



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
TRANSITION  
PERSPECTIVES FROM INDIA AND CHINA**

Organized by

**Institute of Chinese Studies**

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## CONCEPT NOTE

### Higher Education in Transition: Perspectives from India and China

Economic globalization and the emergence of the need for a knowledge economy are the two driving forces which have led to the reorientation of the higher education systems and universities the world over. Since the 1990s large numbers of universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) have reshaped their style of governance, streamlined their functioning and readjusted their priorities. Emerging economies like India and China with the additional factor of rapid economic growth found themselves in a situation where change was required in their higher education system in a variety of ways. Liberalization has brought about several new challenges to tertiary education in both the countries. These challenges have led to a phenomenal transformation of the higher education sector. Since the liberalization of their economies beginning in the 1980s in China and a decade later in India, the two states have adopted a host of policies and measures to ensure that tertiary education keeps pace with the speedy development of the nation's economy. This transitional process has led to, and also in turn is guided by four factors.

There has been a rapid **expansion** in enrolment and in the number of higher education institutions. The structures and essence of **governance and administration** of universities have changed (more in China than India) and continue to change. **Privatization** of the HEIs is being viewed as the best alternative to meet the growing demand for tertiary education although it is contested by many. To create world-class universities to meet the challenge of high quality education **internationalization** has emerged as an important component of the activities of HEIs. The outcome of these policies and measures are having far-reaching consequences, some already visible and some others still unfolding. How are the two fast-growing Asian economies responding to the outcomes? In which direction is tertiary education moving in these two states?

The conference focussed on these four aspects as well as other aspects pertaining to higher education in India and China. The tentative sub-themes were: **Growth of the Higher Education Sector, Towards a Knowledge Economy, Globalization and Internationalization, State Policies and Responses, Equity issues in Higher Education.**

**SreematiChakrabarti**, Convenor

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# REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

## SESSION I: INAUGURAL SESSION

The two-day conference on “**Higher Education in Transition: Perspectives from India and China**”, began with the introduction of the conference by Prof. Alka Acharya (Director, ICS) and Prof. Sreemati Chakrabarti (Conference Convenor). Prof. Acharya on behalf of the ICS welcomed all participants and also highlighted the extensive planning and conceptualization that had gone into making the conference possible. Prof. Chakrabarti, as the convenor of the conference welcomed all participants as well as the attendees, particularly from the Chinese side. She also took this opportunity to express gratitude for the inspiration and support provided by Prof. J. B. G. Tilak in igniting an interest on the issue of education in general and higher education in particular.

This international conference was an important effort towards gaining an insightful understanding of the transitions taking place in the higher education systems of India and China. It brought together some of the renowned experts on the subject and resulted in a fruitful discussion covering a wide array of subjects related to higher education.

### **Keynote Address by Prof. J.B.G.Tilak (NUEPA) and Prof. Lou Shiyan (City University of Macau)**

The first keynote address was delivered by **Prof. J. B. G. Tilak** which provided an overview of the developments that have taken place in the Indian higher education system, the policy approaches employed by the state and how the system fares in a global context. He highlighted both the positive and the negative aspects of the Indian system of higher education as it evolved over the years. Broadly, the system has gone through three distinct phases – from a public-funded and state-dominated system, to the intervention by the World Bank which restricted further progress and finally to the present phase of private sector-led growth in higher education. Quite recently, the quest for building knowledge societies has again brought higher education in focus with an emphasis on becoming globally competitive. The government has under the rubric of inclusive growth envisioned a mission mode for enhancing the access to and the quality of higher education institutions.

The second keynote address by **Prof. Lou Shiyan** from the City University of Macau was read out by Prof. Alka Acharya. The paper aimed to illustrate the path followed by the higher education system in China over the years, highlighting in particular the new era that it has entered into in the reform era. Prof. Lou outlined three main phases in the evolution of the higher education institutions (HEIs) in China. The period from 1978-1985 was a period of recovery following the destruction of the entire higher education edifice during the Cultural Revolution. This was followed by a period of steady development till 1998 and the leap forward from 1998-2009. Presently, higher education in China has entered a new era marked by emphasis on quality

of education; speeding up of the process of internationalization; and the occurrence and deepening of marketization.

