



Following assumption of charge by Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Vice President of India, Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA called on him on 10 Sep 2022.



To commemorate 30 years of India-ASEAN relations, ICWA in collaboration with RIS organised an International Conference on "Geopolitical Shifts and Opportunities: New Horizons in India-Southeast Asia Relations" on 20-21 July 2022. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India.



ICWA, on 8 August 2022, organized a talk on 'G20 @2023 - The Roadmap to Indian Presidency' by Shri V. Srinivas, Secretary, DARPG chaired by Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, G20 Chief Coordinator, Government of India.



Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, G-20 Chief Coordinator & Former Foreign Secretary, on 23 August 2022.

ICWA organised a Special Lecture on "Bangladesh Foreign Policy" by Amb. Shahidul Haque, Former Foreign Secretary, Bangladesh, chaired by



The 39<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture on "25 Years of IORA: Working Towards a Prosperous, Sustainable & Peaceful Indian Ocean Region" was delivered by H.E. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General, Indian Ocean Rim Association on 30 September 2022.



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## Book Discussion- 'Crunch Time: Narendra Modi's National Security Crises', 13 July 2022



Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organised a discussion on the book 'Crunch Time: Narendra Modi's National Security Crisis' authored by Dr. Sreeram Chaulia, on 13 July 2022 at Sapru House. The discussion was chaired by Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar, former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia and the discussants were Dr. Harinder Sekhon, Strategic and Foreign Policy Analyst and Lt. General A.K. Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd). former Lt Governor of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ex-General Officer Commanding- in-Chief, Southern Command.

The panelists pointed that the book looks at the security challenges faced by India and how India has adopted a comprehensive and integrated approach in its security policies in recent years while being mindful of the uncertain geopolitical environment, threats of international terrorism and a troubled neighbourhood. The book looks at the astute leadership of PM Modi who has come out with creative and out of the box responses to national security challenges and provides an account of the deft handling of the Uri surgical strikes, Doklam crisis, Balakot air strikes. It was noted that the world is witnessing the rise of a nation that is unafraid to articulate its interests and positions.

## Sapru House Paper (SHP) discussion on "The Emerging Political Discourse in Southeast Asia: Democratic Transitions and Regional Stability" by Dr. Temjenmeren Ao, 15 July 2022

ICWA organized a Sapru House Paper Discussion on 'The Emerging Political Discourse in Southeast Asia: Democratic Transitions and Regional Stability' by Dr. Temjenmeren Ao, Research Fellow, ICWA. The discussion was chaired by Prof. GVC Naidu, former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Angshuman Chaudhary, Senior Research Associate, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi and Dr. Srishti Pukhrem, Senior Research Fellow, India Foundation, New Delhi were discussants. This paper identifies the emerging political discourse in Southeast Asia and explores factors that may influence democratic transition and regional stability including social and economic factors, insurgencies based on ethno-religious lines, political disputes and role of military.



## Visit of South Korean Scholar, Dr Wondeuk Cho, KNDA, Seoul, Republic of Korea (ROK), 19 July, 2022



Research Professor Dr. Wondeuk Cho, a member of the Korean National Diplomatic Academy, Seoul, visited the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) on 19 August 2022. During his visit, he interacted with the research faculty of the council. The topics of the discussion were South Korea's foreign policy vis-à-vis the Indo-Pacific region. During the interaction, it was noted that, in South Korea, the current Yoon Suk Yeol's Government is keen on fostering ties with other Indo-Pacific countries. The QUAD countries are important partners for South Korea. RoK is supportive of a rules-based international order. The strategic environment surrounding the Korean Peninsula remains complicated. South Korea is keenly observing the US-China competition. Strategically, in the context of the Indo-Pacific, India is a pivotal major power, a leading actor in agenda setting and a resident power in the Indo-Pacific. Bilaterally, possible areas of cooperation for India and South Korea can be supply chain resilience, digital currency and defence industry cooperation, particularly in submarine and naval shipbuilding, and maritime cooperation including maritime domain awareness.

## International Conference to Commemorate Thirty Years of India-ASEAN Relations “Geopolitical Shifts and Opportunities: New Horizons in India-Southeast Asia Relations”, 20-21 July 2022

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in collaboration with ASEAN India Centre (AIC) at Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) organized a two-day International Conference to commemorate thirty years of India-ASEAN relations on the theme “Geopolitical shifts and Opportunities: New Horizons in India-Southeast Asia Relations” on 20-21 July 2022. The seminar had more than forty speakers from think tanks, academic institutions as well as former diplomats from India and ASEAN countries.



The Inaugural Session of the International Conference was held in-person at Sapru House on 20 July 2022. Remarks were made by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA and H.E. Mr Simon Wong Wie Kuen, High Commissioner of the Republic of Singapore to India. Special Remarks were made by Dr. C Raja Mohan, Senior





Fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, New Delhi. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India.

MoS Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh stated that ASEAN-India relationship is one of the key pillars of India's foreign policy which has helped drive India's vision of a wider Indo-Pacific. Southeast Asia has truly emerged as the economic and geo-political centre of gravity of the world of 21<sup>st</sup> century. ASEAN unity and centrality is an important pillar of the evolving architecture in the region. Geopolitical shifts have underscored the importance of strengthening regional cooperation for ensuring security and growth of the region. India and ASEAN need to expand their cooperation to new horizons with focused practical cooperation. India-ASEAN cooperation is a factor for stability in the region.

H.E. Mr. Simon Wong Wie Kuen, High Commissioner of the Republic of Singapore to India stated that the recent India-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting charted the path to engage more strategically for a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Stagflation, flattening of global trade, supply chain disruptions, demand disruption, youth unemployment, US-China competition, prolonged war in Ukraine are among the inter-locking challenges before India and ASEAN. India and ASEAN can strengthen their partnership through digital payment connects, link-up of start-up and fintech ecosystems, collaboration in skill centres and university development, and cooperation in green energy, health and pharma sectors.

Dr. C. Raja Mohan, Senior Fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute stated that the Indo-Pacific construct places the ASEAN at the very heart of the region and, therefore, ASEAN centrality becomes more important. The QUAD is not here to replace the ASEAN but to work in tandem. India and ASEAN need to develop more security cooperation to overcome their dependency on the idea that US and China are needed to ensure the region's stability. India and ASEAN have to work together on defence and security cooperation



both collectively and bilaterally. The answer to current geopolitical ferment and US-China competition is more cooperation, not less, between India and countries of Southeast Asia.

The technical sessions of the conference were held in virtual mode. The first session on "Regional and Global Trends", was chaired by Amb. Rajiv Bhatia, Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, Mumbai and former DG, ICWA, New Delhi. The speakers in the session were Dr. Kuik Cheng-Chwee, Head and Associate Professor, Centre for Asian Studies, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), National University of



Malaysia (UKM), Bangi; Dr. Rahul Mishra, Director, Centre for ASEAN Regionalism, Universiti Malaya (CARUM), Kuala Lumpur; Prof. Shankari Sundararaman, Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi; and Prof. B. R. Deepak, Professor of Chinese and China Studies, Centre of Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. The session discussed key global and regional trends which define the current geopolitical scenario including COVID-19 pandemic, US-China confrontation, Indo-Pacific and the Ukraine crisis. It was observed that Indo-Pacific is a broader construct than QUAD which includes economic and non-traditional security. QUAD is not opposed to ASEAN and current geopolitical trends make a case for stronger ties between India and Southeast Asian countries.

