

# Roots and Routes

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**GRFDT**

Global Research Forum on  
Diaspora and Transnationalism



**Roots and Routes disseminates the latest information on research and policy developments in Diaspora and transnationalism**

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# Editor's Message



One of the positive effects of the Globalisation has been its psychological impact on the individual being-it has brought new changes among the individual by providing them courage and capacity to move transnationally like never before. This mobility has created new opportunities as well as new challenges for the migrants and the society as well. Though there are visible impacts on economic, social and cultural development, there are also enumerable challenges such as trafficking, smuggling, social discontent and other forms of exploitation. One of the classic cases is the conditions of Migrants in Gulf Countries, which is showcasing rapid economic development on one side and the violation of human rights and different forms of exploitation on the other side.

GRFDT organized two talks on Migrant conditions in GCC during the November i.e "Spheres of Interest and Representations of the Migrant: Are Rights Insignificant?" by Dr. Bijulal and "Lack of migration policy causes human rights violation in Gulf" by Dr. Raj Bardouille. Both the topic brought out the plights of migrants in the Gulf countries in the form of migrant's rights violation and lack of proper state engagement from both sending and receiving countries.

The interview with Dr. K.S. Nathan throws light on various issues relating to the dilemma in generations of diaspora, challenges of diaspora, role of diaspora in softpower diplomacy etc. He also highlighted the problem of Indian diaspora in Malaysia and the role of various diaspora organizations. The issue also contains book review, news analysis, seminar/ conference information and other academic information useful for the readers.

Sadananda Sahoo

## Spheres of Interest and Representations of the Migrant: Are Rights Insignificant?

### Need for Diaspora to support the intervention of states in dealing with the bilateral cooperation on labour issues: Dr. Bijulal

In a talk organized by GRFDT on the theme "Spheres of Interest and Representations of the Migrant: Are Rights Insignificant?", on 23 November 2013 Dr. Bijulal M.V, Assistant Professor School of International Relations and Politics, MG University, Kottayam, Kerala mentioned that diaspora can play a constructive role in mediating the issues faced by the Indian migrants in Gulf. The speaker focussed on the recent crisis in the Gulf countries by highlighting the indigenisation of labour force in GCC countries by giving preference for nationals in public and private sector. On these lines the Saudi Arabia's policy of Saudisation in their labour market which was initiated since last decade to tackle increasing unemployment among the Saudi nationals especially the youths and gained momentum with the recent democratic uprisings in the Arab world. The recent policy of Nitaqat introduced in 2009 by Saudi Arabia recommends one in ten employers should be a Saudi national and various sectors were demarcated for this purpose. This policy of Saudi has brought in a big demarcated change in the labour market with more preference for nationals than the migrants having impact on the major sending countries including India.

Similarly, in Oman, the Omanisation of labour market started very early, currently apart from majority of nationals working in the public sector, many nationals had occupied the private sector too. Same is the case with UAE in the name of Emiratization by giving preference to the nationals in place of expats and this would extend till 2016. The indigenisation or nationalisation of labour force is taken up by these Gulf countries in order to get international acceptance in favour of its citizens.

Since 2005, Qatar has been preparing to host the World cup and has been exploiting the migrant workers with major human rights violations in the construction sector. In spite of strong rebuttal from world human rights bodies, the situation continues to be worse with increasing demand for migrant workers in the construction sectors. For the betterment of its citizens,



Dr. Bijulal M.V

India has signed MoU and Agreement on the issues of protection of labour force against vulnerability and for welfare of the migrants.

Oman signed an agreement with India in 1985 on labour welfare emphasizing "welfare will be subjected to the National laws of the local authority". On the same lines UAE signed an agreement with India on Manpower where expats are outside the consideration of the local laws. Workers who are engaged in casual works, household works, domestic maid, etc are exempted from the labour laws and are left in lure without proper protection mechanism and subjected to wide range of vulnerabilities and violations.

The author took references from the literatures on issues related with Diaspora to support the intervention of states in dealing with the bilateral cooperation on labour issues. To conclude the speaker was of the opinion that only the bilateral agreements for the protection and monitoring of labours would be the reasonable solution to solve the persisting problems faced by Indian workers in the Gulf countries.

