Narendra Modi became prime minister of India in May 2014 generating hope of reviving a stagnant economy and reversing trust deficit in government. As Hindu nationalistic Bharatiya Janata Party’s main campaigner, Modi secured a verdict on the twin planks of Development and Hindu nationalistic idea. During electoral campaign Modi emerged as India’s first mainstream anti-Nehruvian leader. He challenged two basic tenets: commitment to welfare state where distribution accompanied growth and the Nehruvian consensus where religious minorities were provided spaces for growth and empowerment. Yet after becoming Prime Minister Modi vacillated between his potential and the dilemmas he faces. On one hand he comes with a proven track record of an efficient administrator and growth catalyst in Gujarat. On the flip side he finds it politically inexpedient to take steps that risk alienation from the masses. This explains Modi’s tough posture on the Free Trade Agreement and categorical assertion of his government’s anti-poor thrust. On the social front where embers of a polarizing campaign needed to have been extinguished, he has allowed drift. Modi has the opportunity to give a decisive thrust to India’s growth, but will he demonstrate political courage?

Abstract
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About the Speaker
Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay is a writer, journalist and television anchor for over three decades. He has worked for several leading Indian newspapers and magazines and hosts A Page from History, India’s only programme on history on television. He has authored two books - The Demolition: India At The Crossroads (1994, HarperCollins) and, more recently, Narendra Modi: The Man, The Times, (2013, Tranquebar). Modi cooperated with him limitedly, though the book was an unauthorized biography. Nilanjan is also a playwright and one of his plays was performed in Delhi by a leading theatre group. He is working on his next book and also writes columns for newspapers and web portals. He went to Jawaharlal Nehru University after schooling for a Masters in Russian language and literature but dropped out before completing the course. Nilanjan currently lives in Delhi.