The Inaugural Session was followed by five sessions with specific themes, within the two days. Every session had three speakers each, who shared their viewpoints on the persisting situation and what the future holds for higher education in India and China.

## **SESSION II: STATE POLICIES AND RESPONSES**

**CHAIR: Prof Patricia Uberoi, Vice-Chairperson, ICS**

### **Presentation 1: Prof. Satish Deshpande (University of Delhi)**

The second session started with Prof. Satish Deshpande's presentation, *“‘Weak’ Students and ‘Elite’ Institutions: The Challenges of Democratizing Indian Higher Education”*, sought to address the condition of equity by a juxtaposition of ‘weak’ students and ‘elite’ institutions in India. According to Prof. Deshpande, even though higher education is the best means of creating equality, it is also responsible for reproducing, modernizing, and strengthening old forms of inequality. Higher education in India performs this paradoxical function by maintaining formal access but denying substantive access. It is also a result of the Indian contextual feature where a ‘distorted credential market’ operates in the area of higher education. The speaker raised the challenges that remain in the process of democratizing Indian higher education such as the issue of hyper-visibility; appropriate forms of evaluation; and the inequality of languages.

### **Presentation 2: Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao (University of Delhi)**

Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao delivered an enlightening talk on, *“Access, Equity and Fairness in Higher Education: What does Expansion mean in the Neoliberal Context?”* His discussion centered around the expansion of higher education in the neo-liberal context highlighting the issues of equity and fairness. The speaker maintained that both India and China are at a critical stage of transition with regard to higher education wherein the elite system is giving way to a mass system. Post-1990's there are two broad phases. The period from 1995-2008 is the period of state withdrawal from the higher education arena. Post-2008, there is clear engagement of the state in giving a strong push to privatization. Basically, the speaker argued that the neo-liberal context has further complicated the inequalities of region, caste, class and gender by virtually widening the disparities in distribution.

### **Presentation 3: Prof. Chan Wing-kit (Sun Yat-sen University)**

Prof. Chan Wang-Kit from Sun Yat-sen's University made an enthralling presentation on, *“Higher Education and Graduate Employment: Challenges for Sustainable Development”*. The speaker dwelt on the topical subject of graduate employment in China as a serious challenge for sustainable development. Since the reforms and opening up China has been witnessing massive unemployment arising out of the privatization of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The expansion of higher education took place as a corrective measure to postpone the seeking of employment by graduates and to boost domestic consumption. However, this has been counter-

productive. The expectations of high paying jobs and the influx of rural graduates seeking job opportunities in the developed regional zones are just some of the problems. The government on its part instead of reforming the system to meet the needs of the labour market has been delegating the responsibility to local governments and bodies. In sum, the policy measures have been exhausted and the problem is becoming huge day by day.

## **Discussion**

In the discussion that followed some pertinent questions and comments were put across. The attendees were curious to know if the Chinese Hukou system is absolutely rigid or it can become flexible in the near future. Another comment pertained to the postponement of job-seeking and highlighted how unemployment itself is a waiting period. One of the participants raised the issue of dealing with the mind-set of HEIs that are creating binaries between different classes in the Indian context. The speakers welcomed the comments and clarified their arguments with regard to the questions asked or issues raised.

## **SESSION III: TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY: SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

**CHAIR: Prof. Alka Acharya, Director, ICS**

**Presentation 1: Dr. Balatchandirane (Asso Prof, Dept. of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi)**

The first paper of this session was presented by **Dr. Balatchandirane**, Associate Professor, Dept. of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi. In his paper titled, *“Higher Education in India and China: A game changer or lost opportunity?”*, he looked at the state of the ‘knowledge driven economy’ in both India and China, specifically looking at the efforts undertaken for advanced research and the state of higher education in both the countries.

Beginning the presentation Dr. Balatchandirane explained that after a point of time, in any given economy, the core economic activity will be defined by the production and consumption of knowledge, where innovation takes precedence over the exploitation of natural resources. He then elaborated upon the role of higher education institutions, i.e. the tertiary education institutions in supporting growth strategies for knowledge driven economies by training a qualified and an adaptable labour force. They in turn generate new knowledge and build capacities to access the existing stores of global knowledge, as well as adapt that knowledge for local use. He pointed out that the corner stone of a knowledge society is advanced research as well as higher education.