### Migration Experiences of Temporary Migrants in the Gulf Council Cooperation (GCC) States: The Case of the Kingdom of Bahrain and Dubai (in the United Arab Emirates)

#### Lack of migration policy causes human rights violation in Gulf: Raj Bardouille

Delivering a talk through Skype on "Migration Experiences of Temporary Migrants in the Gulf Council Cooperation (GCC) States: The Case of the Kingdom of Bahrain and Dubai (in the United Arab Emirates)", Dr. Raj Bardouille, Scholar at Migration and Development Researcher, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University, Toronto, Canada, on 23 November 2013 organised by GRFDT, mentioned that the situation of international migrants are pathetic in Gulf countries due to the lack of proper policy measures. Her presentation was based on the experiences and knowledge gained during the course of field work and information collected through unstructured interviews among the temporary migrants working in unskilled/semiskilled sectors during 2008 in Bahrain and Dubai. The major objective of the talk was to find out how migrants feel by focussing the migration experiences of temporary migrants. The migration trend towards Gulf with increasing number of people for better economic opportunities was highlighted in the backdrop of higher unemployment and lesser income from the home countries. The kafalasystem of recruitment in the GCC countries which ties the migrants to the kafeel or sponsor was directly linked to the nature of employment, salary paid, working and living conditions and other benefits or violations of human rights meted out to those migrants.

A brief background of three players in this migration pattern was discussed with the first being the 'migrants' who are generally male with young population living in poor standard labour camps leaving families back home and increasing female participation late 1990's. The second being the 'origin country' where the higher rate of unemployment and lesser wages which pushes the migrants out towards Gulf for better opportunities and the third being the 'host country' (here GCC) where the population in general were low with less participation of Nationals workforce in the labour market. Therefore the GCC countries encourages expatriates or temporary migrants to fill in their labour

market with their skills, labour force, wealth, revenue, tax etc. With the lack of migration policy in international migration, the author highlighted the competition of migrant workforce with other Asian countries. The future labour force in the GCC are expected to be the children of labours working there. In this context, the Filipinos were placed in better jobs as receptionists, in maintenance, Pakistanis, Nepalese and Bangladeshis in cheaper wages as gardeners, cleaners, helpers in hotels while Indian workers are mainly engaged with construction sectors. Temporary migrants are well aware of the temporary nature of their work and residence in the Gulf countries, they come with specific goals and expectations and once fulfilled return back to home country or to other GCC country.

At the end the speaker raised several questions about the future aspect of labour migration to GCC with emphasising on the effect of migration on neighbours and society, with the indigenisation of labour markets in GCC. What in future if there arises a bifurcation in salaries and skills between the nationals and the migrants, what is the impact on the children and female members of the migrants family because of the migration? These thoughtful queries would raise further research about the migrants in the Gulf and the impact of migration on migrants themselves, the host country and the country of origin.



Dr. Raj Bardouille speaking through the Skype

### The historical, civilizational values and cultural wealth of India are stimulating the linkages between the Diaspora and India :

Dr. K.S. Nathan

The nation comes first, and these 3rd or 4th generation Indians have some times little or no connections with the land of birth of their ancestors, says **Dr. K.S. Nathan**, Principal Fellow Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in an interview with **Dr. M. Mahalingam**, Research Fellow, Centre for Policy Analysis, New Delhi.



**If Diaspora members can be instruments of soft power? What motivates them?**

The historical, civilizational values and cultural wealth of India are stimulating the linkages between the Diaspora and India, especially in the context of India's rise as a major power. It is good for Diasporato connect with their original homeland as is the practice with Malaysian Chinese and Malays who continue to maintain their natural historic connections with China and Indonesia. There is a mutual benefit. For instance, when the Malaysian Prime Minister, honourable Mr.Najib Razak visited India in 2010, he mentioned the important contribution made by the Indian Diaspora in Malaysia in the field of plantations, railways, public health, public works, and government services. He acknowledged their significant contribution to Malaysia's economic development and modernization.. His statement made all the Malaysian Indians feel proud about themselves and India. India is an emerging power and Diaspora would like to connect and to play their role as transnational actors.

**In the era of globalization, Transnationalism of Diaspora is challenging. In the field of International Relations, the theoretical models are based on nation-state. Could you comment on this?**

The Nation-State is playing a role in terms of organization of resources, distribution of resources and management of resources. It cannot be supplanted. Although NGOs and Diaspora as transnational actors can influence the policy of the nation-state, they cannot make policies and manage the resources. They could act as an interest group or pressure group. At the same time, in the era of globalization, Diaspora's influence and connectivity has become very intense between homeland and host land, aided as it is by the revolution in transport and communications.

