

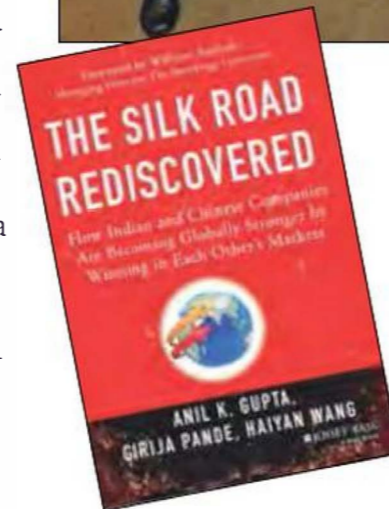
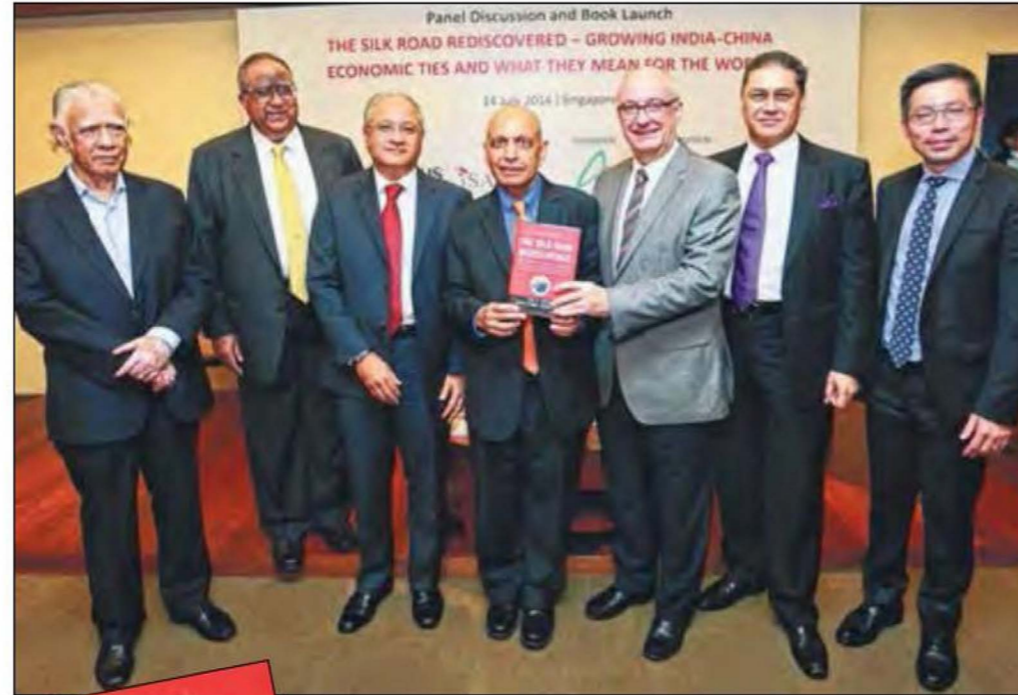
The best kept secret

Former TCS Apac chairman Girija Pande co-authors book examining economic relations between Asian giants India and China

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ASIAN giants India and China are fast forwarding towards being two of the largest economies in the world. The economic ties between these two countries are growing exponentially, yet remain largely not talked about. Mr Girija Pande, the author of the latest book *The Silk Road Rediscovered*, calls it the best kept secret.

Mr Pande, former chairman of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in the Asia-Pacific region, says despite the border politics between the two countries, the economic relations are thriving and the leaders of the two countries are well aware of the potential the relations have.



About both sides of the border... *The Silk Road Rediscovered* (left) is written by Mr Pande (in red tie), Mr Gupta (in blue shirt) and Ms Haiyan Wang (not in picture). The authors are with (from left) Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, SMU's Professor Rajendra K. Srivastava and Professor Arnoud De Meyer, business consultant Pradeep Pant and Ascendas' Mr Jonathan Yap.

PHOTO: ISAS

The book, which Mr Pande has co-authored with Mr Anil K. Gupta, Michael Dingman chair in strategy and globalisation at the University of Maryland, and Ms Haiyan Wang, managing partner, China India Institute, analyses the growing corporate linkage between India and China, telling the success stories of companies like TCS, Mahindra Tractors, NIIT, Tata Motors/Jaguar Land Rover and Sundaram Fasteners. Mr Gupta is an author of six books, including *Getting China And India Right*, which he authored with Ms Wang.

"It is a book that has been in my mind for quite some time, something I felt needed to be told," Mr Pande tells tabla!. Mr Pande set up TCS' business

in Asia Pacific from scratch.

In an 11-year stint which began in 2001, Mr Pande helped the company grow to 11,000 employees in 15 countries. He now runs his own consulting firm called Apex Avalon Consulting.

He says the idea behind the book began with the TCS story but he chose to expand it to include more companies to give it a wider perspective.

"People might be interested in more than just the TCS story. And the co-authors have helped to give the book more dimensions. We are looking at the economic ties from both sides and also write about how Chinese companies like Lenovo, Huawei, TBEA, Haier and Xinxing have major commitments in India," he says.

The book is peppered with stories from both sides of the border. In one such story, Mr Pande speaks about the time when he was the economic adviser to the mayor of Guangzhou.

"We had about 20 software engineers who were vegetarians. I mentioned this fact to the mayor one day and how difficult it was for them to get vegetarian food. During my next visit six weeks later, the mayor told me to visit the Indian restaurant they had started. To me it showed their keenness to welcome everyone to the country for business," Mr Pande says.

He adds that *The Silk Road Rediscovered* is written as a management book which can be beneficial for anyone interested in setting up businesses in either of the two countries.

"It's the right time for a book like this. Both countries have made the right noises about their keenness in doing business together. We have tried to dispel the misconceptions. Indians fear going into China because of the border issues without realising that China has border issues with a lot of countries yet does thriving business with all of them," he says.

The book was launched by Professor Arnoud De Meyer, president, Singapore Management University (SMU), at an event organised by the Institute of South Asian Studies and SMU on July 14. The book is available at bookstores in Singapore and is priced at \$48.10.

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