



# INDIA , CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY: WHAT THE UNITED STATES NEEDS TO KNOW

## A Briefing by Indian Experts

Washington D.C.  
18-19 May 2009

An independent Briefing Visit  
on climate change, energy and opportunities for  
an Indo-US leadership agenda.

---

### 1. Why the visit?

The United States and India are the world's two largest democracies. Within two decades they, along with China, are projected to be the three largest economies in the world. Both countries share a common challenge of energy security and climate change. With the signing of the civil nuclear agreement both countries have shown a willingness to reshape a contentious relationship. With a new president in the USA and elections in India, the time is ripe for these two nations to frame a strategic partnership that puts combating climate change and meeting energy needs at the heart of the relationship.

This independent Briefing Visit is being organized by an Indian non-profit, the Centre for Social Markets (CSM), in partnership with the Pew Environment Group, as part of a new effort to craft a vigorous leadership agenda on climate change between the United States and India.

Improved information and understanding will be at the core of this. At present, perceptions on both sides are under-informed and often distorted. Stereotypes persist and perpetuate an 'us and them' mentality. Instead of seeking commonalities, differences are highlighted. We do not believe that this is the

way to build trust and a common platform to address the dual economic and climate crises of our time. Another approach is sorely needed.

This is the purpose of this visit. An independent effort, it seeks to provide an external channel for information sharing and dialogue outside of traditional diplomatic routes which have their limitations. It has been initiated by the Centre for Social Markets (CSM) as part of an effort to promote a pro-active leadership agenda.

With only seven months to go to crucial UNFCCC climate negotiations at COP15 in Copenhagen, it is time for more active non-governmental diplomacy to improve bilateral understanding and find new ways forward. The two countries could hold the key to success or failure at Copenhagen. As the world will not have another chance in the near future to negotiate a new global climate treaty, and given the urgent need for action, it is high time to get both countries on board for a high-ambition outcome to COP15 at Copenhagen.

This Briefing Visit is part of a broader effort by CSM to create an Indo-US leadership platform on climate change, creating co-benefits and helping put both countries on the path to low-carbon prosperity. Traditional government-to-government means will not be able to achieve this. Hence the need for external engagement and a fresh perspective which this visit represents.

## **2. What are its objectives?**

This Briefing Visit seeks to reach out to US policy makers, lawmakers, media and opinion formers to bridge the information and perception divide there is on India and climate change in national and international context. For example, what India and Indians think about the threat of climate change, what they are doing to address it, what they expect of their government, and what they expect of the United States.

It aims to improve understanding in the United States about climate impacts, climate-related policies and measures in India, and shed light on issues such as technology, innovation and competitiveness.<sup>1</sup> It seeks to engage new communities - such as the 2.5 million Americans of Indian origin - as important constituencies with a stake in efforts to address climate change in both countries.

---

<sup>1</sup> CSM will be organising a reciprocal visit to India in 2009 by US experts to improve understanding in India about climate policies and actions in the US (at both the federal and state level). Briefings before the Indian Parliament are being planned as part of this visit by US experts in Summer 2009.

The visit seeks to promote far greater bilateral understanding of climate and energy challenges - as well as opportunities - which can inform current decision-making and form the basis for a new, more ambitious and effective partnership.

### **3. Who is on the Delegation?**

The 4-member delegation comprises leading Indian thinkers, activists, entrepreneurs, and scientists with policy and on-the-ground experience. It is intentionally multi-sectoral to provide insights from a range of disciplines, sectors and levels of society.

Members have been selected for their personal authority, independence of mind, ability to shape opinion and exert leadership. Collectively they bring considerable knowledge of India and climate change in its multi-dimensional aspects from the worlds of green business, media, government, science, civil society.

#### **Delegation Members (in alphabetical order) are:**

##### **HANDE, Dr. Harish**



*Harish Hande is one of India's best known and most respected solar entrepreneurs. He has received the Ashden Awards, the so-called 'Green Oscars' which recognize work on energy efficiency and renewable energy, an unprecedented two times. An energy engineer, he co-founded SELCO India, a social venture to promote sustainable technologies in rural India. SELCO has pioneered access to rural solar electrification for poor households through a combination of customized lighting systems, innovative doorstep financing, and an understanding of market needs of different user groups. Today SELCO India has installed solar lighting systems in over 85,000 households in rural areas across the country. Harish is much sought-after for his expertise in developing and deploying solar technology, as well as his ground-level understanding of rural reality and energy needs in India. [www.selco-india.com](http://www.selco-india.com)*

Dr. Harish Hande was born in Bangalore, Karnataka and raised in Orissa, India. After completing his basic schooling in Orissa, he went to the Indian Institute of Technology (Kharagpur) for his undergraduate studies in Energy Engineering. He then went to the U.S. to do his Master's and later PhD. in Energy Engineering at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell.

