



CCAS

Centre for China Analysis & Strategy
中国分析及策略中心

BOOK LAUNCH REPORT

“Xi Jinping’s China” and “Cadres of Tibet”

Knowledge World Publishers, 2017

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“Xi Jinping’s China” and “Cadres of Tibet” (both published by Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi) were both officially launched on 7 November, 2017, at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The launch ceremony was jointly hosted by the Centre for China Analysis and Strategy (CCAS) and Knowledge World Publishers. Mr. Jayadeva Ranade, President of CCAS, welcomed the audience.

The Panel Discussion with the theme: ‘Future Trajectory: China-India, China-Tibet, China and the Indian Ocean, and Emerging China was moderated by Dr. C. Raja Mohan. Speakers were Ambassador Shyam Saran (Former Foreign Secretary and Special Envoy to Prime Minister), Vice Admiral Anup Singh (former FOC-in-C Eastern Naval Command and Chief of IDS), Dr C. Raja Mohan (well known columnist and Director of Carnegie India) and Mr Ashley Tellis (Tata Chair, Carnegie Endowment, USA).

Before the Panel Discussions commenced, the author of both the books Mr. Jayadeva Ranade spoke and outlined the the common concepts of both the books. He explained that *Xi Jinping’s China* emphasises the links between the prominent personalities which influence China’s internal politics and events. The book selects and explains key developments of the past five years since Xi Jinping was appointed to China’s three top posts and which have contributed to the hardening of the Chinese State. There is similar focus on the personalities governing Tibet in the *Cadres of Tibet*, which includes biographical sketches of important cadres that are very difficult to get. He described it as probably the first book of its kind.

Amb. Shyam Saran spoke on the future trajectory of bilateral relations between China and India. He emphasised the key role of Tibet in Sino-Indian relations, and India’s assistance to the Dalai Lama in 1959, which he said was a crucial moment in bilateral ties. He spoke of the period between 2004-2006 when both countries reached a consensus on a “Strategic and Cooperative Partnership”. There was considerable discussion before such a ‘partnership’ was agreed to. Ambassador Saran said India and China also closely aligned at the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change. He

touched upon the idea of a quadrilateral alliance between the United States, Japan, Australia and India, adding that this alliance has the potential to invite a strong reaction from China.

Vice Admiral Anup Singh spoke of China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Chronicling the rise of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) in the region, Vice Admiral Singh said that while Chinese presence had been negligible prior to 2008, it has increased over the years. This is because China has learned the art of maritime diplomacy, which it has used to build its own "String of Pearls" in the IOR. China's thirst for power in IOR and "protecting sea lines of communication" is a pretext for carrying out such activities. While highlighting the waning presence of the U.S. Navy in many parts of the world since the last days of the Obama administration, Vice Admiral Singh pointed to the role of the "maritime militia" in the high seas, under Xi Jinping's leadership.

Dr. C. Raja Mohan introduced the history of Britain's engagement with Tibet since colonial times. He stressed that there is a great need to know more about our frontiers. He said Tibet has been central to Sino-Indian relations, and along with Kashmir, is one of the fulcrums towards resolving bilateral territorial issues. As evidenced by the report of the recently concluded 19th Party Congress, a stronger China is more conscious about protecting its sovereignty. He concluded by saying that the radiation of Chinese power across the subcontinent is now visible.

Prof. Ashley J. Tellis discussed the rise of China thematically, in context of its three great leaders Mao (independence), Deng (prosperity), and Xi (greatness). Highlighting four specific issues, namely elite politics, domestic ideology, character of civil-military relations and China's real economic weaknesses and its impact, he talked about China's concerns regarding provincial instability. He also discussed other varied, but equally important issues such as the centralization of power by Xi Jinping, Wang Huning's *Theory of New Authoritarianism*, CCP's full control of the PLA and its operation in peripheral areas like the South China Sea and the IOR. Dr. Tellis pointed out that deep fissures existed in the Chinese economic system and referred to the slowing economic growth and possible financial crisis. The main question Dr. Tellis left the audience with was – can China sustain domestic consumption and continue to experience meteoric economic growth?

Following the panel discussion, the floor was thrown open to the audience for a question and answer session. Mr Jayadeva Ranade was asked whether Xi Jinping's power has reached its peak. Mr. Ranade responded by saying that following the 19th Party Congress, Xi Jinping has further concentrated power. He has only chosen loyalists in the Central Politburo. Replying to whether Xi Jinping could fall, he agreed that the faster the rise the more rapid and harder the fall, and said there are indications that opposition to Xi Jinping still exists. Replying to whether the "alliance system" is suitable for India, Amb. Saran said that a fundamental misreading of India's non-alignment is common and that it was a sound strategy for the time. Answering a

question regarding the rise of China, Dr. Tellis said that China is finally reaping the rewards of its investment in human resources while also pointing out that American negligence in protecting technology and IPR was in large measure responsible for China's rise facilitated by its theft through cyber-espionage. China is now laying claims to global resources like land and mineral resources. Concluding the session, Mr. Ranade pointed out that it was significant to note that China is endeavouring to capture shrinking strategic space.