The second session on “Between Past and Present: Tracing India’s Footprints in Southeast Asia” was chaired by Prof. Baladas Ghosal, former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. The speakers in the session were Prof. Joefer Santarita, Professor of Asian Studies, Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman and President, ASEAN Studies Association of the Philippines, Manila; Dr. Nalina Gopal, Social Historian and Heritage Curator, Singapore; Prof. Suchandra Ghosh, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad; and Dr. Rajiv Ranjan Chaturvedy, Associate Professor, Nalanda University, Nalanda. The session discussed the civilisation aspects which connect India and Southeast Asia and its relevance for contemporary realities. This session elaborated upon the cultural and historical ties between India and Southeast



Asia. It was observed that equal emphasis needed to be put on the study of Indic influences in South East Asia and the influence of the cultures of Southeast Asian nations on India. The need for renewed vigour in promoting tourism, Indian development assistance in restoration of heritage sites in Southeast Asia, & collaboration among museums was emphasized.



The session noted that the pluralist nature of both India and Southeast Asia provided the firm foundation for their friendly and close ties. The third session on “Building Consensus through Regional Cooperation”, was chaired by Prof. Suthiphand Chirathivat, Professor Emeritus, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. The speakers in the session were Dr. Ravichandran Moorthy, Associate Professor, International Relations & Strategic

Studies, National University of Malaysia (UKM), Kuala Lumpur; Mr. Sanjay Pulipaka, Independent Researcher on International Politics and Security, Hyderabad; and Dr. Temjenmeren Ao, Research Fellow, ICWA, New Delhi. The session discussed the perspectives towards building synergies between India and Southeast Asia in the Indo-Pacific. As the Indo-Pacific gains traction amongst the ASEAN nations, the need to build on the convergence between the IPOI and the AOIP and collaborate amongst the four main pillars listed under the IPEF’s enhanced economic engagement was emphasized. It was noted that India and Southeast Asia could build resilient supply chains under IPEF.



The fourth session on “Changing Security Dynamics” was chaired by Amb. Anil Wadhwa, former Secretary (East), MEA, Government of India. The speakers were Dr. Vo Xuan Vinh, Deputy Director, Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Hanoi; Dr. Jirayudh Sinthuphan, Assistant Professor, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Dr. M. Mayilvaganan, Associate Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru; and Dr. Udai Bhanu Singh, former Senior Research Associate, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi. The session discussed the changing dimensions of security in the region which included traditional and non-traditional security threats. The session noted that Southeast Asia in general and ASEAN in particular is facing great challenge due to strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific region between US and China. ASEAN is a catalyst for peace in the region; the ongoing tensions and challenges require a multilateral mechanism which is provided by ASEAN by bringing together all the major stakeholders in a common platform for a constructive dialogue. ASEAN needs to step up its role to address key security challenges.



The fifth session on “Economic Cooperation” was chaired by Amb. Gurjit Singh, Professor, IIT Indore and former India’s Ambassador to Indonesia & ASEAN. The speakers were Dr. Mohammed Masudur Rahman, Visiting Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), Singapore; Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Advisor (Hony.), Bolliger & Company, Bangkok and Former Executive Director, Mekong Institute (MI); and Prof. Biswajit Nag, Indian Institute of

Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi. The session discussed issues and opportunities related to economic cooperation between India and Southeast Asian countries in a post-pandemic world. The need to build connectivity both physical and digital which would help promote trade, commerce and people-to-people ties was emphasized. The immense potential of BIMSTEC master plan for transport connectivity and of Mekong Ganga Cooperation in local capacity building was noted. Textile sector was identified for its potential to develop Global Value Chains in the region. It was also pointed out that infrastructure projects such as the trilateral highway would require the development of industrial zones on the Indian sides to be fully beneficial.

The sixth session on “Development Partnership” was chaired by Prof. S.D. Muni, Emeritus Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. The speakers were Dr. Sithanony Suvannaphakdy, Lead Researcher (Economics), ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore; Dr. Somdeth Bodhisane, Institute for Industry and Commerce (IIC), Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC), Vientiane; Dr. Uma Purushothaman, Assistant Professor,



Department of International Relations, Central University of Kerala, Kerala; and Dr. Sampa Kundu, Consultant, ASEAN-India Centre (AIC), RIS, New Delhi. The session discussed the facets of India’s development partnership



in Southeast Asia that includes line of credits, scholarships, and heritage site restoration. India has built English language training centres, IT centres, women training centres, etc. in Southeast Asia. India is financing Quick Impact Projects in Mekong countries and, in CLMV countries, the focus has been to enhance physical and digital connectivity. Scholarships are being given to students from ASEAN through Nalanda University, ICCR, ITEC and IITs. Development cooperation has been the mainstay of India-ASEAN relations.

The seventh session on “Charting the New Agenda: Pathways to Beyond Act East” was chaired by Amb. Po Sothirak, Executive Director, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP), Phnom Penh. The speaker were Dr. Bradley Murg, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP), Phnom Penh; Dr. Sineenat Sermcheep, Assistant Professor, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok; Prof. Amita Batra, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi; and Dr. Prabir De, Professor, ASEAN-India Centre (AIC), RIS, New Delhi & Dr. Tuhinsubhra Giri, Fellow, RIS, New Delhi. The session discussed the new agenda of cooperation between India and ASEAN countries at the bilateral and regional levels. In light of the current geo-political and geo-economic environment, the session highlighted the need to further deepen ties in maritime, supply chain integration, digital connectivity, economic integration and well-being of global commons which would help truly elevate the relations.

## Seminar on ‘India-Nepal Development Partnership: Economic Challenges and Opportunities’ (Infrastructure, Connectivity, Energy, Health and Education), 27 July 2022

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organized a seminar on “India-Nepal Development Partnership: Economic Challenges and Opportunities - Infrastructure, Connectivity, Energy, Health and Education” on 27 July, 2022. The event had two sessions with both being chaired by Amb. Ranjit Rae, former Ambassador of India to Nepal. Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA and Amb. Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma, Ambassador of Nepal to India, delivered their opening remarks in the inaugural session. The first session on “Fostering Development Partnership in Infrastructure, Connectivity and Energy - Taking Stock and the Way Forward” had the following panelists: Shri Sunil K.C., CEO, Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDIA), Kathmandu; Amb. Vijay Kant Karna, former Ambassador of Nepal to Denmark, Executive Chairman, Centre for Social Inclusion and Federalism, Kathmandu; Prof. Mahendra P. Lama, Centre for South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Dr. Nihar Nayak, Research Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.



The panelists for Session II on “Fostering Development Partnership in Education and Health - Taking Stock & the Way Forward” included: Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel, Associate Professor, Spokesperson/Acting Director of Global Engagement Division, School of Arts, Kathmandu University; Shri Kamal Dev Bhattarai, Assistant Editor, The Annapurna Express; & Shri Goutam Ghosh, Senior Director, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry.





In the inaugural session, it was underscored that India's Neighbourhood First policy accords highest priority to relations with Nepal. Nepal has been one of the largest recipients of India's developmental assistance. Today, the relationship is broad based and the ambit includes High Impact Community Development Projects, education, health, telecommunications, road and rail connectivity and energy. It was also highlighted that the holding of the

seminar on the abovementioned theme at this juncture could help in harnessing the opportunities and addressing the bottlenecks, especially in economic sphere. Five broad areas that have vast opportunities include: i) Trade; ii) Energy: Export of energy to India can offset heavy trade deficit; iii) Tourism: The country is further developing international airports to boost tourism; iv) IT: Nepal is focusing on developing IT sector, including e-commerce; v) Health and Education: Tertiary health and education can be strengthened with joint ventures with India companies.