Harish originally started his PhD thesis in heat transfer. When visiting the Dominican Republic, he saw areas with worse poverty than India that were using solar energy and decided to shift his academic focus. Upon returning to Massachusetts, he flung his heat transfer thesis into the river. He then started anew on solar electrification in rural areas and conducted much of his research in India, Sri Lanka, and the Dominican Republic.

Harish is managing director and co-founder of SELCO INDIA. With its headquarters in Bangalore, SELCO has 25 branches in Karnataka and Gujarat. It pioneers linkages between technology, financing, energy services, income generation and the quality of life for its customers. Today SELCO INDIA has installed solar lighting systems in over 85,000 households in the rural areas of Karnataka and Gujarat, and created SELCO entrepreneurs who distribute solar powered lights to low-income communities.

## **JHA, Mr Prem Shankar**



***Prem Shankar Jha is one of India's leading public intellectuals and media figures. A noted analyst and commentator, he is a former editor of and contributor to The Hindu, The Hindustan Times, The Economic Times and The Financial Express, and a former information advisor to the prime minister of India. He is the author of several books including, 'Marketing Paranoia: Will China and India dominate the 21st Century?' (2008); 'The Perilous Road to the Market: The Political Economy of Reform in Russia, India and China'; and 'Kashmir 1947: The Origins of a Dispute', and a regular columnist with several leading publications.***  
**[www.premshankarjha.com](http://www.premshankarjha.com)**

Born 22 December 1938, Prem Shankar Jha is an Indian journalist, author and columnist. Jha received a Masters of Arts Degree from University of Oxford in philosophy, politics and economics at Nuffield College, Oxford.

In 1961, he joined the United Nations where he spent five years in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). He spent two years in New York as a special assistant to the managing director of the Special Fund Mr. Paul G. Hoffman. He was the first administrator of the UNDP. The remaining three were spent in Damascus, Syria.

In 1966, Jha joined the Hindustan Times as an assistant editor, in 1969 he moved to the Times of India, where he was the deputy editor of the Economic Times. He then joined the Financial Express as its editor before moving back to the Times of India in 1981 as its economic editor. In 1986 he re-joined the Hindustan Times as its editor.

The World Bank appointed him as a consultant in 1978 to prepare a report on the public sector in India. In 1977 the Asia and Pacific Development Administration Centre of the UN in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia gave him the project of preparing a manual for use by public sector managers for operation and evaluation of projects.

Jha was a member of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO in 1975-1977 and in 1976 he was a delegate to the 63rd Session of the Indian Science Congress Association, Waltaire. In 1990 he has served as the information advisor to the Prime Minister of India. He is a columnist for The Hindu, The Hindustan Times, the Business Standard and Outlook magazine. His books include the following:

- ? Kashmir 1947: the Origins of a dispute (2003).
- ? The End of Saddam Hussein's Iraq - History through the Eyes of the Victim (2003).
- ? The Perilous Road to the Market: The Political economy of reform in Russia, China & India. (2002).
- ? A Jobless Future: Political causes of Economic crisis (in India) (2002).
- ? Kashmir 1947: Rival versions of History (1996).
- ? In the Eye of the Cyclone: The crisis in Indian Democracy. (1993).

- ? Development Administration Centre. (1980).
- ? India : A Political Economy of Stagnation (1980).
- ? Management of Public Enterprises in Developing Asian Countries: The UN Asian and Pacific

## **MEHRA, Ms Malini**

***Malini Mehra is the founder & CEO of the Centre for Social Markets. A political scientist and gender specialist by training, Malini has worked on sustainability issues in civil society, business, and government for more than 20 years. She has published widely on these issues and is a frequent media commentator. In 2009, she was nominated as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum (Davos). In 2007, she was named an 'Asia 21 Young Leader' by the Asia Society. In 2006 she was chosen as a Principal Voice by CNN. Her media appearances and publications include CNN, BBC World, TIME and FORTUNE magazines. [www.csmworld.org](http://www.csmworld.org)***



Prior to founding CSM in 2000, Malini worked on international trade, environment and human rights for NGOs including Oxfam and Friends of the Earth. From 2005-2006, she served at the UK government, where she led on international sustainable development partnerships, and initiated the UK's pioneering *Sustainable Development Dialogues (SDDs)* with China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico. From 2003-4, she served as a member of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's *High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relations* chaired by President Cardoso of Brazil. She also contributed to UN publications such as the *Human Development Reports on Democracy* (2002) and *Human Rights* (2000) respectively.

