



RISING ASIA  
JOURNAL



RISING ASIA  
FOUNDATION

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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HARISH C. MEHTA

## ***RISING ASIA JOURNAL TELLS ITS OWN STORY*** **As it Enters the Fifth Year of Publishing**

**T**he journal is arguably the only one of its kind in existence. This is because it occupies a little-explored niche area of the eastern world, straddling the Northeast of India, Bengal, and the Eastern Indian Coast and Hinterland, and equally Southeast Asia, China, Japan, Taiwan, and the Koreas: the territorial mix makes me think that there is no other journal that focuses on all these areas, taken together. It covers these geographies through a scholarly brush that is, at once, spectacularly and ambitiously multidisciplinary and multicultural. We have achieved our goals by publishing authors that are specialists in their fields and disciplines, whom you can find here in our pages.<sup>1</sup> A great example is the

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<sup>1</sup> Our list of authors features scholars such as the Southeast Asia specialists Tommy Koh, Ieng Mouly, Dino Patti Djalal, Craig Etcheson, Tuan Hoang, Ang Cheng Guan, Jason Gibbs, Vinh Phu Pham, Minh X. Nguyen, Luke Stewart, Romen Bose, Vasuki Shastry, Por Heong Hong, Carina Vo-Ta, Joanna Lin, and Tran Ung Thuy Trang.

Our experts on China, Hong Kong and Taiwan are Tian Mashuang, Toh Han Shih, Jing Chen, Long Shih Rome, Julie Banerjee Mehta, Raka Mukherjee, Salikyu Sangtam, and Mohini Maureen Pradhan.

Our specialist on South Asian trade is Sanjay Kathuria, and our experts in Himalayan/China-India trade are Vimal Khawas, Kabindra Sharma, and Rajiv Gurung.



celebrated and much-awarded novelist and professor, Zulfikar Ghose, who wrote a special exclusive article for *Rising Asia Journal* that was possibly his last piece of writing.

A highlight of the year was our editorial board member, Tuan Hoang, guest editing a special issue, “Postwar Music in Vietnam and the Diaspora,” marking fifty years since the end of the Vietnam War. The special issue carried articles by the scholars Jason Gibbs, Vinh Phu Pham, Minh X. Nguyen, and Tuan Hoang. In 2025, we plan to publish two more guest-edited special issues that help build community and broaden the journal’s editorial scope and reach.

So, what should a good journal be? It must serve a larger purpose by crossing over into the realm of the wider public as it strives to become relevant to a broader readership beyond scholars. Quite naturally, the articles we publish go through peer review, and rigorous editing: our admonition to our authors is that even the most complex topics must be written in language easily understood by the reader. In the end, any reader should find immense value in it. The clarity of language we insist upon benefits readers across disciplines so that a historian can understand what an economist is writing, and a literary scholar is not left in the dark by a geographer.

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Our specialists in India’s Northeast are Jangkhongam DOUNGEL, Lalnundika Hnamte, Milan Narzary, Vimal Khawas, Sudipta Bhattacharjee, HM Izhar Alam, Ajay Kumar Pandey, Man Norbu, Punyo Yarang, Pfokrelo Kapesa, S. Hohoi, Nengpinem Haokip, Arshi Khan, and Md. Nawaz Sharif.

Our international relations specialists are Yuen Pau Woo, Asad Latif, Gurjit Singh, Manjeet S. Pardesi, Bich Tran, Alok Kumar, Ryan Mitra, Vinay Kaura, Ingudam Yaipharemba Singh, Saranya Antony A, Binodkumar Singh, Aniruddha Babar, Nicole Smith, Md. Nasir Uddin, Pak Nung Wong, and Mustakim Khan.

Our specialists on literature, literary studies, and film studies are Ryan Kerr, Jason Mattocks, Marietta Kosma, Prasanta Mahanta, Koushik Goswami, Aisheedyuti Roy, Ritish Dutta, Himadri Lahiri, Siu Heng, Xinkai Sun, Sneha Chakraborty, Yufei Zhu, Jiaying Chen, Aman Tripathi, and Vinod Kumar Pillai.



Besides producing a high-quality publication, the journal and its parent organization, the Rising Asia Foundation, have regularly held the Distinguished Annual Lecture, delivered by Indonesian Ambassador Dino Patti Djalal in 2021, Cambodian Senior Minister Ieng Mouly (2022), and by Singapore Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh (2023). These high-profile events raise scholarly and general understanding of topics and issues relating to individual Southeast Asian countries as well as of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The Rising Asia Foundation, under the initiative of its President Aniruddha Lahiri, staged a live event in collaboration with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry in December 2024, titled the “Rising Asia-BCC&I Summit: The New Growth Triangle—The Bengal Pivot to the Northeast and the East.” The all-day conference, held at the heritage premises of the BCC&I, featured an inaugural session followed by five panels on the Bengal Pivot to the Northeast and East, Investing in the Growth Triangle, Unlocking Northeast India’s Potential, Regional Diplomacy for Economic Cooperation, and Cultural Narratives: Preserving Heritage in Bengal and the Northeast. The Summit allowed both the non-profit organizations, the RAF and the BCC&I, to pool their strengths in order to explore an important topic, and to enable the community of writers and novelists, scholars, diplomats, businessmen, and journalists to share a common platform.

Rising Asia Literary Circle, anchored by Dr. Julie Banerjee Mehta, kept a busy calendar in 2024, holding discussions on the Canadian Nobel Prize winner Alice Munro’s short stories, and the Anglo-French author Cecile Oumhani’s short stories; launching the book *Between Homelands* in Michael Ondaatje’s *Fiction* at the Tollygunge Club; and staging the live



event “Four Novelists in Search of their Mothers,” featuring the novelists and memoirists Saikat Majumdar, Manish Oberoi, Radhika Oberoi, and Cecile Oumhani, at the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in Calcutta.

Rising Asia Literary Circle conducts book launches, book discussions, and author interviews. The Literary Circle’s conference on the works of the Sri Lankan-Canadian novelist Michael Ondaatje resulted in the publication of the book *Between Homelands in Michael Ondaatje’s Fiction*, edited by Julie and Harish Mehta and published by Routledge (London and New York, 2024). Similar book projects are in the pipeline. In 2025, many more literary events will be staged that will result in more books.