**International scholars have argued that 'the biggest instrument of our soft power is the Indian Diaspora' Do you support this statement?**

Of course, Indian Diaspora is doing well in the hostland as entrepreneurs, professionals, political leaders, as well as skilled and unskilled workers, and so on. They maintain Indian cultural traits and look upon India for civilizational values. They could lobby for the interests of India in the hostland. They could act as intermediaries for facilitating trade and bilateral relations. For instance, in the case of Malaysia, Indian Diaspora has been in power in the Malaysian political system which is based on the ethnic model. Thus, by holding high-level political positions they could act and more easily promote the economic and political interests of both countries—Malaysia and India. They could influence the Malaysian government's decision in favour of India's foreign policy interests in the region. Indeed, it is not too far-fetched to say that the Indian Diaspora have emerged as a strategic asset. India could leverage this factor by formulating appropriate Diaspora engagement policies.

**Do you think that the Indian Diaspora of Southeast Asia is a strategic asset for India in the region?**

I would think so, given geographical proximity, they have maintained economic and cultural links with India for hundreds of years. You have huge temple complexes and a trace of Indian civilization in the social and cultural life of Southeast Asia. Moreover, there are a large number of professionals, political leaders and entrepreneurs who are playing a major role in the host-lands in Southeast Asia. Definitely, Indian Diaspora can be considered as a strategic asset for India.

**Malaysian Indians have been a part and parcel of the ruling government of Malaysia since independence. How far have they influenced the Malaysian government in favour of India?**

Malaysian Indians have been very supportive of India's efforts with regard to Malaysia. In 2011, Malaysian Ex-Minister for Works, Mr. S. SamyVellu was appointed as Special Envoy on Infrastructure for India and South Asia, with the aim of promoting trade and economic relations with Malaysia. He has initiated many measures for making Malaysian companies to invest in India. Malaysian companies have already been involved in numerous infrastructure development projects in India.

**What kind of expectations and aspirations do Malaysian Indians have from India?**

Educational exchange at the student level, and academic exchange at the faculty level should be encouraged. India has opened up its economy which encourages Diaspora to play its due role. Malaysian Indians should be encouraged to invest in India and build smart partnerships for the benefit of both countries. The Indian government could also do more by offering more study fellowships to Malaysian Indian students who may not be able to benefit from similar opportunities in Malaysia.

**Indian Diaspora of Malaysia is facing several challenges due to majoritarian politics. What is your say on this?**

The present economic model favours the Malay majority. So, the minorities -- Chinese and Indians are facing more challenges and difficulties than usual, especially with regard to government employment and promotions. The Malaysian Indians, given that the majority (at least 70%) were of plantation background, have a steeper hill to climb the socio-economic mountain. At the same time, the Indian community should also adopt self-empowerment approaches to improve their standard of living. The more fortunate members of the community have an obligation to help the less fortunate ones. This spirit of unity and self-empowerment also reduces the burden on government to help the Indian poor. As they say, charity begins at home: as the Malaysian Indian community unites to help their own kind, the Government will surely take heed and also contribute to the empowerment of the community to enhance national development, welfare and security. Indian community is fragmented and they should get united for increasing bargaining power.

**A majority of Indians are third or fourth generation Malaysian citizens. How do they prefer to call themselves as Indian Malaysians or Malaysian Indians?**

According to me, I prefer the phrase 'Malaysian Indian'. I think that they should be identified as Malaysian Indians because they have become citizens of Malaysia. The nation comes first, and these 3rd or 4th generation Indians have sometimes little or no connections with the land of birth of their ancestors. Malaysia is the only country they know, and where they are full citizens.

**What is the relevance of the Malaysian Indian Congress(MIC) to the Indian community after the HINDRAF's (Hindu Rights Action Force) induction into the ruling coalition?**

The MIC did not perform well in the last election (2013). They also did badly in the 2008 General Election. Their representation has gone down. The Indians who are belonging to opposition have more representation in the Malaysian Parliament than MIC. It is no longer the sole party which represents the Malaysian Indian community. Previously, MIC was allocated money to distribute it for Indian welfare programmes. At present, this is not so. The Malaysian government, after the 2008 GE fiasco, decided that other organizations should be approached and supported. One such NGO which

receives direct funding from the Government is the Sri Murugan Centre which was established in 1982, and has demonstrated a good track record of connecting with the grass-roots. So, MIC is not the only a channel today, there are various other channels that are available to promote the welfare of Malaysian Indians (over 2 million) of which 85% are ethnic Tamils.