The discussions underlined that the seminar is taking place at a time of considerable global flux because of COVID-19 and the Ukraine crisis which has had huge impact on oil prices, food security and has created difficulties in many countries including in South Asia. Most countries are grappling with high inflation and going in for tightening of fiscal policies. The neighborhood first policy of India will help to address the challenges of the global crisis better. The objective of the neighborhood first policy is to create an interconnected, interdependent open economic space where every member of this region can exploit its comparative advantage to the maximum. The need for deepening Indo-Nepal connectivity ties was also stressed upon. There has been significant progress over the past few years in the energy sector bilaterally because of power sector reforms in India (second generation) and Nepal (first generation) with private investments. Timely completion, monitoring and maintenance of completed projects is important. It was also suggested that India needs to focus on public private partnership model in the infrastructure and hydropower sectors. Transmission sector is an area where India can assist Nepal. It was observed that there has been a slow-down in people to people contacts in recent years. Collaboration in health sector remains one of the central areas of cooperation between India & Nepal and was discussed in detail.

## ICWA talk on “G-20@2023- The Road Map to Indian Presidency” by Shri. V. Srinivas, IAS, 8 August 2022

The Indian Council of World Affairs organized a talk titled ‘G20 @ 2023 - the Roadmap to Indian Presidency’, on 8 August 2022. The opening remarks were delivered by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. The discussion was chaired by







Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, G20 Chief Coordinator and former Foreign Secretary of India followed by the talk by Shri V. Srinivas, Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India. Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) was the panelist. The event was attended by several Heads of Missions, officials of the Embassies of Indonesia and Italy who are members of G20 troika along with India, and members of strategic and academic community.

Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, while delivering the opening remarks highlighted that the G20 Summit will be a major event in India's calendar of multilateral diplomacy. India has a lot to offer to G20. It is the fastest growing economy in the world with a large consumer base. It is a leader in Pharma and IT sector. India has the third-largest unicorn base in the world and is the global leader in digital payments. In July 2021, with US\$6.28 billion transactions, India made the highest volume of digital transactions in the world. India's role in the G20 stems from the realization that being a major developing country, India has a stake in the international economic and financial system. As founding member of G20, India continues to utilize this platform to raise issues of vital interest that impacts developing countries. In its Presidency, India would seek to work with other members of the group and bring meaningful outcomes.

Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla elucidated that it is a great opportunity for India to showcase its achievements. Together, the G20 members represent more than 80 percent of world's GDP, 75 per cent of international trade and two-thirds of the world population. It includes all 5 permanent members of UN Security Council and all members of G7 and BRICS. India will assume a big responsibility as the President of the group. Though G20 primarily started as a financial and economic grouping but today it covers a comprehensive list of areas important for global development such as health crisis, food security etc. India engages not only with all the stakeholders such as different Ministries and Departments of various countries but also with various think tanks and many of the non-Governmental groups that could contribute to G20 goals. As the President of the G20, India would set the agenda by identifying the key and focus areas, conduct discussions and deliver outcomes. India will also highlight and strengthen international support for priority issues of vital importance. India is tirelessly working on the issue of climate change and has achieved the target of 40 per cent energy capacity of non-fossil fuels, nine years before the committed timeline. 10 per cent target of Ethanol blending from petrol will be achieved 5 months before the committed schedule.

Shri Srinivas expounded that India is deeply committed to multilateralism and democracy and G20 Presidency would be a significant moment in India's history. Since Independence, India has engaged with the multilateral institutions. It has been a founding member of Bretton Woods System and the United Nations. India's inclusive model of governance with emphasis on multilateralism promises one of the finest years of G20 leadership, wherein multilateralism can flourish and G20 can make serious contribution to make globalization safer, sustainable while transforming the processes of international negotiation. The Italian Presidency in 2021 focused on people, planet and prosperity while the Indonesian Presidency in 2022 highlighted recovering together, recovering stronger. India's Presidency would highlight India's contribution to G20 and how multilateralism can be strengthened. Before finalizing the roadmap for Indian Presidency, it is important to look back at what happened in earlier Presidencies held by other members. The agenda can be drawn from the communiqués of Riyadh, Rome and the Jakarta Summits. G20 Presidency would be one of the milestone moments for India's democracy.





It is widely felt, in times when there is a crisis of multilateralism; India has the responsibility of bringing stability to deeply divided multi-polar world. Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi in his remarks explained that the world is going through an unprecedented level of crisis. More and more countries are getting involved in the crisis. Crisis of refugees and migration are also multiplying. There is an uncertainty involved in public health, food security, recession and inflation. The whole agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is being delayed by 7-8 years. All multilateral forms including G20 are grappling with three 3Cs: Covid19, Conflict and Climate. The idea of financial crisis cannot be solved without solving the triggers and the triggers are coming from the failure of addressing development. And this is the reason why after completing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the agenda of SDG was adopted. The global inequity requires a revisit. It is important for Indian Presidency to bring localized development and hence it should encourage local production and local capacity building.

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## **Sapru House Paper discussion on "Why Visegrad 4? – Prospects of India-V4 Cooperation" written by Dr. Ankita Dutta, Research Fellow, ICWA, 22 August 2022**

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ICWA organized a discussion of Sapru House Paper titled "Why Visegrad 4? – Prospects of India-V4 Cooperation" by Dr. Ankita Dutta on 22 August 2022. The discussion was chaired by Prof Bhaswati Sarkar, Professor, Centre for European Studies, JNU and discussants were Dr. Dhananjay Tripathi, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, South Asian University and Dr. J. Jeganaathan, Assistant Professor, Department of National Security Studies, Central University of Jammu. The paper looks at the bilateral relations between India and the Visegrad 4 (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia) countries and their evolution in recent years and identifies traditional as well as the new areas of cooperation.

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## **Special Lecture on "Bangladesh Foreign Policy" by Amb. Shahidul Haque, Former Foreign Secretary, People's Republic of Bangladesh, 23 August 2022**

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Indian Council of World Affairs organised a Special Lecture on "Bangladesh Foreign Policy" by Amb. Shahidul Haque, former Foreign Secretary, People's Republic of Bangladesh on 23 August 2022. The special lecture was chaired by Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla, G-20 Chief Coordinator & former Foreign Secretary.

In her opening remarks, Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA, said that the lecture is special as it is taking place at a significant time for four reasons. First, India and Bangladesh in 2021 celebrated 50 years of their diplomatic relations, with Maitri Diwas being jointly observed in 18 capitals of the world apart from New Delhi and Dhaka. Second, it is taking place as India celebrates its 75 years of Independence, on the theme of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. For India, Neighbourhood First is a priority in its foreign policy and Bangladesh occupies an important position. Thirdly, in the last fifty years of its existence, Bangladesh has shown resilience and laid the firm foundations of a nation-state. Bangladesh was created on the vision that was chalked out by Bangabandhu





Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, an extraordinary political visionary and a charismatic leader of people, who carved out an independent foreign policy for the nation. Fourth, this lecture is taking place just ahead of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's forthcoming visit to New Delhi which will further strengthen India's ties with Bangladesh.

In his opening remarks as Chair, Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla said that the lecture is being held at an important juncture – Bangladesh has just commemorated 50 years of independence, India-Bangladesh has celebrated 50 years of bilateral relations; Bangladesh is celebrating 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu; and India is celebrating 75 years of independence and the next 25 years are part of Amrit Kaal as India moves towards 100 years of independence. The relations between the two countries have developed at a tremendous pace since 2008. As soon as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina came to power in 2008, she has expelled insurgents from Bangladesh which were working against India. For its part, India has given duty-free market access to Dhaka and has provided soft loans for its development. He said that the two key agreements signed between the partners includes land boundary agreement and delimitation of maritime boundary. The importance of relations is further highlighted from the fact that in the last year alone, President, Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister of India have visited Bangladesh. The key developments in the relations includes restoration of rail and road connectivity between India and Bangladesh; development of inland waterways; signing of framework agreement in defence; removal of non-tariff barriers to facilitate economic integration; releasing the potential of people-to-people contacts; cooperation during the pandemic through oxygen trains from India to Bangladesh and vaccines under Vaccine Maitri. As a way forward, Shri Shringla said that the focus needs to be on the youth of both countries; conclusion of comprehensive trade agreement; maritime cooperation; fintech and IoTs; third party power supply systems; enhanced cooperation in regional and sub-regional organisations such as BIMSTEC and BBIN; and increased private sector investments.

