



25th New Generation Seminar

September 13-27, 2015

Rising India: Shifting Regional Power Dynamics, Meeting Domestic Challenges

Honolulu • Delhi • Mumbai

Background Summary

Background Information

Each year, the East-West Center (EWC) identifies participants from the younger, rising generation of leaders from the United States and Asia Pacific for this two-week intensive educational and dialogue program developed around a thematic focus. The purpose is to help create a better-informed younger generation of leaders who have a greater understanding of regional issues and challenges. The New Generation Seminar (NGS) also provides these younger leaders with a network of counterparts throughout Asia Pacific and the United States upon which to draw as they rise in their leadership positions. Since its launch in 1988, a total of 353 participants from 26 Asia Pacific countries and the United States have participated in 24 NGS programs.

The program is funded by the East-West Center and private donations. Through this funding, the East-West Center covers a limited number of spaces in the program, covering participant air and ground travel expenses, meals provided by the program and lodging. Participants are responsible for any visa fees or expenses, health or travel insurance, and their incidental expenses. Additional cost sharing by participants and nominators is strongly encouraged.

The East-West Center seeks nominations for participants from a variety of organizations and individuals: US Embassies and Consulates in Asia Pacific; the Japan Center for International Exchange in Tokyo; the American Council for Young Political Leaders, and the New Generation Seminar alumni. Self-applications are also accepted through our website. Nominations/applications are accepted in May-June, with selections made by early July. The New Generation Seminar is a *competitive* process; a selection committee at the East-West Center makes the final selection of participants.

Participant Criteria

The New Generation Seminar involves 10-14 participants aged 25-40, from Asia Pacific and the United States. The program seeks to engage those in a position to influence policy, shape public opinion and lead action. An important selection consideration is demonstrated leadership in current and past positions, and the potential for future leadership. The program has targeted elected officials because of their direct role in policymaking, but also includes those who influence policy and public opinion through leadership in political parties, civil society organizations, business, law and the media. Past participants have included members of national, state or provincial government assemblies or ministries; mayors and governors; city council members; leaders in political parties and party youth wings; policy advisors; business and community leaders; entrepreneurs; and others.

The NGS is not geared toward academics, researchers or individuals who are specialists in the program theme; rather it seeks to engage leaders with broad-based policy knowledge, responsibility and influence who can benefit from learning about a range of Asia Pacific issues in addition to the theme. Preference is

given to Asians who have had little opportunity for travel to the US or other parts of Asia Pacific; likewise we generally select Americans with little or no Asia Pacific experience. Fluency in English is required.

Program Agenda

The New Generation Seminar provides rising leaders with an intensive learning experience through a unique combination of study, dialogue, leadership development and travel. The first week of the New Generation Seminar is held at the East-West Center in Honolulu and consists of briefings by EWC research staff on key regional developments such as security, international relations, economics, population, health and environment, as well as sessions directly related to the seminar theme. The Honolulu program also includes meetings with experienced policymakers, relevant field visits, and an opportunity for the participants to engage with each other in dialogue on issues of importance to their countries. Each participant will be asked to come prepared to share a short presentation and lead a discussion with their colleagues in the program. The Honolulu program also will include several sessions focused on executive leadership with an emphasis on leading change.

The second week of the program involves field travel to either the Asia Pacific region or the United States mainland to enhance participants' knowledge of a specific theme. Recent themes have included: Asia Pacific security and the US role, innovation and industrial policy for job creation, the US middle class, and social and economic transformation in Asia Pacific and climate change. Field travel provides participants with an opportunity for in-depth, first-hand perspectives through travel and meetings with policymakers, civil society and business leaders, analysts, experts and others to gain strategic insights, best practices, and new understanding to apply to challenges in their own countries.

25th NGS Theme: “Rising India: Shifting Regional Power Dynamics, Meeting Domestic Challenges

India is on the rise. Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisions the coming decades as “India’s century.” By 2030, it is expected that India will surpass China as the world’s most populous country, with a large percentage of youth. In 2014, India recorded a higher economic growth rate than China. India’s “Act East” policy sees India taking a larger role in East and Southeast Asia on all fronts—economically, diplomatically and militarily—and President Obama’s New Delhi visit at the start of 2015 marked the increasing importance of the US-India relationship to both nations. With a robust democracy and a new government embarking on economic and social reforms, India seems poised to rise as a regional and global power. However, like many countries in the Asia Pacific region, India has significant challenges to overcome to ensure a stable economic growth trajectory and provide shared prosperity. In addition to economic and market reforms, India must address the need for infrastructure and basic services such as health, sanitation, energy and housing; ensure education for its growing workforce; and bridge gaping inequality. It will need to provide quality jobs and manage an increasingly rapid rural-to-urban transition. In addition, growing middle classes are demanding more accountability, especially for environmental management and livability of burgeoning urban areas.

The 25th anniversary of the New Generation Seminar will mark the program’s historic first visit to India, highlighting the country’s growing economy and rising role in Asia Pacific regional affairs. Travel to Delhi and Mumbai will provide young leaders an opportunity to better understand this growing power and explore its potential impact on strategic, economic and political dynamics in the region. In addition, India will offer leaders and policymakers a chance to examine the key development issues facing countries throughout the region in the 21st century—the need to provide environmentally and economically sustainable economic growth, good jobs, quality services, and more equitable and inclusive prosperity—and how they are being addressed in this enormously diverse, robust and decentralized democracy. Aside from new government initiatives, participants will learn from India’s vibrant civil society and technology sectors, which are pioneering innovative ways to address these challenges that can be models for other countries across the region.