meticulous job of screening people who enter the district. They are tested and quarantined for minimum of two to three days. The focus now has to be on Chennai. I recommend that public movement from Chennai to other districts should be restricted for a period of 2 months. Chennai being the Capital, we can't stop people from coming in. People coming into Chennai must follow all preventive measures like wearing of masks. That would give the administrators some breathing time. As we don't have a vaccine yet, public cooperation is paramount.

A (Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam):

Let me confess. It is a tough question to answer as I am not an epidemiologist. Going by the data available and if the numbers put out in the public domain are correct, our hospitals are not, at the moment, overwhelmed. Our death rates are not high, though I get scary messages about the hospitals in Delhi being overloaded. We learn new things about the virus every day. We may have to learn to live with the pandemic; we must make sure our supply chains work across the states. For instance, I was told that makers of silver anklets in Salem are not able to go to nearby Coimbatore to sell their wares.

We have to isolate our elderly population from the youngsters who go out to work or isolate the youngsters and protect our elders. The rest of the people must be allowed to work. The economic crisis resulting as a fallout of the lockdown might as well claim more lives than the virus.

Concluding Remarks & Vote of Thanks

Group Captain R Vijayakumar (Retd), VSM, Executive Director, MMA



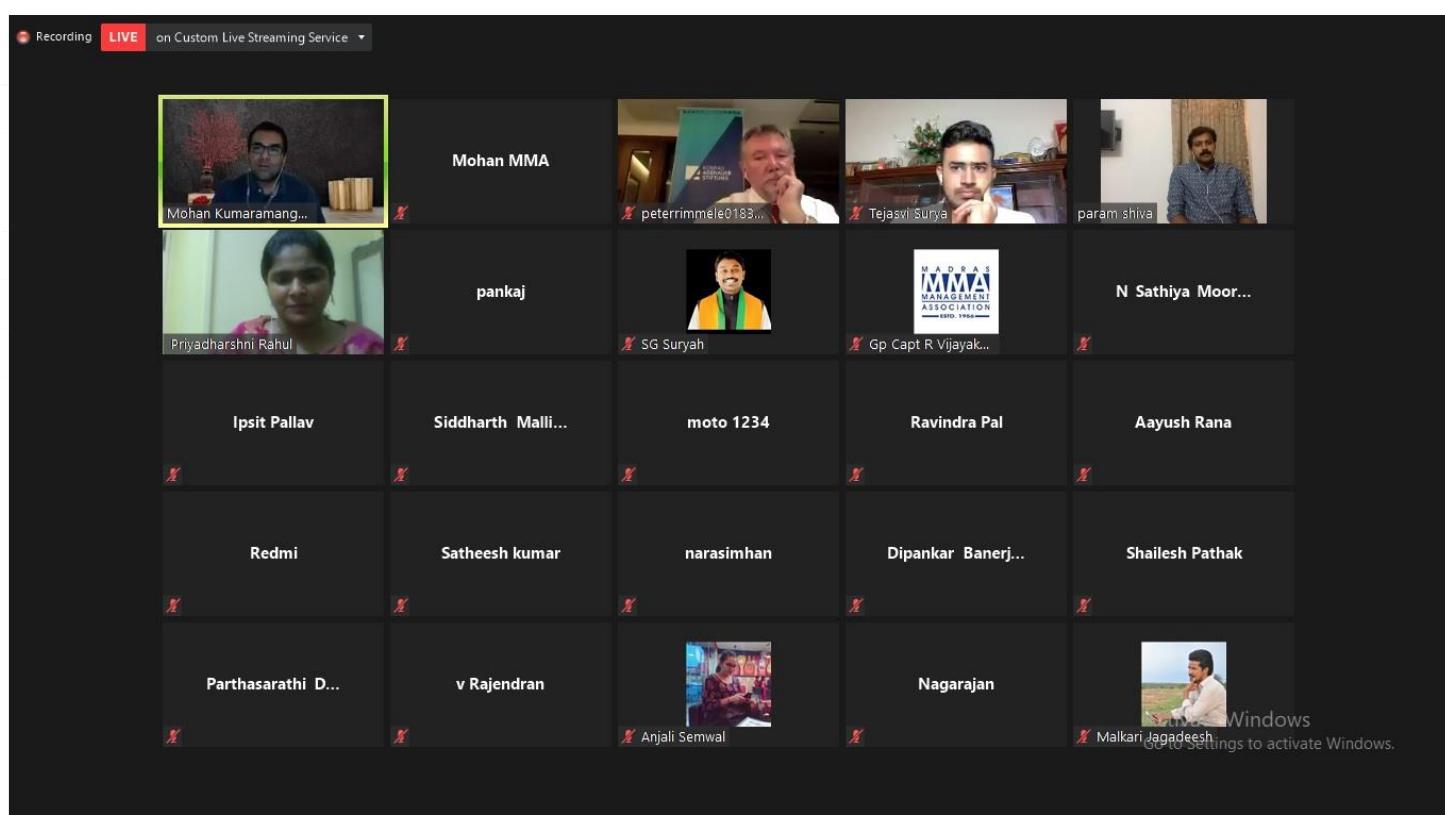
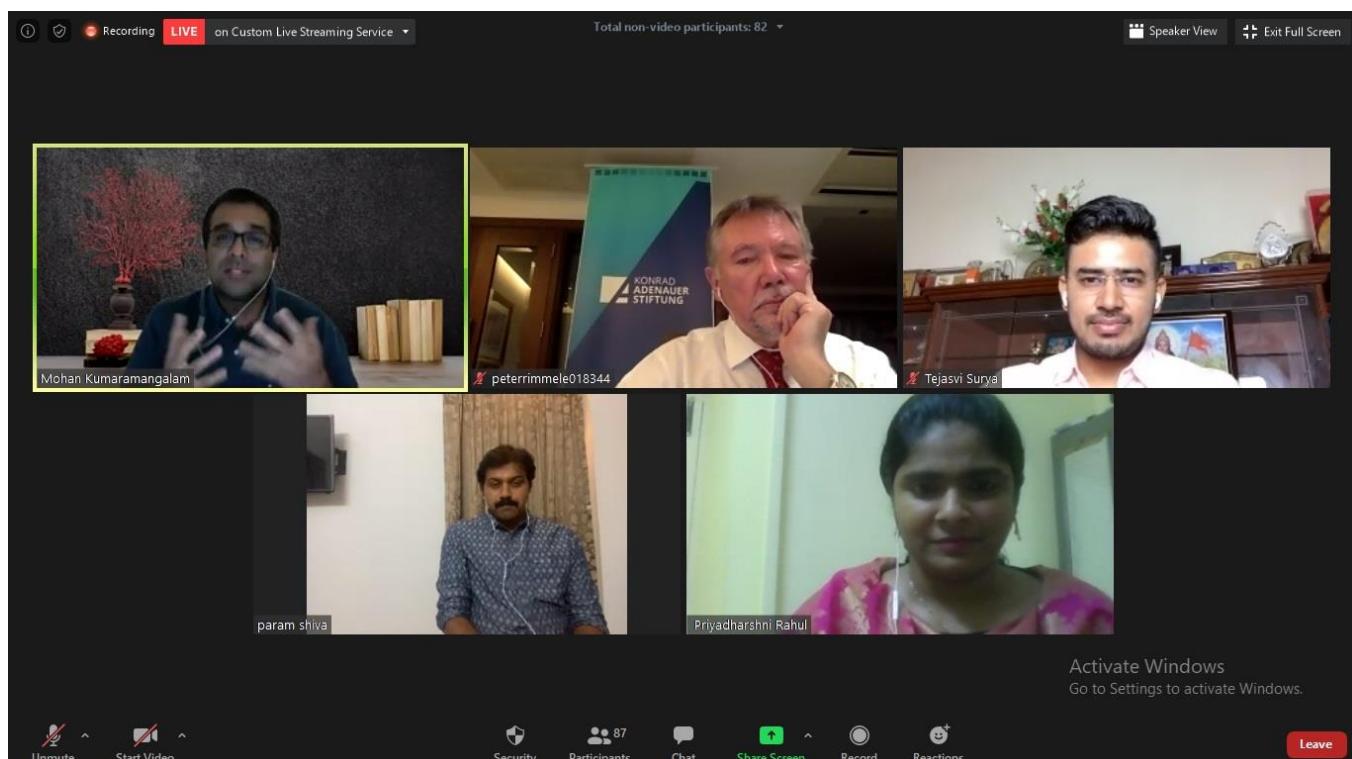
At the end of the Q & A session, the moderator **Ms Priyadharshni Rahul** summed up the discussions stating that in the final analysis, humanity and integrity really matter and the three panellists amply conveyed this message. She also said that there is a perception that if only our young politicians show the right attitude, they can easily connect with people. The three members on the panel demonstrated that they are shining examples of promising politicians and aspiring youngsters can draw lessons from the three.

Group Captain R Vijayakumar, ED, MMA thanked the moderator **Ms Priyadharshni Rahul**, National President, NGPL. He thanked the panellists **Mr Tejasvi Surya**, MP, **Dr V P B Paramasivam**, MLA and **Mr Rangarajan Mohan Kumaramangalam**, Working President, TNCC for their clear views and inspiring articulation. He thanked Mr Peter Rimmele, Resident Representative to India of KAS for his introductory remarks and great support extended to MMA. He also thanked Mr Pankaj Madan, Head of Programs of KAS, Mr Satyamurthy of ORF and all the viewers before signing off.

The event concluded at 8.00 PM.