In his special lecture, Amb. Shahidul Haque said that Bangladesh was left in shambles after the 1971 war with more than 30 percent of the population living in poverty. However, Bangladesh quickly shed the label with rapid growth and socioeconomic development. During the Covid pandemic, Bangladesh experienced steady growth and moderate inflation. Despite high GDP growth, the job growth has been low at around 1 per cent. Unemployment rate has risen due to pandemic and remains above 5 per cent. The fundamentals of Bangladesh's foreign policy include - commitment to the charter of the UN and to contribute to the international peace and cooperation; respect for national sovereignty and equality; non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; peaceful settlement of international disputes and respect for international laws. The elements of Bangladesh foreign policy include safeguarding sovereignty, territorial integrity, security and national interest; Upholding values of War of Liberation and the Constitution; Peace, Stability and Sustainable Development (Shonar Bangla); Realization of National Interest; Pragmatism and Innovations; Humanitarianism and Human Rights; and building alliances and allies in a competitive and national interest-driven world. The strength of Bangladesh's foreign policy includes its geography, demography, economy, connectivity, technology and defence. While the limitations include threats posed by climate change and natural disasters, rise of violent extremism, presence of over one million Rohingyas and governance limitations. India remains an important partner in



Bangladesh's foreign policy. Relations between the people of India and Bangladesh have been forged in a unique situation of tragedy, sacrifice, distress, as well as inspiration, freedom, diversity, development, and inclusion. Bangladesh's Indo-Pacific strategy is driven by promotion and establishment of rule of law, freedom of navigation, free trade etc.; pursuit of economic prosperity; and commitment for peace and stability. The key challenges to Bangladesh's foreign policy are - increasing tensions, rifts and strategic competition between and among big powers; involvement of non-state actors in inter-state and inter-society relations; widening engagement in public and private sectors beyond traditional 'high issue' foreign policy; increasing focus on regional/trans-regional/sub-regional cooperation; changing apparatus and machinery of diplomatic practices (AI enabled apparatus); balancing between state interest and people's aspirations.

## Round Table Discussion on “US Extended Nuclear Deterrence in Asia”, 25 August 2022

ICWA organized a Round Table Discussion on “US Extended Nuclear Deterrence in Asia” on 25 August 2022. The talk was chaired by Amb. Sheelkant Sharma, former Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Vienna and IAEA. The Speakers included Dr. Manpreet Sethi, Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi; Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, Former Professor, School for International Studies, JNU; and Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan, Professor, School for International Studies, JNU.



## Panel Discussion on “Pakistan’s Continuing Political and Economic Crisis”, 30 August 2022

ICWA organised a panel discussion on “Pakistan’s Continuing Political and Economic Crisis” on 30 August 2022 at Sapru House. The discussion was moderated by Amb. Vivek Katju, former Ambassador of India to Afghanistan, Myanmar and Thailand. The two panelists were Prof. Ajay Darshan Behera, Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University; and Dr. Ashok K. Behuria, Senior Fellow, MP-IDSA.

While delivering her opening remarks, Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA said that Pakistan is faced with several complex and interlinked challenges. Pakistan's recent floods occurred at a time when the country was already going through a political churn and economic crisis. On the political side, ever since Imran Khan lost the vote of confidence, he





# PAKISTAN'S CONTINUING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS



has been doing political rallies and protests and has won by-elections in both Punjab and in Sindh; which indicate his continuing popularity in Pakistan. She raised the question on what will be the impact of the 'Imran factor' in the political dynamics of Pakistan. The multiparty coalition Government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif requires to deal with the ongoing economic crisis and the damage caused by the floods. She pointed out that the existing coalition Government is composed of traditionally opposed parties which puts a question mark on the durability of this coalition. On the economic side, Pakistan had approached IMF for a bailout. It also approached other countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE for investments - will the support of IMF and other countries manage to address Pakistan's macro-economic challenges, remains to be seen. She further stated that the role of Pakistan in supporting terrorism is of concern. It is an important aspect that is constantly being watched by the international community.

Amb. Vivek Katju during his opening remarks stated that Pakistan is going through a challenging period; however, it is not the first time in Pakistan's history that it is faced with such turbulence. As Pakistan celebrates its 75th anniversary of its creation there is a requirement to assess lessons learnt from the past. The country went through a period of introspection when it completed 25 years in 1972, which occurred just after East Pakistan had broken up from Pakistan to emerge as an independent nation of Bangladesh. That introspection led to the hardening of anti-India position. Such a stand also led to Pakistan's decision to develop nuclear weapons. Amb. Katju stated that he does not see any future prospect of Pakistan listening to voices from within which are urging it to abandon the enterprise of basing a state on religious nationalism, instead of geographical nationalism. Pakistan is also not doing any cost benefit analysis of the strategies it has pursued, especially terrorism against India for over three decades now. In this period, the Human Development Index of Pakistan has fallen substantially.

Prof. Ajay Darshan Bahera (Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University) stated that Pakistan being in crisis is not a new phenomenon. Pakistan is presently facing a deep structural crisis, both political and economic. He stated that we are aware that the military and political elite in Pakistan are responsible for the power structure that exists in Pakistan. It is important to identify some causes and new dynamics of the challenges faced by Pakistan. The existing challenges started since 2014, post Peshawar army school terrorist attack. It made a deep impact on the general masses, altering people's perception about the military. There was a feeling or assumption that the military could not provide security to its people, questions were raised about the relation military has with groups like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Prof. Behera pointed out that the rise of Imran Khan has brought some new dynamics into the Pakistani polity. Peshawar army school attack had a deep impact on Pakistani psyche and that became a rallying point for Imran Khan. This led to a shift in the electorate in Pakistan - from a polity dominated by two major parties to three major parties with the emergence of PTI at the national level.





The next discussant Dr. Ashok K. Behuria said that Pakistan is used to crisis - it was born out of a crisis, faced multiple political and economic crisis in the last seven decades and continues to face such crisis in the present. Dr. Behuria shared his opinion that Pakistan's economic situation is not as critical as it seems to be. Pakistan has a very developed informal economy which absorbs the macro-economic shocks. He further stated that Pakistani military has to constantly recalibrate its policies to dominate the political scenario in the country and that the Pakistani Army can be considered as a separate political entity in Pakistan which does not contest elections but remains relevant.

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## **Talk on “Situation in Myanmar” by U Min Zin, Founding Member & Executive Director, Institute for Strategy and Policy, Myanmar, 5 September, 2022**

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ICWA organized a talk on the ‘Situation in Myanmar’ by U Min Zin, founding Member and Executive Director, Institute for Strategy and Policy, Myanmar on 5 September 2022. A select group of experts, scholars, and media representatives were present at the talk which was followed by a discussion. The talk was chaired by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA. Discussion was held on the situation in Myanmar following the coup of February 2021, the current regional and global geopolitics, role of China, militarization of Myanmar society, ties with India and scenarios for Myanmar.