Dr. Balatchandirane, compared the economic performance of India and China through the Global Innovation Index (which compares countries on the basis of enabling environment to innovation and inputs to innovation), where China was consistently at the 29<sup>th</sup> spot, since year 2007, while India’s place has been going down mainly for want of adequate interventions in the higher education sector. Drawing the linkages between Knowledge Economy, globalization and the role of universities, Dr. Balatchandirane, argued that the positive effect of globalization was that the

need for highly qualified human capital kept on increasing, however on the other hand, the withdrawal of the state from higher education and the subsequent reduction of public resources for higher education have pitted the higher education institutions between the state and the market. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Balatchandirane cautioned that Prime Minister Modi's idea about making India into a 20 trillion dollar economy, would be a big piped dream unless and until sufficient investments are made at the right time to improve our stakes in both the human capital and R&D front.

### **Presentation 2: Mr. Alok Ranjan (formerly a Research Associate, ICS)**

Mr. Alok Ranjan's presentation was titled, **"Towards Regional Knowledge Society: Capacity Development through Cross Border Cooperation in Tertiary Education in Northeast India."** The speaker noted that the emergence of a knowledge economy presents both opportunities and challenges for developing countries. But to avail the emerging opportunities, a greater critical mass in certain fields is needed, especially in the post-secondary education and training systems. It is in this backdrop that the cross border cooperation in education and capacity building has a crucial significance as it facilitates the construction of strong regional innovation systems which can take better advantage of global markets. He further asserted that there are no quick fixes for rectifying the system; Institutional impediments need to be confronted, however, no matter how difficult they are.

### **Presentation 3: Dr. Anamika (CIE, University of Delhi)**

Dr. Anamika's paper was on, **"Human Rights education in China and the Contribution of Sweden"**. Beginning with a background to the Human Rights Education in China and Sweden's role in promoting it in China, she elaborated that China has tried to incorporate the contents of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenant of Political and Civil Rights (ICPCR) and other international conventions, to its Human Rights Education curricula. According to her, China needs Human Rights education specifically because it lacks skilled Human Rights specialists who can articulate and also contribute in framing Human Rights policies in China. Secondly, with the emergence of a market based economy, and the opening of a lot of multilateral businesses, China needs to protect its laborers' rights and also address the various human rights violations there.

She concluded by saying that to create a Human Rights culture, China has to pay more focus on secondary levels as well as major interventions at University level. In Chinese school level curricula Human rights Education is known as Citizenship education, which she argued is an inadequate approach.

### **Discussion**

The discussion session raised a lot of interest on the topics presented during the session. A question about the efficiency involved in the amounts spent on R&D by both India and China, who were late comers was raised with apprehensions as to how they would be able to catch up with the high spenders from the developed world. Dr. Balatchandirane replied by citing the work

done by Prof. Kazuhiko Ozawa, which found that the late comer nations like Taiwan and South Korea had taken cues from their predecessors to learn from their development experiences. This gives hopes to India and China with massive populations.

Concluding the session, Prof. Alka Acharya remarked that the presentations convinced her that more comparative studies have to be done on the development experiences of both India and China. She exhorted the young researchers to take cues from the presentations to delve into other topics.

#### **SESSION IV: INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**CHAIR: Amb. Kishan S. Rana., Honorary Fellow ICS.**

Amb. Rana, as the chair of this session, in his opening address offered some food for thought to the audience. While Chinese educational institutions have attracted close to three lakh foreign students, India with a measly thirty five thousand students from abroad has been miserably unsuccessful in doing the same. The dismal difference in figures in attracting foreign students reflects the lacunae in India's policy on 'education diplomacy' (ties established between nations through collaborations in the field of education). The game of numbers involving foreign students in India and China was the key determinant in gauging the success of a national policy. With his opening remarks Amb. Rana threw down the gauntlet challenging the three speakers to enlighten the audience on the success and strategies of the two nations in the field of education.