**HINDRAF has been inducted into the ruling government. Mr. P. Waythamoorthy has become a deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Department. Do you think HINDRAF can deliver to the Indian community?**

In the beginning, HINDRAF was obliged to act on its own as the MIC was reluctant to recognize it as a movement promoting Indian welfare, especially the depressed sector. Prime Minister Najib Razak had sufficient wisdom to recognize some of the strengths of the HINDRAF movement, especially its commitment to uplift the welfare of poor Indians and to tackle urban poverty, as many thousands of plantation workers migrated to the urban areas with little or no skills after their estates were fragmented or closed down. There is also the lingering problem of several thousand stateless Indians (people born in Malaysia but without proper documents to facilitate processing their applications for Malaysian citizenship). Mr. Waythamoorthy should be given time to deliver, as he too had to confront the dilemma of the cost-benefit approach of whether it is better to serve the Indian cause outside Government or inside the Government. He has chosen the latter, and we should give him a chance and enough time to deliver on the programmes which inspired him to form HINDRAF. Undoubtedly, HINDRAF has raised political awareness among the working class Indians. Empowerment has two sources: internal source (self-empowerment) and external source (Government and other agencies including the private sector). With commitment and a focused approach from all sides, there is hope for raising the socio-economic performance of Malaysian Indians in relation to all Malaysians.

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**K.S. Nathan was born and educated in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He is currently a Principal Fellow at the Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA) in the National University of Malaysia (UKM), Bangi, Selangor. He served as Director of the Institute of Malaysian & International Studies (IKMAS) in UKM from 1st January 2011 until 1st April 2013. Dr. Nathan has also served as the first President of the Malaysian International Affairs Forum (MIAF), and the Malaysian Association for American Studies (MAAS), both of which were founded in 1983. Dr. Nathan was also a Visiting Scholar at several leading academic and research institutes in the world. He can be contacted at ksnathan@ukm.my, nathan200846@yahoo.com**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**Redrawing the Boundaries of International Relations:  
Going beyond State and Power**

Ravenshaw University, Cuttack is organising an International Conference on " Redrawing the Boundaries of International Relations: Going beyond State and Power " on February 20-22, 2014. The Conference is sponsored by ICSSR, New Delhi. The Conference is expected to provide a suitable platform to a large number of International Relations Scholars working both at national and international levels to debate and discuss the changing dynamics of International Relations both in theory and practice.

Sub themes:

- Social movements in different parts of the world (with a special focus on developing countries and emerging markets).
- Human Rights
- Global Justice
- Comparative Development experience
- Women's issues
- Migration and Diaspora
- Environmental Politics across the globe
- Human security
- Nuclear Proliferation
- International Terrorism

- Globalization and the post cold war order
- The Politics of Humanitarian Intervention
- Future Role of United Nations

Scholarly articles are invited from academicians, activists, research scholars to present their ideas in the conference. The papers may not necessarily be limited to the sub-themes outlined here. The paper can be submitted on any aspect of International Relations based on the theme of the Conference. Research scholars are encouraged to present their paper in this conference.

Important Dates:

Conference Date: 20-22 February, 2014

Last date of Abstract Submission: December 20, 2013

Abstract Confirmation: December 25, 2013

Full paper Submission: January 30, 2014

See details at: <http://www.icir2014ravenshaw.in/Home.php>

**Özden, Çağlar And Schiff, Maurice (2006), International Migration, Remittances, and The Brain Drain, New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN-10: 0-8213-6372-7, Pages: XIII+279**

International migration has made a very significant impact on the economies of both developed and developing countries. More than 215 million people (app. 3% of the world's population) live outside their countries of birth. This constitutes the most active population that contributes to the economy through skills and knowledge, remittances etc and impacting the development process.

International migrant remittances are perhaps the largest source of external finance in developing countries in recent years. Officially recorded remittance flows to developing countries exceeded US\$406 billion in 2004 according to the World Bank (2012), making them the second largest source of development finance after foreign direct investment. Though the issues of remittance and its impact have been discussed by many scholars, many of them skewed towards economic development. However, this book is more broadbased and going beyond the economic impact. The book is an outcome of a research project "International Migration and Development Research Programme" by World Bank (Development Economics Research Group).