## **ICWA Web based Conference on “India and the Island States in the Indian Ocean: Evolving Geopolitics and Security Perspectives”, 6 September 2022**

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The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) organised an online International Seminar on ‘India and the Island States in the Indian Ocean: Evolving Geopolitics and Security Perspectives’ on 6 September 2022. The Speakers at the Seminar included foreign policy and strategic experts from the Indian Ocean Island States and India. The Seminar was attended by members from the diplomatic, academic and strategic community of India and other countries.

At the inaugural session, opening remarks were delivered by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. She emphasised the importance of the Indian Ocean and the wider Indo-Pacific region in India's foreign and



strategic policy. She said that the Council has actively pursued research on this topic through hosting major conferences and regular publications. This seminar was unique as it focused on the strategic perspectives from the Island States and located them in India's foreign policy towards the Indian Ocean. India has traditionally close and friendly relations with the Island States of the Indian Ocean, has built strong political, economic, developmental and people-to-people ties and is engaging vigorously with them as part of its SAGAR (Security and Growth for All) initiative.



The Keynote Address was delivered by Dr. Sanjaya Baru, Member, Governing Body, ICWA. He noted that the world was in a state of flux with sharpening US-China rivalry and renewed interest of external powers in the Indian Ocean Region. He noted that the seminar was taking place at a time when India had just launched a new aircraft carrier (INS Vikrant) and a Chinese navy ship visited Sri Lanka. With the European powers, especially Britain and France, showing renewed interest in the Indian Ocean, this body of water that has remained a 'zone of peace' has begun to attract global attention. It is, therefore, relevant for countries within this geographical space to note that the only memory of conflict in the Indian Ocean Region is associated with powers that have entered this space from the outside. India has never been a hegemonic power in the region. In fact, it has sought to promote growth and security within the region. Its SAGAR initiative balances the security and developmental interests of all countries in the region.

The first Session on 'Sri Lanka and Maldives' was chaired by Amb. Ashok Kantha, former Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka. Speakers of the Session were Asanga Abeyagoonasekera, Geopolitical Analyst, Strategic Advisor on Security and Author, Senior Fellow, The Millennium Project, Washington DC (Sri Lanka), Athaula A. Rasheed, Department of Pacific Affairs, Australian National University and former diplomat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Maldives), N. Manoharan, Director, Centre for East Asian Studies, Associate Professor, Department of International Studies, Christ University, Bangalore (India) and Vice Admiral (Retd.) M.P. Muralidharan, former Director General, Indian Coast Guard.



The first Session discussed Sri Lanka's current political and economic crisis, its impact on the Indian Ocean geopolitics, security dynamics of the region and the 'China factor' in the current Sri Lankan crisis. Maldivian perspective on geo-political challenges including climate change was shared and India's growing role in development cooperation was emphasized. Readiness of India to be the 'first responder' without expectation of quid pro quo as part of India's Neighbourhood First policy was noted. Panellists spoke on issues like the changing maritime strategies of various powers in the region and the strategic complexities of the littoral States which should be recognized and understood. It was highlighted that the Indian Ocean region cannot be seen in isolation as it is integrally connected with and gets impacted by the Asian economic growth, strategic rivalries along with





the process of globalization. Importance of avoiding confrontation and zero-sum outcomes was emphasized.

The Second Session on the 'Island States in the Southwest Indian Ocean' was chaired by Amb. Anup Mudgal, former Indian High Commissioner to Mauritius. The panellists of the session included Ms. Malshini Senaratne, Asst. Head of Department, Faculty of Business

and Sustainable Development, University of Seychelles (Seychelles), Dr. Priya Bahadoor, Lecturer, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Mauritius (Mauritius), Dr. Juvence Ramasy, Lecturer, University of Toamasina, Madagascar (Madagascar), Prof. A. Subramanyam Raju, Dean, International Relations, Professor & Head, UMISARC & Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry University (India) and Commodore (Retd) R.S. Vasan, Director General, Chennai Centre for China Studies (India).

The Second Session discussed the long term strategies to secure and harness Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) as well as strategies to ensure the security of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Technical collaboration with the regional and extra-regional powers for safety and security of the Ocean was emphasized. Another key point of discussion was the issue of Blue Economy which is particularly relevant for the development and security interests of the Island States. India's approach in the region including soft power and naval diplomacy under the rubric of SAGAR, HADR activities, and assistance spanning areas like health, culture and education were also discussed. It was noted that the maritime dimension has enhanced India's credibility as a preferred partner, including in the field of security. Indian panellists spoke about how the region is critical to India's energy security as well.

## Interaction with the 5<sup>th</sup> batch of foreign delegates of ICCR's Gen-Next Democracy Network Programme, 7 September 2022





ICWA hosted foreign delegates of Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR)'s Gen-Next Democracy Network Programme on 7 September 2022 at Sapru House. The interaction was chaired by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA. The delegates participating in the discussion were from: Romania, Australia, Greece, South Korea, Costa Rica, and Austria. Shri Soumen Bagchi, Deputy Director General, ICWA highlighted ICWA's evolution and mandate in promoting an India narrative on issues of foreign policy and international affairs. An overview on Indian Foreign Policy was given by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. The Research Faculty members of the ICWA shared their insights on geopolitical issues shaping the current global order like the Ukraine crisis, China, Afghanistan, and the Indo-Pacific regions.

## ICWA-PUCP, Lima Dialogue on India-Peru Relations: Engagements with the Region and Bilateral Relations, 8 September 2022

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and its MoU partner Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP), Lima held their inaugural dialogue online on the theme 'India-Peru Relations: Engagements with the Region and Bilateral Relations' on 8 September 2022.

In the Inaugural Session of the Dialogue, remarks were made by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA, Amb. M. Subbarayudu, Ambassador of India to Peru, Ms. Monica Campos, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Peru, India and Dr. Aldo Panfichi, Vice President for Research of PUCP.



Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA stated that Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region is of growing importance to India. The region is rich in resources and minerals, has impressive agriculture and manufacturing and can play a role in India's food and energy security needs. She noted that India is a strong and leading democracy, the fifth largest economy and an aspirational nation which is a leader in technology, space research and has world class companies in various sectors of the industry where India and countries of Latin America could explore joint collaborations and investments. She highlighted the high-level visits from India to the region and stated that India is expanding its diplomatic presence in the region with Embassies in Dominican Republic and Paraguay, which were recently inaugurated.

Dr. Aldo Panfichi, Vice President for Research of PUCP spoke about the value and mission of the PUCP, Lima. He stated that the University through its partnership with institutions such as the ICWA intends to expand its knowledge of Asia and India. Interactions between intellectuals and experts in international relations and foreign affairs will help develop relations between India and Peru and between Latin America and the Caribbean region and India. As a leading university of Peru, the PUCP is committed to development of a knowledge base about India and Asia among its scholars.



Amb. M. Subbarayudu, Ambassador of India to Peru noted the more than six decades of cordial relations between the two countries. These relations are marked by cultural affinity and growing people to people contacts. He stated that two nations are multicultural ancient civilizations believing in democratic values and sharing common concerns such as climate change, fight against terrorism, hunger and poverty alleviation. India and Peru are partners in South-South cooperation and work together in multilateral forums. He noted the growing trade relations between the two nations and highlighted the need to explore more complementarities especially in the technology sectors such as space, energy, defense and high technology. He stated that during the Covid-19 pandemic, India had provided Covid medicine technologies and tech based goods and services. The multifarious relations cover areas such as defence & space, IT, S&T, renewable energy, tourism, education and traditional medicine.

