

## COMMUNITIES WITH A GLOBAL REACH

The first of its kind, *The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora* offers both academics and lay readers information and valuable insights into the history, growth and development of Indian communities around the world. It is a work of great importance in this age of increased ethnic awareness.

### IN-DEPTH COVERAGE

The 400-page *Encyclopedia* gives comprehensive insights into the worldwide spread of communities that set out to maintain their 'Indianness' in a range of ways – in music, language, religion and dress, for example. There emerges a sense of the activism of these diasporic communities and of the contributions they have made both to their host countries and internationally, in areas as diverse as literature, cuisine, popular culture, sports and political life, all of which are covered extensively through the *Encyclopedia's* 20 contextual features.

The striking resilience of Indian communities in very diverse host societies – North America, the UK and Europe, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean and Australasia – is also demonstrated in over 60 country/region profiles. This resilience is seen as key to the strength of the communities, whether they were founded in the 'old' diaspora at the time of European colonial dominance or in the 'new' diaspora of the globalisation era.

'The longer-settled communities... show important lines of political organisation and leadership...'

### The *Encyclopedia's* vital statistics

- ♦ 280 mm x 225 mm page size
- ♦ 400 pages, 20 contextual articles
- Over 60 country/region profiles
- ♦ 75 boxed features
- More than 350,000 words
- ♦ 1000 photographs, maps, and other graphics
- ♦ 60 tables, 62 contributors

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GREAT LEADERS

In the *Encyclopedia*, there are many examples of the rise of Indian political activists and leaders who contributed, and continue to contribute strongly to the political life and development of host societies. The longer-settled communities, where Indians formed a significant part of the population over time – Fiji, Mauritius and Guyana, for example – show important lines of political organisation and leadership; but the same is shown in the case of the UK, where the government has consciously drawn leading figures in community life into the national political and legislative sphere.

*continued overleaf*

### Editorial Management Board

The *Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora* is overseen by the Editorial Management Board. Its members are as follows:

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- **Dr Rajesh Rai**  
Assistant Editor; Visiting Fellow, South Asian Studies Programme, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore.



### MESSAGE

Brij V. Lal  
General Editor

The 'encyclopedia project', is making great progress. There has been a concerted effort to get the text

into final order and the editors have achieved that almost completely. The nitty gritty of each article in the book has been discussed and debated, leading to a final version which we believe meets the high standards required of a book of this nature. There is still much to be done but we are well on track for the expected publication date. For the editors, it has been a great experience to be a part of the *Encyclopedia* as it is a unique volume which will be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of not just academics, but any reader interested in getting to know more about the origins and development of the Indian diaspora.



### MESSAGE

Tan Tai Yong  
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore; Chair, Editorial Management Board

Developed in association with the South Asian Studies

Programme of the National University of Singapore, *The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora* is a book that will fill an important niche in work on this vast subject area. With the growing importance of India in the global economy, the world is now rushing to gain more insights into the vast subcontinent and its many peoples and cultures. This volume will go some way to furthering understanding and increasing awareness of a significant and lesser known aspect of Indian history, evident in the political, cultural and economic histories of diverse diasporic communities around the world.



'The striking resilience of Indian communities in very diverse host societies... is also demonstrated...'



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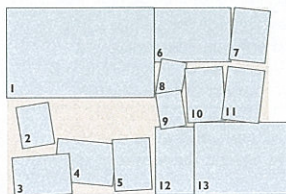
The picture of communities which emerges from this book – even of those groups which suffered in the colonial period from the darker sides of the indenture system – is one of energy and resourcefulness, and the capacity to make a positive social and economic contribution.

#### PROGRESS TO DATE

Since discussions began between the editorial team and the publishers in August 2004, much progress has been made. By September, a draft outline of the book's contents had been formulated. The team then drew up a list of scholars who might be commissioned to write the entries. These authors – of which there are now 62 – were selected based on their areas of expertise.

The earliest textual material for the *Encyclopedia* was received in February 2005. In May, having received some 60 per cent of the total, the team began editing the articles. As at March 2006, some 95 per cent of the text has been forwarded to the publishers.