The volume's aims are multiple: the impact of migration and remittances on development indicators, including poverty and inequality, investment (in both human and physical capital), entrepreneurship, and entry into capital-intensive activities; the brain drain; temporary migration, and the links between migration, trade, and foreign direct investment (FDI). Some of the questions the research program aims to answer are as follows: How does migration affect poverty and growth, especially in the sending countries? Who are the main beneficiaries of migration and main recipients of remittances—the poor who have the most to gain or the middle classes who are more likely to have the resources needed to migrate? What are the effects of migration and remittances on investment in both physical and human capital? What are the determinants of the migration of the highly skilled workers and the effects on destination and source countries?

Chapter 1 by Jorge Mora and J. Edward Taylor (Determinants of Migration, Destination, and Sector Choice: Disentangling Individual, Household, and Com-

munity Effects) contributes to the existing literature in two important dimensions by incorporating alternative destinations (internal or international) and sectors of employment (farm or nonfarm) for migrants from rural Mexico, and by including new community variables as determinants of migration. Using the 2003 National Rural Household Survey of Mexico, Mora and Taylor include individual, family, and community variables in their estimation. Authors have extended their arguments with a case study of Mexico along with other countries, thus providing a very rich comparative perspective. Although author's arguments about determinants of internal migration such as school migration, network migration as less effective factors seems unsatisfactory in a broader perspective. In chapter 4, David J. McKenzie finds that migrant networks raise the probability that other community members migrate internationally. Using the 1997 National Survey of Demographic Dynamics for Mexico, McKenzie finds that the effect of networks varies across the wealth distribution. The chapter has tried to move beyond remittance with broader discussion about different effect and influence of migration.

Chapter 3 by Dean Yang and Claudia A. Martínez exploits an exogenous event, namely the exchange rate shocks that occurred during Asia's currency crisis in the late 1990s, to examine the impact on poverty in the Philippines. They find that an appreciation of the currency in destination countries relative to the Filipino peso leads to an increase in remittance received by the related households and to a reduction in their poverty. They also find spillover effects to other households, including to those without migrant members, whose poverty falls as well. Some additional discussion of aggregate remittance impact was discussed by Richard H. Adams Jr. (Remittance, Poverty and Investment in Guatemala) in the next chapter. Richard H. focuses on how the receipt of internal and international remittances (from the United States) affects the marginal spending behavior of households on various consumption and investment goods. Adams finds that households receiving remittances spend more on investments (such as education, health, and housing) and less on consumption (food and consumer goods, durables) than do households receiving no remittances.

Part 2 of the volume focuses on the effects of migration of educated and skilled people from developing to developed countries (the brain drain). The phenomenon of

brain drain is one of the most recognizable phrases in the development literature and policy debates. In chapter 6, Maurice Schiff provides a critical examination of the main findings of the new brain-drain literature. The new brain-drain literature argues that, because skilled wages are typically higher in destination countries, the brain drain raises the expected benefit from education and induces additional investment in education. In chapter 6, Schiff also examines the brain-gain issue from a general equilibrium viewpoint, which also finds a smaller impact on the brain gain and on welfare and growth. Chapter 7 by Özden deals with the brain drain to the United States. He finds striking differences in the labor market placement among highly educated immigrants from different countries, even after controlling for their age, experience, and education. Specifically, immigrants from Latin America and Eastern Europe are more likely to end up in unskilled jobs in the United States compared with immigrants from Asia, the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa. In chapter 8, Gnanaraj Chellaraj, Keith E. Maskus, and Aaditya Mattoo examine the impact of international students and skilled immigration in the United States on innovative activity. The main specification is based on a three-equation model of idea generation in which the dependent variables are total patent applications, patents awarded to U.S. universities, and patents awarded to other U.S. entities, each scaled by the domestic labor force. Results indicate that international graduate students have a sig-

nificant and positive impact on future patent applications, as well as on future patents awarded to university and nonuniversity institutions, and that skilled immigrants have a similar although substantially smaller impact.