Ms. Monica Campos, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Peru stated that the economic relations between the two nations are strong and growing but have more potential. She noted that there are number of companies from Peru that are invested in the mining sector in India. Traditional areas of trade such as minerals such as gold and copper remain important. At the same time, trade is diversifying with private industry taking steps to invest in each other's economies. She noted that Peru wishes to explore opportunities with India in the agricultural and agro-industrial sector.



The panel discussion on the India-Peru Relations: Engagements with the Region and Bilateral Relations was chaired by Prof. Rubin Tang, Advisor to the Vice President of Research, PUCP. The speakers in the panel were Amb. Ravi Thapar, Former Ambassador of India to Panama, Costa Rica & Nicaragua and Amb. Luis Tsuboyama, Ambassador of Peru to Indonesia. They discussed India's Engagement with Latin America and Peru's Engagement with Asia. They discussed the key global and regional trends which define the current geopolitical scenario including US-China confrontation, Taiwan cross-strait tensions, Covid-19 Pandemic and the Ukraine crisis. They also discussed the economic ties between India and the region. Possibility of exchanging experiences and best practices in implementation of poverty alleviation and digitalization programmes and setting up of Centres of Excellence by India in Peru and in the region in the S&T sector was discussed. Efforts needed for improved B2B interactions were emphasized.

Dr. Sebastian Adins, Head of Department of Political Science, PUCP, Lima and Dr. Stuti Banerjee, Research Fellow, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi spoke on India-Peru Bilateral Relations. An overview of the six decades of bilateral relations was presented; it was emphasized that the two countries had a tradition of working together in multilateral fora based on shared beliefs in multiculturalism, solidarity of the Global South, etc. It was emphasized that trade and economics are the mainstay of the bilateral relationship and that India has become an important economic partner of Peru. While partnership in traditional sectors of the economy such as mining, agriculture, minerals trade was noted, possible future areas of cooperation such as start-ups, AI, climate change initiatives and space technology were discussed.

The Dialogue noted that India and Peru would be celebrating the 60th year of their diplomatic ties in 2023. This provided an opportunity to take stock of the relationship, chart the way forward & give impetus to the overall ties.





**Following assumption of charge by Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Vice President of India, Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA called on him on 10 September 2022.**



## **Sapru House Paper (SHP) Discussion on “Isthmus of Kra: Connecting the Malay Peninsula by Rail and Canal” written by Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Research Fellow, ICWA, 13 September 2022**

ICWA organized Sapru House Paper Discussion on ‘Isthmus of Kra: Connecting the Malay Peninsula by Rain and Canal’ by Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Research Fellow, ICWA. It was chaired by Dr. Prabir De, Professor, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and Coordinator of ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS. The discussants invited were: N. K. Kumaresan Raja, Professor & Head, Dept. of Politics & International Studies, Pondicherry University, and, Dr. Alvite Ningthoujam, Assistant Professor at Symbiosis School of International Studies.



## **27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG), 14 September 2022**

The 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) was held virtually on 14 September 2022. Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research, ICWA and Dr. Pragya Pandey, Research Fellow, ICWA attended the meeting as ICWA representatives. The Meeting was chaired by Prof Juliet Hermes, NRF- SAEON, South Africa (current IORAG Chair). Discussions were held on IORAG Work Plan 2022-2027 and on IORA-GIZ Climate Change Project. Technical sessions were held on Strengthening the Academic-Policy Interface and Water Sciences in IORA.





## Sapru House Paper (SHP) Discussion on “Changing Foreign Policy of Smaller Gulf States: A Case Study of the UAE” written by Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA, 15 September, 2022

ICWA organized a Sapru House Paper Discussion on ‘Changing Foreign Policy of Smaller Gulf States: A Case Study of the UAE’ by Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA. It was chaired by Amb. Anil Trigunayat, former Ambassador to Jordan, Libya and Malta; Former Director, Gulf Division, MEA; Distinguished Fellow, VIF. The discussants on the paper were Mr. Atul Aneja, India Narrative, Associate Editor, The Hindu, & Dr. N. Janardhan, Senior Research Fellow, Gulf Asia Program, Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, Abu Dhabi.



## ICWA- India Future Foundation Symposium on “Strategic Competition in the South China Sea: Interests, Defence and Diplomacy”, 16 September, 2022

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in collaboration with The Indian Futures organised a Symposium on ‘Strategic Competition in the South China Sea: Interests, Defence and Diplomacy’ on 16 September 2022. The Symposium was divided into two sessions: Session I: Ideational Perspectives: State of Play? and Session II: State Perspectives: Alliance, Non-Alignment, or Multi-Alignment?



In her welcome remarks, Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA elaborated upon the increasing tensions in the South China Sea region which has great strategic and economic value for countries in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. China has, over a period of time, steadily stepped up its activities in the South China Sea as its needs for resources increased and it asserted its historical maritime territorial claims. China’s claims are contested by Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. The claims and counter-claims on the islands and waters remain unresolved; and South China Sea remains alive with frequent skirmishes. Claimant countries have in their own ways pushed back against Chinese claims, and asserted their own territorial rights. New partnerships are emerging in the Indo-Pacific region whether it is QUAD, AUKUS or IPEF – bringing options to the countries in the region.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Manish Dabhade, Founder, The Indian Futures and Faculty, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi alluded to the multilateral strategic contestation underway in the South China Sea which is likely to intensify. The US and its allies are locked in the ‘Thucydides Trap’ with a rising China. For India, the South China Sea is of immense strategic significance from political, economic and security perspectives. The region falls into the larger ambit of the Act East Policy of India.





The first session was chaired by Amb. Ashok Kantha, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies and Distinguish Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation. Speakers were Lt. Gen. Vinod Khandare, Advisor, Ministry of Defence, Government of India and Mr. Jayadeva Ranade, President, Centre for China Analysis and Strategy (CCAS). The session discussed Chinese postures in the South China Sea. Over a period of time,

the region has emerged as the fulcrum of great power strategic competition. The dispute has intensified political and military rivalry across the region between China and the US and has become a major point of friction in the ongoing US-China rivalry. The session noted China's rapid military modernization including of its naval fleet and its effort to expand its footprint in the Indo-Pacific.

The second session was chaired by Amb. Gurjit Singh, former Ambassador of India to Germany, Indonesia, ASEAN, Ethiopia and the African Union. Speakers were Dr. Do Thanh Hai, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, The Hon. Lisa Singh, CEO of the Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne and Prof Srikanth Kondapalli, Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. This session discussed the issue from a regional perspective. The South China Sea has different connotations & perspectives for different countries. Among the claimant countries, Vietnam was among the first to observe the changes in Chinese behaviour and tactics in the South China Sea. It was noted that, for China, the control of the South China Sea is crucial to maintain its own prosperity. It was also stated that ineffectiveness of large multilateral bodies in dealing with regional challenges such as the South China Sea was leading to increasing resort to issue-based minilateralism.



## Sapru House Paper (SHP) Discussion on “Geopolitics of the Northwest Indian Ocean: Exploring the Strategic Presence of West Asian States” written by Dr. Sankalp Gurjar, Research Fellow, ICWA, 23 September, 2022

ICWA organized a Sapru House Paper Presentation on ‘Geopolitics of the Northwest Indian Ocean: Exploring the Strategic Presence of West Asian States’ by Dr. Sankalp Gurjar, Research Fellow, ICWA. It was chaired by Amb. Anil Trigunayat. The discussants invited were: Dr. Alvite Singh Ningthoujam, Assistant Professor, Symbiosis School of International Studies, Pune; and, Prof. Aparajita Biswas, former Professor and Director of the Centre for African Studies, University of Mumbai. The paper focuses on growing engagements of six West Asian States viz., Qatar, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Israel in the north west Indian Ocean & explores the key drivers of this engagement.





