



Educate & Lead

AWARENESS IN ACTION

Newsletter

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Awareness in Action is a think tank, founded 15 years ago by a group of youngsters in Hyderabad. It is dedicated to create awareness among various walks of life on unexplored and ignored issues of national importance through intense debates, research, documentation, intellectual pursuits and campaigns.

The focus so far has been on initiating a meaningful debate and thus understanding the issues related to national security, national unity, economy and social harmony.

We are now expanding the focus to issues like environment, human rights, urban infrastructure and agriculture. We are proposing to take up intense exchange of ideas and research activities in these areas.

Veer Savarkar Movie Promotion

During initial years, it was confined by taking up some promotional activities in few areas. It was actively involved in promotion of the Hindi movie 'Veer Savarkar', a film made by Shri Sudhir Phadke,

It was indeed a historic moment, as the long-awaited epic movie on the life of legendary freedom fighter 'Veer Savarkar' and not only because of its dramatic subject matter, but also because of the way it was made.

This is the only movie in the world whose major chunk of financing came from ordinary citizens. However, it remains unknown to the people. The movie was screened publicly and privately across South India drawing tremendous response from the people.

India's Security Imperatives & Siachen



Awareness in Action organised a series of lectures on the Indo-Pakistan and Indo-China wars. Former defence personnel, who had participated in those wars, gave first person accounts of the untold stories.

Due to lack of awareness on the matters of defence and national security, majority of Indians perceive that India should not waste its resources on holding Siachen. However, Awareness in Action knew very well the strategic importance of Siachen for India's security.

Siachen Glacier is the world highest, coldest and costliest battle field. Our brave men in uniform putting their life at risk to secure these forbidding icy glacial heights with a firm commitment that India cannot afford to lose these fields.

Siachen offers India a rare tactical advantage at a time when China is expanding its foot print to Pak Occupied Gilgit Baltistan and the growing China-Pak linkage through Karakorum heights.

Pakistan is making desperate attempts to get control over this glacier with Chinese occupied Aksai Chin. China-Pakistan link-up through Siachen would drastically expose India's defence in Ladakh.

Hence, Super-high altitude and treacherous climate conditions notwithstanding, our brave jawans feel their career incomplete without a stint in this theatre of refrigerated combat.

Keeping this in view, a seminar on Siachen Glacier's Strategic Importance was organised on Feb 21, 2016, soon after ten soldiers of Indian Army were buried under the snow when their camp in the northern part of the Siachen glacier was hit by a major avalanche.

Experts on the issue – Mayank Singh, strategic affairs journalist, Brig. Krishnaiah, Col. Kumar, Nehru Yuva Kendra Vice Chairman P Sekhara Rao, journalist K R Sudhakar Rao - demystified the participants of their misconceived notions during the day-long seminar on Siachen Glacier's Strategic Importance.

In this regard, a signature campaign was also launched seeking the Government of India to be alert with Chinese designs and also be prepared to face any eventuality of war.

A talk on Nationalism

How does the idea of 'us and them' arise? How does an emotional attachment to land, river, mountain and the men and women who people that land make one live and die for that ideal? Is Nationalism a post-modern dinosaur or colonial construct? Or is it an identity that super cedes all other identities? Does culture grow in isolation? Is patriotism *sui generis*?

These are the few questions that are rocking the intellectual minds of our nation. Many of them seems to be confused with such questions. Does coming together of a clutch of diverse people be able to weld itself into a nation? What role does

India's long history and ethos play in the ideological construction of Indian nation? How is Indian concept of nationalism different from the Western nation-state?

These are questions and questions galore!! Thanks to the raging debate spawned by the recent incidents in some Left-dominated academia, nationalism is back in currency. The debate will only help the nation rediscover its soul or *Chiti*. It will only help to re-invent itself and re-contextualize itself. It will only help in the harmonious belonging of *ChiraPuratana* (the age-old) with *NityaNutana* (ever young).

To clear minds over such confusions, a talk was arranged on



this crucial subject with renowned thinker, foremost activist K N Govindacharya, who had created history in social and political spectrum of the nation on April 1, 2016. He explained the true meaning and spirit of nationalism and what is the need of the hour.

For him nationalism is nothing but to live in harmony with nature and nation. Stating that the need of the hour is national security, social unity and life in-tune with our culture, he said such ideals reflects in the concept of nationalism. He said that nationalism required 'unity in social action' (Samajika Yekatmatha).

Stating that there are 127 agro-climate zones in the country, which are different from physical and climate conditions, he said this is the beauty of nature, which reflects unity in diversity. "Hindutva is also based on such concept of unity in

differences", he added.

"Religion is the only mode of establishing relationship between man and maker. Puja is related to Bhagawan. But Indian thinking is not limited to form of worship and everyone has freedom to choose their form of worship unlike in the West, where everyone is dictated to practice a particular form of worship. There is no contradiction in people worshipping various forms of God or even some didn't believe in such form of worship", Govindacharya added.

Stating that Hindutva believes 'truth is one, but it reflects in various forms', he asserted that diversity is its beauty. "Hindutva believes in the socio and economic conditions based on Dharma and every creation in the universe has equal rights and freedoms. Our way of life is to live with nature in harmony, but not by destruction of nature", he added.