The book has included numerous econometric analyses with the use of different data sets. This reflects the fact that a high proportion of contributors to the volume are banker's data and surveys in financial and payment systems. But there is a scarcity of recommendations illuminated by the microeconomics of remittance senders and recipients. Although chapters by Richard Adams and Dean Yang discussed the issues at the micro level, but it could have made more qualitative analysis. While new empirical work on international migration and remittances from the developing country standpoint is deeply needed, this book unfortunately does little to help fill the gap. The pieces in the book sorely lack the micro-level empirical analysis that would have strengthened the knowledge related to remittances and their impact on recipient households. Overall the book presents a good number of case studies related to remittance and its influence worldwide.

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## Global Update

### Cécile Kyenge, the first Afro-Italian minister in the history of the Country

The Italian Government has finally been installed obtaining the vote of confidence from the new Parliament on April, 29th. This vote was attained after almost two months of political inactivity, following a harsh political campaign that split the Parliament into three parts, with a substantial parity among 'Movimento 5 stelle - M5S' ( 5 stars Movement, led by Beppe Grillo, who gained an unforeseen consensus in his first electoral campaign), the right wing ('Popolo della Libertà - PDL', led by the tycoon Silvio Berlusconi) and the left one, a coalition between PD - the democrats - and SEL, of communist inspiration, who won the elections by the narrowest margin. Scelta Civica, the party of the outgoing Prime Minister Mario Monti and a sprinkling of quarrelsome nationalistic factions making up the rest.

Because of a severe internal crisis of the Democrats, the new government was launched under the warranty of Giorgio Napolitano, 88, re-elected at the Quirinal despite his age and the Constitutional practice, being the first President of the Italian Republic appointed for a second mandate. Because of the pressing economical measures that had to be undertaken to save the country and the

impelling need of reaching a compromise with the European Union, President Napolitano supported a broad based governance between the hitherto incompatible PD, PDL and Monti's Scelta Civica, thus pushing out the vastly represented M5S to the opposition benches, alongside the extreme wings (SEL on the Left, Fratelli d'Italia - FDI on the Right and the Lega (League) a chauvinist separatist party).

This is the frame in which Cécile Kyenge took her function as Minister of Integration: she is the first foreign born citizen to be appointed Minister of the Italian Republic.

An ophthalmologist, born in Kambove, Congo, in 1964, she has lived in Italy for almost thirty years. She's married to an Italian, and lives in the center-north of Italy, in Emilia-Romagna. She is the national spokeswoman of the network "1 Marzo" (March, 1st), involved in the issue of Migrants' rights and coordinator for Northern Italy in the project "Diaspora Africana" (African Diaspora), involved in the promotion of full citizenship rights for the migrants.

Her political activity started in 2004: she was elected in the municipality of Modena with the Democrats, and obtained the provincial-level responsibility of the forum for International Cooperation and immigration.

In 2009 she was elected councillor in the district of Modena, and in the meantime she became responsible for the immigration policies of PD at regional-level.

After the elections, last February, she was elected deputy of the Italian Republic, and promptly submitted a draft for a Parliamentary Bill (signed with Pierluigi Bersani, Khalid Chaouki and Roberto Speranza) about the rights of citizenship for immigrant children born on Italian soil, the "ius solis" of the Roman law.

She was appointed Minister of the Italian Republic on April 28th, 2013.

The neo-minister gathered a general approval in both the wings of the Parliament, with the predictable exception of the racist League and a powdering of minor right wing forces who are against every integration policy in Italy, and tend to maintain the current strict legislation on immigration.

In a very popular radio broadcast, "Un Giorno da Pecora" (a sheep's day), Mario Borghezio, a particularly boorish exponent of the League described the Minister, live, as

"Una scelta del ca\*\*o, ha la faccia da casalinga" (a fu\*\*\*\*g choice, she's got the face of a housewife).

Matteo Salvini, secretary of the same Party in Lombardy, called 48-year-old Kyenge "the symbol of a hypocritical, do-gooding left that would like to abolish the crime of illegal immigration and only thinks about immigrants' rights and not their duties". He said the League was ready to mount "total opposition" to her in Parliament. And that's what they are doing, in the most virulent and offensive way.

The African born football striker, Mario Balotelli, called her appointment "a further, big step towards a more civilised and responsible Italian society"

The M5S members of Parliament didn't applaud Cécile Kyenge upon her appointment. The Movement's spokeswoman, Roberta Lombardi, said: "We didn't like the fact that Mrs Kyenge was considered as an exception. In our opinion the presence of young people and women in politics should be plain routine. It seemed to us that she was

somehow exhibited, so we didn't clap out of respect for her person".