## Sapru House Paper (SHP) Discussion on “China and the Indo-Pacific: Issues and Concerns” written by Dr. Teshu Singh, Research Fellow, ICWA, 29 September, 2022

ICWA organized a Sapru House Paper Discussion on ‘China and the Indo-Pacific: Issues and Concerns’ by Dr. Teshu Singh, Research Fellow, ICWA. It was chaired by Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli, Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. The discussants invited were: Commodore Gopal Suri, Senior Fellow, Centre for Contemporary Chinese Studies, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi; and, Dr. Prashant Kumar Singh, Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence

Studies and Analyses. The paper investigates the Chinese position on the concept of the Indo-Pacific and China’s responses to the evolving frameworks in the Indo-Pacific region.



## Sapru House Paper (SHP) Discussion on “Ten Years of Turkey-Egypt Relations: Confrontation to Reconciliation” written by Dr. Arshad, Research Fellow, ICWA, 29 September, 2022



ICWA organized a Sapru House Paper Discussion on ‘Ten Years of Turkey-Egypt Relations: Confrontation to Reconciliation’ by Dr. Arshad, Research Fellow, ICWA. It was chaired by Ambassador Rahul Kulshreshth, Professor, former Ambassador to Egypt and Turkey. Dr. Omair Anas, Yildirim Beyazit University, Turkey was the participating discussant. The paper tracks and analyses the changing dynamics of relations between Turkey and Egypt over the last decade.



## 39<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture on “25 Years of IORA: Working towards a Prosperous, Sustainable and Peaceful Indian Ocean Region” by H.E. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), 30 September 2022

H.E. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) delivered the 39th Sapru House Lecture on 30 September 2022 on the theme; 25 Years of IORA: Working towards a Prosperous, Sustainable and Peaceful Indian Ocean Region’. The Sapru House Lecture was chaired by Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA. Special remarks were made by H.E. Ina H. Krisnamurthi, Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia to India and Ms. Geetika Srivastava, Joint Secretary, Indo-Pacific Division, Ministry of External Affairs. The Lecture was organized in collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy in New Delhi.



On the occasion of the 25 years of IORA, DG, ICWA recalled the role of India as the Founding Member of IORA and a key supporter of IORA in its journey. It was highlighted that in India's Chairmanship during 2011-13, the six priority areas of maritime security, trade and investment, disaster risk management, fisheries management, tourism and cultural exchanges and academics, science and technology. Two focus areas, blue economy and women empowerment, were added later on. She stated that IORA has a comprehensive agenda which seeks to contribute to the growth and development of Member-States. India is a major stakeholder in the Indian Ocean Region and the wider Indo-Pacific. India's engagement with IOR is deep. She recalled the Sagar Vision announced by PM Modi in 2015 in Mauritius and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative in 2019. She noted that the seven pillars of IPOI are complementary to IORA's focus areas. She also recalled ICWA's association with IORA and the two editions of the Indian Ocean Dialogue – the track 1.5 initiative of IORA – that it hosted in 2019 and 2021, the capacity building workshop on UNCLOS organized for IORA Member States held by ICWA in 2021, and the Chairmanship of the IORA Academic Group held by ICWA/India in 2019-21.

Ambassador of Indonesia to India stated that IORA could be a platform for dialogue for a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific. IORA has to adjust and adapt to changing times. IORA can promote the Indian Ocean region as the new centre for sustainable global growth. She mentioned that the current IORA Chair Bangladesh has launched Dhaka Development Initiative (DDI) which could complement existing mechanisms of IORA. Ms. Geetika Srivastava, Joint Secretary, Indo-Pacific, Ministry of External Affairs, India emphasized that, with 23 members and 10 dialogue partners, IORA is the largest and pre-eminent organization in the IOR. India is actively engaging with IORA in areas like disaster relief efforts and academic and S&T linkages. India is one of the largest contributors to the IORA Fund. Being a Founding Member of the IORA, India is strongly committed to its strengthening. IORA is rightfully engaging itself with all the contemporary issues of regional and global importance including its Outlook towards the Indo-Pacific.



H.E. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General, IORA highlighted the key achievements and the focus areas of IORA over the past 25 years. He elaborated upon the objectives, working and impact of IORA. He stated that the Indian Ocean is strategically critical for the world. It is home to 36 economies and five sub-regions. It is also a centre of global trade and investments. IOR is rich in natural resources like oil and gas. One fifth of global fish production takes place in Indian Ocean. Formation of IORA in 1997 was not just not a Government driven process, but was supported by academia and business. The IORA Charter seeks to expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through consensus-based and non-intrusive approach. The success of IORA is in keeping the region together and engaged. Bilateral issues and tensions have not been a divisive factor. IORA's membership and number of dialogue partners have grown over the years. There is a need to expand and strengthen IORA's collaboration with other relevant organizations. He said that the 25th anniversary is an opportunity to raise the profile of the organization. Academic community needs to get more engaged and write about IORA's successes and challenges. Currently, IORA is work in a challenging regional and global security landscape. IORA is in the process of developing an Indo-Pacific vision of IORA. Climate change and health challenges in the wake of Covid-19 are other two important challenges. IORA needs greater high-level political support to serve as the pre-eminent organization in the IOR. IORA needs greater financial resources to strengthen the Secretariat and more people-centred and concrete development projects. He mentioned the current Chair Bangladesh's Dhaka Development Initiative in this context.

## OUTREACH EVENTS

### **Two-Day International Conference titled “The New Afghanistan: Challenges and Probable International Responses”, Department of International Relations, South Asian University, 9-10 September 2022**

Department of International Relations, South Asian University organized a Two-Day International Conference titled “The New Afghanistan: Challenges and Probable International Responses” in collaboration with Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) at New Delhi on 9-10 September 2022. Dr. Anwesha Ghosh, Research Fellow, ICWA represented the council at the event. The conference had five sessions, including the inaugural and valedictory sessions. The conference was organised in a hybrid format. The Acting President of the SAU, Prof. R.K. Mohanty, inaugurated the conference. The inaugural session was chaired by the Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences at SAU Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi. ICWA representative was also invited to deliver her remarks at the inaugural session. The inaugural session was followed by the key note address by Prof. C. Raja Mohan. The themes of Session I and Session II were “International Concern and Responses” and “Regional Responses”. Session III focused on the return of the Taliban. The valedictory address of the conference was delivered by Amb. TCA Raghavan.







## ICWA Publication

### Sapru House Soundings on Area Studies

## China's BRI in Different Regions of the World: Cooperation, Contradictions and Concerns

Sanjeev Kumar (Ed.)

(ICWA; KW Publishers, 2022)

### Foreword

India and China are two major economies of the world. Both have strategic and economic weight in the emerging global order. The developments in the realm of India's Foreign Policy and China's policies and perspectives are watched with great interest globally by the strategic community, invariably attracting the interest of academicians and scholars.

The Indian Council of World Affairs has been following the developments in China. The Council has been holding conferences, seminars, dialogues, lectures and outreach programmes on different dimensions of China, including its internal and external dynamics.

The Council has several publications focusing on study of different dimensions of China, including: The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China: A Major Turning Point for China; India-China Boundary Issues: Quest for Settlement; China: Confucius in the shadow; A China Primer: An Introduction to a Culture and a Neighbour and; China and the Eurasian Region: Geographic and Geopolitical Influences.

The main objective of the current study is to examine the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) from the viewpoint

of individual countries as well as regions across the globe. The implications of BRI in our neighbourhood in particular, is a subject of interest and enquiry. The edited volume identifies and highlights several broad trends from different regions; and provides valuable insights in terms of analyzing BRI and understanding the emerging perceptions and concerns in participating countries.