Photos

Photographs taken during the Live Panel Discussion on the theme: “Politics under Gen Next Leaders”



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Panel Discussion on Politics under Gen Next Leaders Live streaming on 29th May 2020 at 6:00 PM

MMA, Chennai was live.
29 May at 05:27 · [Edit](#)

Panel Discussion on Politics under Gen Next Leaders Live streaming on 29th May 2020 at 6:00 PM

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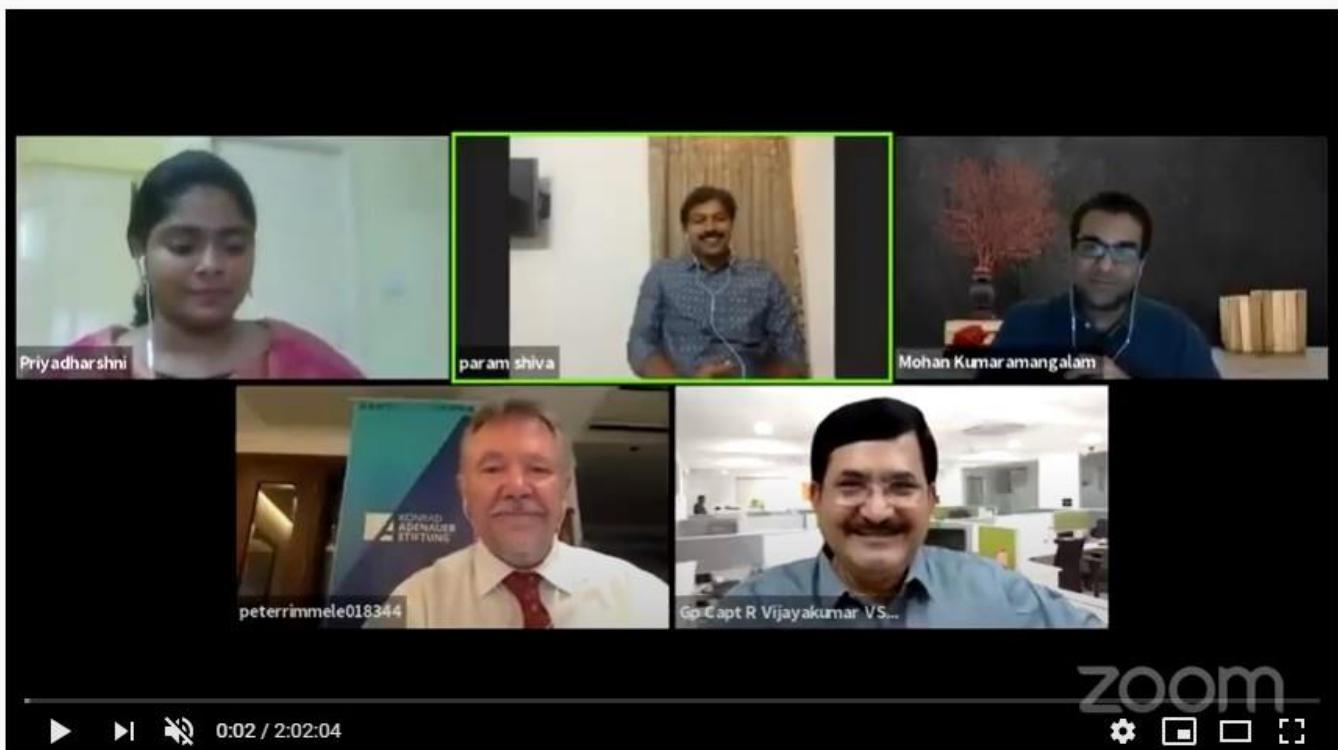
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Vasudevan Sethuraman · 1:08:12 Shri Mohanji... You have to work for a constituency but your leader can straightaway choose



Live Talk on Panel Discussion on Politics under Gen Next Leaders

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Links for the Recording

Politics under Gen Next Leaders

We are pleased to share that the recording of the event is available for viewing pleasure through the links indicated below:

Website:

www.liveibc.com/mma/

YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/hZhazYm4XIM>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/mmachennai/videos/608878263083246/>



The response to the event has been excellent and we had larger number of viewers logged in live through Zoom, MMA Live webinar, YouTube and Facebook.

Total Number of Participants:

Zoom: 96

YouTube: 172

Facebook: 19000

MMA Webinar: 481

Total number of participants at the event - 19749



The Partners – MMA, KAS and ORF

About Madras Management Association (MMA)

Madras Management Association (MMA) was established in 1956 with the prime objective of promoting management education, training and development activities in this part of the country. The vision of MMA is “To be the Fountainhead of World class Management Excellence in India”.