**Presentation 1: Prof. Sreemati Chakrabarti, University of Delhi and Honorary Fellow, ICS.**

Prof. Sreemati Chakrabarti presenting a paper titled, *'The State in the Internationalisation of Higher Education: India and China contrasted'* made an initial argument by observing that the meaning of the phrase, 'internationalisation of education' has expanded in the age of globalisation from the traditional scenario envisaging an exchange of students and faculty as well as transfer of knowledge to a much more dynamic one involving the projection of soft power of nations as well as commercialisation and political considerations. The handicap of a non-internationalised field of education would sooner or later hurt the aspirations of these two nations in their quest to be viewed as a strong knowledge economy. At the start of the 1990s India had a clear cut qualitative edge over the Chinese education sector that China has erased through massive investments in infrastructure for higher education.

Foreign collaborations in India were restricted to efforts in establishing the IITs and IIMs whereas knowledge gained from ties with the USSR was the mainstay of China's higher education apparatus. In present times, an identification of the aims and goals in the Chinese sphere has marked a feasible direction. In India, however, although the aims are visible, policies are very unstable. Another stark difference between India and China exists through an official consciousness encouraging students of natural sciences to study abroad in the case of the latter. While in China, the Knowledge Innovation Programme combined with the Torch Programme provided the first signs of state interest in nurturing domestic talent, the massively funded 'Project 211' played a vital role in attracting talent from abroad. Prof. Chakrabarti concluded by

criticising India's National Higher Education Mission that does not possess a concrete plan to internationalise Indian education. However, the massive online open catalogue initiative is significant over China due to the presence of Chinese online firewalls and handicap in language.

**Presentation 2: Dr.Kavita Sharma, President, South Asian University, New Delhi.**

Dr. Kavita Sharma, in her paper '*Privatisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education: India and China, Imperatives of Globalisation*', was very enthusiastic while arguing that the Indian mind-set is still in favour of public funding of higher education in India. However, a skewed demand-supply ratio has compelled the government to permit the entry of private players on a massive scale. In China, the Cultural Revolution led to the downgrading of education as post-Cultural Revolution admissions to higher education was based not on competitive exams but on physical contributions at the assigned work units and their recommendations. The Indian government's position is also very contradictory. On the one hand the government wishes to strengthen privatisation, on the other opposition from many spheres has created an urge within the government to tightly regulate this sector.

**Presentation 3: Dr. Liu Qiang, Beijing Normal University.**

Dr. Liu Qiang from Beijing Normal University in his paper titled, '*Internationalisation of Chinese Higher Education: Changes over time and perspectives to the Future*', focussed on student mobility whilst moving to a new location using a qualitative survey. In his analysis, although the US receives a lion's share of the Chinese students, several APEC countries also attract a vast number of Chinese students. Some of the reasons are favourable funding, better future prospects, wide spread recognition of institutions and the proximity to China. The fact that the Asia-Pacific region possesses several cultural similarities is also a major reason attracting Chinese students. Deng's dictum of 'support studying abroad, encourage their return and allow free mobility' is a general guideline since 1993 governing foreign education.

Claiming that the People's Republic of China aspired to attract at least 5,00,000 students by 2020 through the 'Plan for Study in China', it has established at least twenty four programmes for educational collaboration with the US but only three programmes exist between India and China. The speaker called for the educationists present in the session to search quick and concrete solutions to facilitate a better system of people-to-people contact.

**Discussion**

Encompassing the sphere of privatisation the session on internationalisation of higher education drew in sharp and varied comments. The first question forwarded to the panellists was regarding the cluster of institutions of higher education in urban and semi urban areas. Another member of the audience probed Dr. Kavita Sharma as to the reason behind the negative connotations attached to privatisation of higher education. Dr. Sharma in her reply stated that these suspicions are not necessarily without reason. In India most private players were profit oriented while not conveying necessary skills. As to the first question, Prof Chakrabarti argued that although there



are universities being established in several regions in India the infrastructural realities and qualitative lacunae is a major hindrance in further expansion.

Dr. Liu Qiang was asked to give his opinion on the advantage of studying abroad when future prospects for jobs are continuously diminishing in these regions. He replied that although the number of students studying in China was increasing annually, the qualitative skills and prestige associated with studying abroad continues to outweigh other factors. A comparison of China and India should only be qualitative. In India migration, is due to policy failure and in China it occurs due to policy alone.