The editorial office also began to focus on obtaining the nearly 1,000 illustrations needed. The primary sources so far have been the authors, who have supplied archival and contemporary shots, as well as material such as posters and newspaper clippings. Work has begun on developing maps, tables and figures. Based on the progress so far, the *Encyclopedia* is on its way to meeting the September 2006 publication deadline.



1. A gurdwara in Birmingham, UK.
2. Author Rohinton Mistry.
3. An Indian migrant in New York.
4. Children in the Gulf States.
5. President of Guyana, Cheddi Jagan, with his wife Janet.
6. Indian cricketers in action.
7. *Mississippi Masala* was directed by Mira Nair.
8. Steel tycoon J. R. D. Tata.
9. Fijian Jai Ram Reddy, a member of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.
- 10 & 11. Posters advertising a disaster relief concert and Indian entertainment in Chinatown (UK).
12. An early image of Mahatma Gandhi.
13. The *Oriana* docked in Fiji.

## Big names in Business

From the earliest period, movement overseas from India involved merchants and financiers seeking profit in trading commodities and Indian manufactures, or in changing and lending money. Such activity remained important through the colonial period.

This tradition lives on today, with Indians playing a major role in international industrial, business and financial systems from positions in their host societies. In the UK, for example, the contribution of Indian entrepreneurs to the UK GDP is, according to reports, out of all proportion to their numbers in that society.

(Malaysia), to name a few. Others have come to prominence more recently, such as **Dr Sudhir Gupta** of Singapore's Amtel Group and **Dr Hari N. Harilela** in Hong Kong.

Major India-based corporations are now showing great interest in expanding into international areas in which there are diasporic communities. Led particularly by corporations in the IT sector, such as Infosys and Wipro, as well as by older Indian industrial giants such as Tata, Indian business is reaching out into new fields of development.

The greater attention the Indian government now pays to the diaspora

'...Indians playing a major role in international industrial, business and financial systems...'

The *Encyclopedia* examines the role of businessmen in 'The Age of Globalisation', which highlights Indian entrepreneurs in diverse industries such as steel, electronics, pharmaceuticals, travel and hospitality, fashion and food processing.

Such entrepreneurs operate in many regions: the UK and EU, North America, East and Southeast Asia, Russia and Eastern Europe. Many are household names – **Mr Lakshmi Mittal (UK)**, **Lord Swraj Paul (UK)**, **Mr Vinod Khosla (US)** and **Mr Ananda Krishnan**

ra's major business figures is thus matched by the increasingly international outlook of Indian business, and the likelihood of increased linkages with the diaspora's leading figures and companies.

The *Encyclopedia* shows the extent to which many businessmen within the Indian diaspora – industrialists, entrepreneurs, merchants, bankers, venture capitalists, financiers and CEOs – have helped develop Indian expertise and know-how, and promote it internationally.