Over the past six decades, MMA has striven for development and nurturing management expertise, combining Indian ethos with International Management thoughts and practices. MMA has contributed immensely to the enhancement of management capability in this part of the country, and in particular Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. MMA has over 7000 corporate houses, industries, professionals, academics and executives on its rolls as members. MMA annually organizes about 725 executive development activities, including seminars for top management with a total participation of fifty nine thousand executives and entrepreneurs.

MMA is the largest affiliate association of All India Management Association (AIMA) in the country and has been adjudged as the Best Management Association in India by

AIMA for ten times in a row including the “National Excellence Award” for the year 2017-18.

The activities of MMA are planned to achieve managerial excellence in the functioning of industries and professional managers in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. In this direction, MMA chapters have been established at various towns in Tamil Nadu mainly to cater to the needs of SMEs. Nine such MMA Local Chapters at Ambur, Attur, Erode, Hosur, Namakkal, Salem, Sri City, Trichy and Puducherry are functioning effectively.

Apart from corporate leaders, MMA has, in its Managing Committee, the Vice Chancellors of Madras University & Anna University, the Directors of IIT Madras and IFMR and the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu, as members.

OUR VISION

To be the Fountainhead of World Class Management Excellence in India

OUR MISSION

- Synthesise Indian Ethos with international management thought
- Be a reservoir of expertise in management
- Inspire individuals to actualise their potential
- Nurture creativity and originality

About Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a German political foundation, with a strong presence throughout Germany and all over the world. Freedom, justice and solidarity are the basic underlying principles of the work of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

With more than 100 offices abroad and projects in over 120 countries, it makes a unique contribution to the promotion of democracy, the rule of law and social market economy. To foster peace and freedom KAS encourages a continuous dialogue at the national and international levels.

Human beings in their distinctive dignity and with their rights and responsibilities are at the heart of its work. KAS is guided by the conviction that human beings are the starting point in the effort to bring about social justice and democratic freedom while promoting sustainable economic activity. By bringing people together who embrace their responsibilities in society, KAS develops active networks in the political and economic spheres as well as in society itself. The guidance it provides on the basis of political know-how and knowledge helps to shape the globalisation process along more socially equitable, ecologically sustainable and economically efficient lines.

KAS cooperates with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, we seek to intensify political cooperation at the national and international levels on the foundations of our objectives and values. Together with our partners we contribute to the creation of an international order that enables every country to develop in freedom and under its own responsibility.

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has organised its program priorities in India into the following working areas:

1. Foreign and Security Policy
2. Economic and Energy Policy
3. Rule of Law and local Self-Government
4. Social and Political Training and Development
5. Indo-German Parliamentary Dialogue programmes

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung's India office takes great pride in its cooperation with Indian partner organisations who implement jointly curated projects and programmes.

About Observer Research Foundation (ORF)

The Beginning

ORF began its journey in 1990 at the juncture of ideation tempered by pragmatism. During the period of India's transition to a new engagement with the international economic order, several challenges emerged, evoking a need for an independent forum that could critically examine the problems facing the country and help develop coherent policy responses. ORF was thus formed, and brought together, for the first time, leading Indian economists and policymakers to present the agenda for India's economic reforms.

What We Are Today

Propelled by the process of reforms initiated in the 1990s, ORF, over the past 30 years of its existence, has effectively narrated and participated in India's story as the country has acquired an unmistakable global footprint. From primarily looking inward and engaging with domestic reforms, to gradually forging global partnerships, ORF today plays a seminal role in building political and policy consensus that enables India to interact with the world.

As new powers re-emerge onto the global stage, existing systems face challenges of agreeing on a new set of rules to control and regulate the new frontiers of space, the oceans, the internet and the human mind. The world continues, also, to navigate persisting concerns related to security and strategy, economy and development, energy and resources. As India begins to play a larger role in the 21st century, ORF continues

to push normative boundaries, bring new ideas into the policy discourse and provide a platform to a new generation of thinkers. It is supported in its mission by leading intellectuals, academicians, policymakers, business leaders, institutions and civil society actors.

ORF's aim is to encourage voices from all quarters, geographies and gender, both those that fall in and those that question dominant narratives. It is this plurality of thought and voice — in a country of over a billion individuals — that ORF seeks to carry abroad, while simultaneously bringing contemporary global debates to India.

The Mandate

ORF seeks to lead and aid policy thinking towards building a strong and prosperous India in a fair and equitable world. It sees India as a country poised to play a leading role in the knowledge age — a role in which it shall be increasingly called upon to proactively ideate in order to shape global conversations, even as it sets course along its own trajectory of long-term sustainable growth.

ORF helps discover and inform India's choices. It carries Indian voices and ideas to forums shaping global debates. It provides non-partisan, independent, well-researched analyses and inputs to diverse decision-makers in governments, business communities, and academia and to civil society around the world.

Our mandate is to conduct in-depth research, provide inclusive platforms and invest in tomorrow's thought leaders today.