**DAY 2: 28 February, 2015**

## **SESSION V: GROWTH OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR**

**Chair: Prof. Mary E John (CWDS, New Delhi)**

### **Presentation 1: Prof. Rui Yang, Hong Kong Institute of Education**

Prof. Rui Yang talked about “*Hitting a Glass Ceiling soon? Some preliminary Assessment of China’s Higher Education Development*”. Higher education in China has played an imperative role in the economic construction, scientific progress and social development. Before reform and opening up, China’s Higher Education was centralized to adopt with the China’s economic system. But things have started to change after 1990s. In the present times Chinese government has placed literacy work as one of the priorities in educational development. According to the PRC government, Higher Education is based on the principles of openness, fairness, strictness and objectivity to ensure its quality. Inspection, supervision and assessment of Higher Education exercised at various levels throughout China. Knowledge and skills are at the heart of the development and diffusion of new technologies relating to Higher Education.

Assessing the Higher Education in China Prof. Yang believes that it has remained confined to the elite. Higher Education order was not restored in the name of reform until late 1970s. China is now the third largest producer of research articles, only behind EU and US. Admission into the Chinese universities has inflated significantly since 1999. It recruits largest number of teachers and students in the world.

According to Prof Rui Yang “the most striking feature of China’s strategy for internationalization is its vigorous engagement with the outside world, particularly Western nations”. Chinese government attaches great importance to the international cooperation and exchanges of higher education.

The speaker informed that attempts have been made by policy makers to ensure academic freedom and autonomy. He also highlighted challenges faced by the higher education sector in China such as, disputes between Confucian-led education and enforced West-led education system, existence of rampant corruption in both academia and administration, how academic promotion relies heavily on guanxi or personal connections etc.

There is a strong alliance between politics and education. Much needed integration has never been achieved. Regional disparity in access to higher education still remains an issue. A gender difference in access is also there. Some scholars are sceptical about educational sovereignty.

**Presentation 2: Dr Saumen Chattopadhyaya (Jawaharlal Nehru University) & Ms Aishna Sharma (Jawaharlal Nehru University)**

Dr. Saumen Chattopadhyaya and Ms Aishna Sharma jointly presented a paper on “*Higher Education Policy in India during the Post-Liberalization Era*”. The speaker classified the situation after liberalization into two phases. In the first phase of reforms, public expenditure on higher education was drastically low. The presentation discussed the various Committee Reports on Higher Education such as the Punnayya Committee, Birla-Ambani Report, 2000, the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.

The “first phase of reform” laid emphasis on governance reform through change in the mode of funding. In the second phase of reforms, privatization was highlighted which helped in finding alternative funding as well as role of the state was redefined. Since 1950s, both central and state governments finance higher education. The role of private sector has been nominal. 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan emphasized three things, such as: expansion, inclusion, excellence. Narayan Murthy Committee and Yashpal Committee Reports were discussed as a part of the second phase of reforms. She argued that neo-liberal expansion has also made matters worse by creating inequalities of class, caste, region and gender etc. Only huge chunks of middle class have been able to take advantage in the expansion of higher education. At the end the speaker made some recommendations regarding Higher Education along with efforts to induce Research and Development in the field.

**Presentation 3: Dr. Liu Qiang, Beijing Normal University**

Dr. Liu Qiang presented paper, “*Who finds it Easier to go to College? An Empirical Study of the Relationship between Students’ Socio-economic Status and Their Access to Higher Education in China*”. Dr. Liu Qiang discussed the importance of education and how it has become the keystone of national rejuvenation, education equity etc. The 17<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress stressed how education has become important foundation of social justice. Society can be divided basically into high social echelon and low social echelon. The students coming from high social echelon find it easier to enter into the schools and universities. There are also many factors responsible for access to higher education. Such as: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital etc. Secondly there exists significant rural-urban as well as gender differences in access to higher education. Therefore immediate action should be taken to prevent it. The speaker talked about “Project 211” which was aimed in raising the research standard of well known universities.

**Discussion**

There were several questions regarding the poor performance of State supported provincial Universities in China, the identity dilemma faced by the Chinese students, etc. In case of India, it

was asked as to why ‘privatization’ has negative connotations. The speakers also welcomed comments and observations from other participants. They elucidated answers with the regard to the questions asked or issues raised.

## **SESSION VI: EQUITY ISSUES in HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Chair: Prof. Binod Khadria (Jawaharlal Nehru University)**

**Prof. Binod Khadria** chaired the fourth session of the international conference and stressed the conflict between growth of higher education sector and equity.