Gad Lerner, a popular democrat journalist and anchor-man declared in his blog:

"It's with great joy that I hail the fellow citizen Cécile Kyenge, new Minister of Integration: at last, the neglected millions of "new Italians" will have a real representation. The loutish clamouring of a few reactionaries isn't worth considering. Now, we shall be able to assess the real effectiveness of a broad based governance, measuring the speed and the incisiveness of the too long disregarded integration issues, such as the citizenship for the land born, the necessity of expunging the hostile Bossi-Fini law and of removing the shameful identification and Expulsion detention centres. Break a leg, dear Cécile!"

After a violent attacks to the neo-Minister in the galaxy of racist and neo-fascist websites, Laura Boldrini, the Speaker at the Lower House of the Italian Parliament, declared: "It is outrageous, in a civilized country, the amount of insolence addressed against the new Minister Cecile Kyenge. Like most of us, when I saw her taking the oath at the Quirinal, I felt that Italy was stepping ahead in the way of progress, and not only for the "new Italians", but for the whole country, as we understand at last how rich, contemporary and ancient at the same time is the meeting of cultures. A few might not like it, but no uncouth aggression against a person for the colour of her skin is justifiable. Freedom of opinion has nothing to do with this. There are sites stirring up racial hatred, and this is a crime, even if expressed through the web. The witless comments of some political exponents, go far beyond a mere dissent for the political initiatives of Mrs Kyenge. It is unacceptable that such baseness, instigated by a certain press, is allowed to enter the circuit of the political discussion without arousing the abhorrence it deserves. I moreover wish to remind all, that the Bill for citizenship is not upheld by the new Minister alone. With us, standing firmly, is our President Napolitano. Welcome Cécile!"

However, in spite of such coarse judgments, the national debate about immigrants' rights will have to be unearthed, and given a strong political acceleration, after a far too long hibernation of the issue, even if this weird majority will be hard tested on this kind of issues.

**Anadi Mishra, Rome. Email: [hagi1972@hotmail.com](mailto:hagi1972@hotmail.com)**  
**Note: The views expressed in the article are those of author's.**

## Session on "Issues in the Gulf" In Pravasi Bharatiya Divas -2014

The 12th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention, the flagship event of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India, will be held in New Delhi on 7-9 January 2014. The Indians in Gulf constitute a very huge proportion of Indian diaspora. They are mostly semi-skilled and low skilled labour and the problems are more acute as compared to other destinations. Usually Gulf is a area that mostly figures in the seminar conducted in the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. Some organizations in the Gulf have requested for a session on the Gulf during Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2014 and there is a session on the gulf planned during PBD 2014.

The Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Shri Vayalar Ravi has said in Rajya Sabha that traditionally PBDs have had sessions on the Gulf where issues relating to Indians in the Gulf were discussed

He said, PBD Conventions provide a platform for exchange of views and networking to Persons of Indian

Origin (PIOs) and Non- Resident Indians (NRIs) on matters of common interest. These Conventions assist the Government of India to better understand the expectations of the Overseas Indians from the land of their ancestors and to acknowledge their role in India's all round development and its efforts to acquire its rightful place in the comity of nations.

The Minister said, eleven years since its inception, the PBD has grown to become a vital platform for evolving ideas, identifying actions and creating opportunities for the interaction between the home country and its overseas citizens. It is also a forum where the Government of India and various State Governments showcase investment opportunities and potential in various sectors. Separate sessions are held by State Governments in this regard to inter alia interact with potential investors.

Source: PIB, MKP/SKM/AK

## Forthcoming GRFDT Event GOPIO's Outreach Initiatives and Progress in the Indian Diaspora

By Ashook Ramsaran, President, GOPIO International (USA), at CSSS II, JNU, 8th January 2014 at 5 p.m.

