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Coming Soon in CPD's E-book Collection: "Rising Soft Power: India" ^[1]

As part of CPD's "Rising Soft Power in Emerging Markets"  initiative, we are launching a companion e-reader series, with its first title focusing on the Indian experience.

The initiative seeks to provide a deeper understanding of public diplomacy practices and trends in emerging markets of different political persuasions, against the backdrop of increasing multi-polarity and shifting world order. It explores and examines the forces reshaping public diplomacy and cultural relations globally.

The "Rising Soft Powers" e-book series is a curated collection of research articles, essays, blogs, and interviews originally published by CPD. It intends to inform both public diplomacy academics and practitioners as well as non-expert audiences of the discourse and practice of public diplomacy in some of the emergent powers. The series takes a practice-based approach and draws from the viewpoints of both scholars and practitioners.

In the last two decades, India has emerged as one of the world's fastest growing economies and an important player in contemporary soft power. As Ian Hall has argued in the journal *Asian Survey*, India's newfound interest in public diplomacy has been driven by its perception of its own weak image in certain critical regions, and by the belief in integrating new technologies in the country's external communication.

The cultural resources India has at its disposal in promoting its soft power are quite abundant, from Bollywood films and heritage sites to yoga and cricket. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations, which was established by the government in 1950, has long been engaged in cultural promotion and exchanges. India has carved out a distinct brand identity as a tourism destination through the "Incredible India" campaign since 2002. To more effectively engage the more than 25 million Indian diaspora around the world, it created the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in 2004. And in 2006, it established a public diplomacy division within the Ministry of External Affairs, later merged with its publicity division.

The India soft power e-book, which will be available for free download on CPD's website later this week, draws together a wide array of contributions to explore the various facets of the country's public diplomacy concept and programs. Highlights include:

- A conceptual overview of India's soft power discourse by the leading international communications scholar Daya Thussu
- Reflections on the opportunities and challenges facing India's public diplomacy by two former joint secretaries for public diplomacy, Riva Das and Navdeep Suri
- A behind-the-scenes look at the "Incredible India" campaign by Leena Nandan, former joint secretary of the Ministry of Tourism
- An interview with Indian diplomat and best-selling author Vikas Swarup, whose book was adapted into the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, on the intersection between popular culture and public diplomacy

Other topics covered in the e-book range from India's cultural diplomacy and gastrodiploacy, to the domestic dimension of public diplomacy and the historical role of public diplomacy in U.S.-India relations. We hope this collection offers you a comprehensive reference and view on India's soft power in action.