Ambedkar's vision of India

The raison d'etre of all great personalities is to think ahead of their times and strive to usher in a root-branch reform in the society, polity, human thought and action. They strain every sinew of theirs to re-engineer, re-build and realize the world tomorrow.

Unfortunately, such great epoch-making personalities are often misunderstood and misrepresented as they are light years ahead of the contemporary society. The totality of their thoughts and actions gets distorted as years pass by and their legacy is either deified by blind devotees or brashly derided by inveterate detractors.

Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar is one such visionary leader, who suffered this strange vicissitude. It was felt the dire need for the intellectual class to rise above politics and petty considerations to study his life, philosophy and works dispassionately and draw up contours for future India.

2016 is the 125th birth anniversary of Dr Babasaheb. Also, it is about time for his 60th Mahaparinirvan. On this occasion 'A Symposium on Ambedkar's Vision of India' was organised on May 21, 2016. Speakers felt has strongly denounced in

making Ambedkar as a champion of the particular section of the society.

While recalling his historic services for the upliftment of dalit community and making of Indian constitution, they also stressed the need to take inspiration and lesson from his innumerable contribution in the areas of national security, economy, relations with minorities and many other nerve sectors of national life.

Prominent social activist and writer of several books on Ambedkar Dr VaddiVijayasarithi said that Ambedkar is a true nationalist and he was forefront on several issues working safeguarding interests of the country. By adopting Buddhism, he said that Babasaheb has prevented daliths from resorting to disruptive modes and made them to stand for nationalism and spiritualism.

Though he was insulted in so many ways, Vijayasarithi recalled that how Ambedkar performed his duties in making of constitution without exhibiting any partiality or revenge. Post-doctoral fellow at JNU Dr Sattu Lingamurthy, senior journalists K Raka Sudhakar Rao and A Amaraiah also spoke.



Look East, Act East & What Next?

Look East, an important post-cold war foreign policy initiative that signalled a major paradigm shift in India's perspective of the world, helps to achieve economic integration and security cooperation with the countries of South East Asia. The Look East of PV Narasimha Rao graduated to the next level – the Act East – during Vajpayee years.

There is a focus shift on the all-important region - From Australia to East Asia, with ASEAN as its core – and a wider security and economic cooperation, political partnership, physical connectivity through road and rail links.

This major shift from the essentially West-centric post-1947 policy to Asian neighbours needs to be taken to the next level by embedding it into India's foreign policy architecture leveraging on shared colonial experiences and cultural affinities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 37th lecture on 'India's Singapore story' in Singapore referred to the point of how his government wants to further accelerate engagement with ASEAN. Our engagement with the Asia-Pacific can go a long way in realizing Prime Minister Modi's idea that “Five Ts” - *tradition, talent, tourism, trade, and technology* - are essential to make India a superpower.

The contours for future debates on **ACT EAST** are:

Why are substantially deeper economic, institutional and security relations and with Asia Pacific countries important for India?

Can diplomatic and economic engagement with Asia Pacific help in counter-balancing China's maritime advances like the Nine-Dot line, String of Pearls or naval adventurism in South China Sea?



Can India play a greater strategic role in the region given the swiftly changing security dynamics? Can it counter-balance growing Chinese presence in Indian Ocean by building strategic convergence with Japan, Philippines and Vietnam? Can India help in ensuring that Indian Ocean does not become a theatre of contest, but a dais for shared prosperity?

Can India leverage on the strengths such as vast and rooted Indian diaspora in Asia-Pacific and the cultural bonds with the East Asia starting from Sri Vijaya and Kambhoja era down to the Girmitiaemigres, besides the 2500-year Buddhist links?

What could be the role of great democratic quadrilateral of India, Japan, Australia and US in ensuring peace and shared prosperity in Asia-Pacific?

Ram Madhav Varanasi, who as the top BJP functionary and the founder-director of the Strategic think-tank, the India Foundation, has addressed these issues at a lecture organised on July 24, 2016 and presented a framework for greater Indian engagement in Asia-Pacific.

India's Wars with Pakistan- A lecture Series



India's decisive wars with Pakistan during 1965 and 1971 have changed India's contemporary history, have altered South Asia's atlas, showed nation's resilience and scripted stories of valour, grit and sacrifice.

Even after decades they continue to inspire our people, stands like deterrence against anyone who dare to dream of attacking

India. Also remains as crucial part of our defence preparations from all aspects.

The memories of war are a distant blip on the radar of collective memory and the dramatic personae have moved on as did a forgetful nation. But, should we forget them and consign these memories to the dustbin of history? Or should we hold them up as sources of perpetual inspiration for generations to come?

Shouldn't the memories of these modern day heroes be heard and reheard from the heroes themselves? Shouldn't these stories be told and retold to India of today and tomorrow? Firmly convincing that India is duly bound to recall these stories of valour, patriotism and heroism where our men did not swerve from an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with death to protect the idea of India, organised talk series.

On December 3rd, 17th and 24th, 2016, war veterans Brig Madhuranthakam Ravindranath, Col. S K Rao and Brig Krishnaiah narrated their war memories and field experiences. MLC RamchanderRao , presided over these sessions



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