The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) was established in 1989 with the objective of addressing the concerns and interests of the global Indian community of over 30 million persons of Indian origin living outside of India. GOPIO is aggressively continuing its outreach mission to engage and embrace the Indian Diaspora with rapid expansion and growth of its programs, chapters and councils, adapting to the changing dynamic of mobility, migration and second journeys within the Indian Diaspora. GOPIO's organizational effort includes upgrade and revitalization of its website, newsletters, news bulletins and shared information among its membership and general public. GOPIO's outreach includes expansion of its chapters in more countries, including those of the "legacy Diaspora" (more than 2 generations) and countries with rapidly increasing migration such as USA, Canada and Australia. GOPIO has also engaged French-speaking persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) as well PIOs in Africa, accounting for a significant percentage of the Indian Diaspo-



ra. In addition, GOPIO has revitalized its councils which are designed to address specific issues to serve the diverse interests of the global Indian community, namely: Human Rights, Business, Cultural, Academic, Media, Health Services, Youth, Women and Science & Technology. GOPIO is engaging the Indian Diaspora at all levels and in all regions with local, regional, national and international seminars, conferences and symposia on matters beneficial to the Indian Diaspora. GOPIO advances its collaboration with Government of India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and other departments), other governments, agencies, organizations, institutions and associations to better achieve

its objectives and goals.

### Time and Place:

Date: Wednesday, Jan 08, 2014

Venue: Room No- 13, CSSS II, JNU

Address: Room No- 13, CSSS II, JNU

City/Twon: New Delhi

## 7th Global Conference "Diasporas: Exploring Critical Issues"

This inter- and multi-disciplinary project seeks to explore the contemporary experience of Diasporas – communities who conceive of themselves as a national, ethnic, linguistic or other form of cultural and political construction of collective membership living outside of their 'home lands.' Diaspora is a concept which is far from being definitional. Despite problems and limitations in terminology, this notion may be defined with issues attached to it for a more complete understanding. Such a term which may have its roots in Greek, is used customarily to apply to a historical phenomenon that has now passed to a period that usually supposes that diasporans are those who are settled forever in a country other than the one in which they were born and thus this term loses its dimension of irreversibility and of exile.

The Steering Group particularly welcomes the submission of pre-formed panel proposals. Proposals will also be considered on any related theme.

Delegates are welcome to attend up to two sessions in each of the concurrent conferences. We also propose to produce cross-over sessions between these groups – and we welcome proposals which deal with the relationship between Diasporas and visions of the Apocalypse.

### What to Send

Proposals will also be considered on any related theme. 300 word abstracts should be submitted by Friday 14th February 2014. If a proposal is accepted for the conference, a full draft paper of no more than 3000 words

should be submitted by Friday 16th May 2014. Proposals should be submitted simultaneously to both Organising Chairs; proposals may be in Word or RTF formats with the following information and in this order:

a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) body of proposal, f) up to 10 keywords. E-mails should be entitled: DIAS7 Proposal Submission.

The conference is part of the 'Diversity and Recognition' series of research projects, which in turn belong to the At the Interface programmes of ID.Net. It aims to bring together people from different areas and interests to share ideas and explore various discussions which are innovative and challenging. All proposals accepted for and presented at the conference must be in English and will be eligible for publication in an ISBN eBook. Selected proposals may be developed for publication in a themed hard copy volume(s). All publications from the conference will require editors, to be chosen from interested delegates from the conference.

Inter-Disciplinary.Net believes it is a mark of personal courtesy and professional respect to your colleagues that all delegates should attend for the full duration of the meeting. If you are unable to make this commitment, please do not submit a proposal for presentation.

Details on the conference running alongside this project in 2014 can be found here: [Apocalypse: Imaging the End](#)

## Migration and development

The French Development Agency (AFD) Research Department, the World Bank Development Research Group (DECRG), the Center for Global Development (CGD) and the International Migration Institute (IMI) at the University of Oxford are jointly organizing the Seventh International Conference on "Migration and Development" in Oxford, 30 June – 1 July, 2014. The conference is devoted to investigating ways in which international migration affects economic and social changes in developing countries. Possible topics include the effects of migration on poverty, inequality, and human capital formation in developing countries, diaspora externalities, remittances, brain drain, migration and institutional/technological change.

Submissions in the form of full papers are invited; the deadline is 5 January 2014. See attached PDF for details.

PRIO Research Professor Jørgen Carling serves on the Scientific Committee for the conference.

Time and Place:

Date: Monday, Jun 30, 2014

Venue: University of Oxford

Address: University of Oxford, Oxford

City/Twon: Oxford

[View PDF](#)

**We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit a small write up of their achievements and awards to the editor. It will provide the scholars a platform to connect with peer groups working on themes related to Diaspora and Transnationalism. Information related to seminar/conferences/events can be sent to the Editor at: [editor@grfdt.com](mailto:editor@grfdt.com)**