**Presentation 1: Prof. N. Sukumar (University of Delhi)**

**Prof. N. Sukumar**, from University of Delhi presented on *‘Education for Dalits: Betwixt Emancipation and Stigma’*. Prof. Sukumar argued that ‘caste discrimination results in decline, deterioration and stigmatization of self’. Preliminary field data collected by him and his team from University of Madras, Hyderabad University, Bombay University and Delhi University substantiated his arguments. He stressed that there are two very important contradictory truths of equity in higher education. Though higher education is being provided to SCs and STs through affirmative action i.e. quota, but at the same time these students from SC and ST categories have to carry the stigma attached to their caste and have to face discrimination. He pointed out that the institutes are not at all cooperating in revealing the data on reservations and other issues related to SC and ST. Other than discrimination, there are campus issues such as suicides committed by the reserved category students, delay in fellowships and sometimes students are not allowed to submit their PhDs if they are involved in protests.

**Presentation 2: Dr. Shreeparna Roy (University of Delhi)**

The presentation by Dr. **Shreeparna Roy**, *“Affirmative Action: The Issue of Access and Quality in India and China’s Higher Education”*, was read by Prof. Sreemati Chakrabarti as Dr. Roy was not present. Her paper focused on the particular features of affirmative action, the growth of affirmative action mechanisms and institutions, historical background, and the problems associated with its implementation in India and China. She asserted that both India and China have seen massive growth in their higher education sectors post-liberalization period since 1991 and post-reform period since 1978 respectively. Prior to 1990s, the higher education record in India and China in general and with regard to internationalisation of higher education in particular were more or less in India’s favour. Post-liberalisation, both India and China began to develop and restructure their higher education system to meet the needs of globalisation and their own development goals. In China, the state retains the control over internationalisation of education while the role of state in internationalisation of higher education in India has been limited.

The major hurdles in the successful implementation of affirmative action policy have been geographical location i.e., geographical separation from developed areas (lack of institutions in these areas); historically poor financial conditions of the disadvantaged groups; language barriers;

weak academic base; dropouts (failures in subsequent exams); vacant seats in higher education which are otherwise reserved for these socially and economically deprived sections of society; social disadvantage; use of affirmative action by well off sections among others. She emphasized that there is scope for both India and China to learn from each other when it comes to implementation of affirmative action policies. At the same time, there is need to focus on the quality of education.

### **Presentation 3: Dr. Ritu Agarwal, (Jawaharlal Nehru University)**

The final presentation was by Dr. Ritu Agarwal, *“Ethnic Minorities, Integrative Nationalism and Higher Education in Yunnan Province”*, began with a discussion of the geographical and ethnographic structure of the Yunnan province. She talked about various measures taken by the State to integrate ethnic minorities in the entire population. She pointed out some important mechanisms carried out by state authorities to ensure ethnic revival of minorities such as introduction of bilingual education leading to cultural revival of these minorities, promotion of mosques and so on. Also, cross border linkages has led to minorities consciousness among Dai inhabited prefecture. She talked about the problems such as quality of education, local knowledge, shortage of minority teachers, and lack of minority text books. She stressed that there is a need to make the entrance exam easier for minorities, and also these minorities need to be allowed to write their exams in their respective minority languages.

### **Discussion**

As the session moved towards question and answer segment, many significant questions were raised like, on the reactions of the politicians and administrative staff who belong to reserved categories to the discrimination taking place on university campuses and role of political parties playing in the mobilization of these groups, required steps to be taken to improve the quality of higher education and also positive inclusion of minorities and various castes in higher institutions. This session highlighted the deep-rooted problems of quality and equity issues in higher education in both India and China and provided with both conventional and unconventional ways out to ensure inclusion of weaker sections of society in development process via higher education. Many significant conclusions were reached like, mere state policies such as reservations are not sufficient to ensure the reach of higher education to all sections of life; this is high time to improve the quality of education, including the orientation of the faculty, staff and peer groups towards inclusion of neglected sections of society in higher education.

### **Vote of Thanks**

The conference ended with a vote of thanks given by **Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam (Hon. Fellow, ICS)**. He expressed his gratitude to all the chairs, speakers and participants for their lively discussions and contribution to the conference.

**Note:** ICS is likely to bring out a publication on this.