Malini has been involved on climate issues since the United Nations' conference in Kyoto (1997) where she coordinated the input of Friends of the Earth International. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Arts, Commerce & Manufactures (RSA), the Remarque Foundation, and the British-American Project. She serves on many advisory boards, including Ethical Corporation and companies such as Unilever, BHP Billiton and Fortis. Malini has degrees from the Institute of Development Studies (Univ. of Sussex) and Smith College (USA). She is married with three children, speaks six global languages, and presently splits her time between London and India.

## **NAMBI, Dr Arivudai**



***Dr. Nambi currently serves as the Director of the Climate Change Program at the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), India. His expertise and experience is in the areas of Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change, Vulnerability Assessment, Biodiversity Conservation and Environment Education. He serves in several committees of Government of India including the committees constituted to study the climate impacts by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, and the Ministry of Water Resources. [www.mssrf.org](http://www.mssrf.org)***

Dr Nambi has been closely associated with the Conference of Parties (COP) meetings of the CBD & UNFCCC for the past eight years. He is the convener of the South-South exchange program on Capacity Building and the National Dialogue on the 'Model Act on Local Level Climate Risk Management', a work in progress.

Prior to joining MSSRF, he worked with the United Nation's Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Program as a 'Senior Associate' (Outreach and Engagement) based in Chicago. He also served as a Consultant for five years with the Secretariat of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) at the World Bank, Washington DC. Here, he researched on public-private partnerships, agricultural policy and governance issues. Mr. Nambi holds a doctoral degree in Inter-disciplinary Social Science from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, New York. He holds two Master of Arts degrees, one in Public Management from University of Madras, India and another in Development Studies from Cambridge University, UK. He majored in Physics for his Bachelor degree from University of Madras, India. He has contributed many popular articles and journal papers on a range of environment & development issues.

## About the Centre for Social Markets (CSM)

CSM is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to making markets work for the triple bottom line - people, planet and profit. Founded in 2000, by Indian social entrepreneur Malini Mehra, CSM has a values-based culture committed to professionalism and integrity. Through our offices in India, the UK and US, and an international network of partners and associates, CSM works to accelerate the transition to sustainable development and the realization of human rights. Our primary constituencies are domestic industry and other stakeholders in developing countries, and ethnic minority communities in industrialized countries such as the Indian Diaspora.

### Key attributes

- CSM is a 'can-do' organization with an entrepreneurial culture and a holistic vision of change.
- Our role is to act as a catalyst and thought leader on key sustainability challenges of the day.
- We work across niches and boundaries with a range of players to inspire new models of change.
- We educate, mobilize, push boundaries and make possible new spaces for debate and action on sustainability issues.
- We are committed to partnership and work actively and pro-actively with others to build synergies and magnify our impact.

### CSM's core programme areas from 2007 onwards are:

- (1) **Climate Change** - lead a major public engagement initiative - 'Climate Challenge India' - to promote a pro-active domestic response to climate change in India.
- (2) **India as a Global Player** - focus on India's emergence as a player on the global stage with particular reference to sustainability and human rights challenges.
- (3) **Corporate Responsibility** - undertake innovative research, education and leadership programmes as India Inc. goes global.

### **On Climate Change**

CSM has led India's foremost public engagement initiative on climate change - Climate Challenge India - since early 2007. We mobilise business and city leaders, NGOs, opinion formers and ordinary Indians on the need for a pro-active agenda on climate change. At the end of 2007, CSM's Climate Challenge India campaign was recognized as one of the world's top five campaigns on climate change and profiled at the UN climate conference in Bali. CSM has, in

partnership with E3G, worked closely with world leaders such as Al Gore and his team on India issues and advised a range of political leaders on the new climate agenda for India. CSM has developed a number of innovative platforms for business leadership on climate change issues - including a film, 'In Good Company - Corporate India and the Climate Challenge,' to be launched at the World Business Summit on Climate Change in Copenhagen in May 2009. We are also developing a number of 'axes of leadership' on climate change between India and the US, Europe and China, with a particular emphasis on the Indian Diaspora.

Full details on CSM's work can be found at:

<http://www.csmworld.org>

Full details on Climate Challenge India can be found at:

<http://www.climatechallengeindia.org>

For further information, please contact:

Ms Sumana Das at: [info@csmworld.org](mailto:info@csmworld.org) or one of our five offices in Bangalore, Delhi, Kolkata, London or New York. Full contact details can be found on our website: [www.csmworld.org](http://www.csmworld.org)