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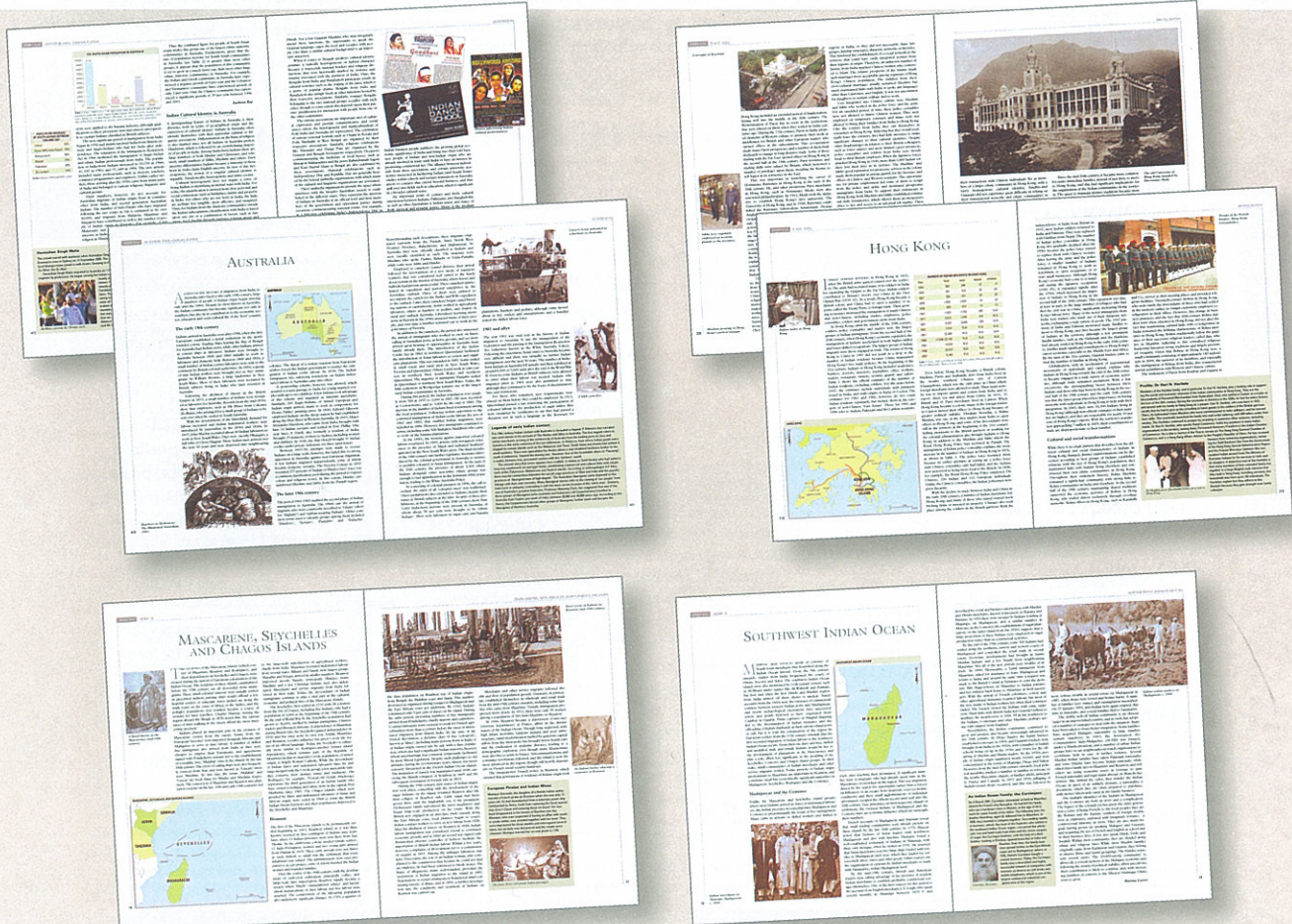
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 - Ashwin Raj  
 French Pacific (New Caledonia)  
 - Frédéric Angleviel

Acknowledgements  
 Bibliography  
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## CONTRIBUTORS

Over 60 academics and experts in the field from over 15 countries have contributed to the comprehensive range of articles in the *Encyclopedia*.

**AMARJIT KAUR**, *Fellow, Academy of Social Sciences, Australia; Professor, School of Economics, University of New England, Australia.*

**AMARJIVA LOCHAN**, *Reader in History, University of Delhi, India.*

**ASHWIN AVINESH RAJ**, *PhD Candidate, Division of Pacific and Asian History, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Australia.*

**ASSA DORON**, *Post Doctoral Fellow, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**B. A. PRAKASH**, *Professor and Head, Department of Economics, University of Kerala, India.*

**BILVEER SINGH**, *Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**BINOD KHADRIA**, *Professor of Economics, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.*

**BRIAN STODDART**, *Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), La Trobe University, Australia.*

**BRIJ V. LAL**, *Professor of Pacific and Asian History, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University.*

**CAROLINE PLUSS**, *Post Doctoral Fellow, Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, China.*

**CLARE ANDERSON**, *Senior Lecturer, School of Historical Studies, University of Leicester, UK.*

**CHAN CHOENNI**, *Co-ordinator for Strategy, Research and Communication, Ministry of Justice, Netherlands.*

**CLEM SEECHARAN**, *Professor and Course Leader, Caribbean Studies, Department of Humanities, Arts and Languages, London Metropolitan University, UK.*

**FAIZAL YAHYA**, *Assistant Professor, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**FRANK FANSELOW**, *Lecturer, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Brunei Darussalam, Brunei Darussalam.*

**FREDERIC ANGLEVIEL**, *Professor, University of New Caledonia, Noumea, New Caledonia.*

**GIJSBERT OONK**, *Lecturer, Department of History, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Netherlands.*

**GOOLAM VAHED**, *Assistant Professor, School of Social Sciences and Development Studies, University of Durban-Westville, South Africa.*

**GYANESH KUDAISSA**, *Assistant Professor, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**IGOR KOTIN**, *Assistant Professor, Faculty of Oriental Studies, St Petersburg State University, Russia; Senior Research Fellow, Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences (Kunstkamera), Russia.*

**IRENA KNEHTL**, *Economist, researcher and writer about business and investment opportunities and prospects in Yemen.*

**JACQUILINE LECKIE**, *Senior Lecturer, Anthropology Department, School of Social Sciences, University of Otago, New Zealand.*

**JAMES D. LESLIE**, *Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Waterloo, Canada.*

**JOSEPHINE NAIDOO**, *Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada.*

**KENNETH MCPHERSON**, *Professor, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, Germany.*

**KNUT A. JACOBSEN**, *Professor, Department of the History of Religions, University of Bergen, Norway.*

**KRIPA SRIDHARAN**, *Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**KUMUD MIRANI**, *Head of the Hindi Programme, SBS Radio Sydney, Australia.*

**KUSHA HARAKSINGH**, *Associate Fellow, Department of History, University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago.*

**LAAVANYA KATHIRAVELU**, *Research Assistant, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**MARINA CARTER**, *Honorary Research Fellow, Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK.*

**MARTIN BAUMANN**, *Professor, The Study of Religions, University of Lucerne, Switzerland.*

**MEDHA KUDAISSA**, *Assistant Professor, Department of History, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**MICHAEL PEARSON**, *Professor of History, School of History, University of New South Wales, Australia.*

**NANDITA KHADRIA**, *Editor, Manpower Journal, Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Delhi, India.*

**NATASHA PAIRAUDEAU**, *PhD Candidate, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK.*

**NATHAN KATZ**, *Professor of Religious Studies, Florida International University, USA.*

**PETER REEVES**, *Head, South Asian Studies Programme; Director, Centre for Language Studies, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**P. R. GOPINATHAN NAIR**, *Honorary Fellow, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, India.*

**RAJEND MESTHRIE**, *Professor and Head of Linguistics, University of Cape Town, South Africa.*

**RAJESH RAI**, *Visiting Fellow, South Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore, Singapore.*

**RAJINDER K. DUDRAH**, *Lecturer, Screen Studies, School of Music and Drama, University of Manchester, UK.*

**ROSA MARIA PEREZ**, *The Discoveries Commission for the Commemoration of the Portuguese Discoveries (Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses - CNCDP).*



Members of the editorial team meeting in Singapore to review proposed layouts. FRONT ROW (FROM LEFT): Professor Peter Reeves, Professor Brij V. Lal and Timothy Auger. BACK ROW (FROM LEFT): Laura Jeanne Gopal, Wajihah Hamid and Dr Rajesh Rai.



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### Contact details

#### The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora.

South Asian Studies Programme, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, National University of Singapore, 3 Arts Link (AS3-02-05/06), Singapore 117569

email: [sassec@nus.edu.sg](mailto:sassec@nus.edu.sg)  
fax: +65 6777 0616

Editions Didier Miller  
121 Telok Ayer Street #03-01  
Singapore 068590

email: [edm@edmbooks.com.sg](mailto:edm@edmbooks.com.sg)  
phone: +65 6324 9260

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