Indian position on BRI is clear and consistent. Connectivity initiatives must be based on universally recognized international norms. They must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations and follow principles of openness, transparency and financial responsibility.

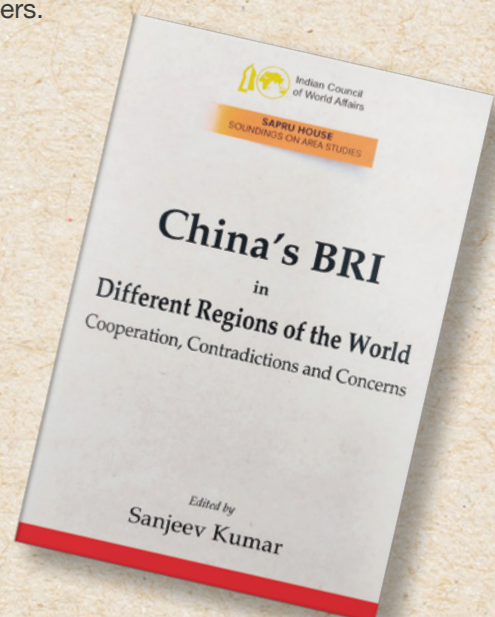
The ICWA scholars specializing in area studies have made valuable contributions and insights, in particular, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Senior Research Fellow, who has edited the volume. I am sure this will further enrich the scholarship and debate on the subject in all the quarters.

### Amb. Vijay Thakur Singh

Director General,

Indian Council of World Affairs

7 July 2022





## ICWA Publications

### Issue Briefs

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1. Dr. Temjenmeren Ao, Philippines under a new Administration led by Marcos Jr (05 July 2022)
2. Dr. Ankita Dutta, Analysis of the NATO's Madrid Summit (07 July 2022)
3. Dr. Stuti Banerjee, President Biden's Middle East Conundrum (07 July 2022)
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17. Dr. Athar Zafar, SCO Samarkand Summit and India's Chairmanship: A Perspective (23 September 2022)

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1. Dr. Temjenmeren Ao, Democracy in Southeast Asia: Emerging Trends and Factors Shaping the Transitions

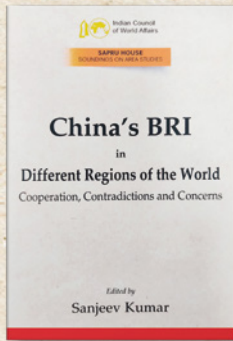
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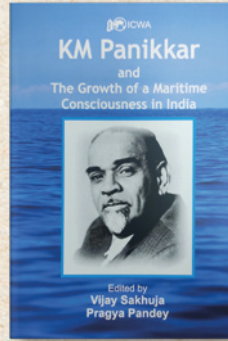
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By Sanjeev Kumar,

(Indian Council of World Affairs; KW Publishers, 2022)



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By Vijay Sakhuja & Pragya Pandey,

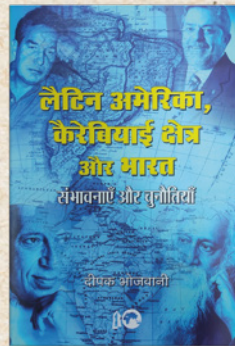
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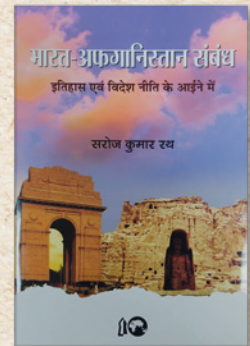
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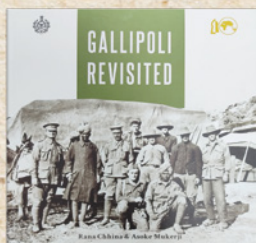


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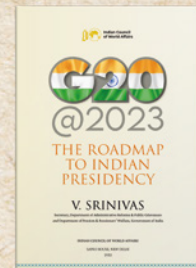
(15 July 2022)



### Renewing the Shanghai Spirit: India's Presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Edited By Amb. D.B. Venkatesh Varma, Prof. K. Warikoo & Prof. S.K. Pandey

(6 September 2022)



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Edited By Sh. V. Srinivas

(9 September 2022)

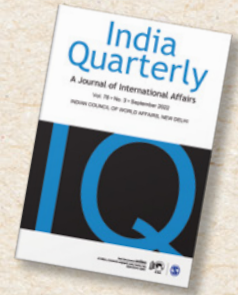




# India Quarterly A Journal of International Affairs

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Guest Issue



## Editorial

As the world passes from one 'unprecedented' event to another, the word itself seems to have lost its meaning. If we thought COVID-19 was unprecedented, in almost hindsight now, it would seem that the unprecedented related only to the manner in which twenty-first-century technologies were able to record and report it in real-time across the world. The response of individual nations, global institutions and large corporations did not depart from their established practices. So with the Ukraine war, where the lines are drawn along entrenched strategic interests written into Europe's history. Hence, endless supplies of European and American weaponry sustain war, not its cessation, even as reportage becomes the story.

Yet the term 'unprecedented' has meaning not so much in what it depicts but in how the sense of the unprecedented makes possible the loss of a sense of enormity, leading inevitably to a social acceptance of greater levels of violence. Writing about the violence of the twentieth century, the late cultural critic George Steiner, in a telling analogy with our own predicament, pointed to: the intriguing suggestion that the ease of the holocaust relates to the collapse of currency in the 1920s. Large numbers lost all but a vaguely sinister, unreal meaning. Having seen a hundred thousand, then a million, then a billion mark needed to buy bread or pay for bus tickets, ordinary men lost all perception of concrete enormity. The same large numbers tainted with unreality the disappearance and liquidation of peoples. (George Steiner, 1997, p. 51)

Hence, he noted: There is nothing natural about our present condition. There is no self-evident logic or dignity in our current knowledge that 'anything is possible'. In fact, such knowledge corrupts and lowers the threshold of outrage.... The numb prodigality of our acquaintance with horror is a radical human defeat. (Steiner, 1997, pp. 48-49)

The circularity of the loss of outrage, of the feeling that anything is possible, and the acceptance of violence marks the world today. Hence, the WHO's

report on the numbers of the dead due to COVID-19 globally sparks outrage not because too few were counted but that too many were.

The compassion for Ukrainian refugees is marked by an outrage over Russian perfidies but is separated from the outrageous fact that 79.5 million people around the world are refugees today. To place this in context, 79.5 million is larger than the populations of Canada (38,246,108) and Australia (25,684,000) combined. The discussion over the incarceration of its Uyghur minority by China, needed as it is, ignores the quite recent murders of large numbers of American Indian children in American and Canadian religious educational establishments and, therefore, the larger question of human rights for marginal groups across developed and less developed societies.

As this century moves into its second-decade, states such as China and Russia shuffle larger, more modern and dangerous militaries on land and water to regain a geopolitical reach dictated by a nationalist reading of their history. Unsettling geopolitical advances are cloaked as economic outreach in South Asia, undermining political stability and unleashing domestic violence, and, further afield, nascent alliances question the values of an embattled West straining against its own battlements. The possibility of greater violence, not just dissent, begins to haunt us. These are not false fears, as the essays in this issue of the India Quarterly note raising, as they should, significant questions about the circularity of numbness and the acceptance of a rising threshold of violence.

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**Madhu Bhalla**

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## ABOUT ICWA

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was established in 1943 by a group of eminent intellectuals led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Dr. H.N. Kunzru. Its principal objective was to create an Indian perspective on international relations and act as a repository of knowledge and thinking on foreign policy issues. The Council today conducts policy research through an in-house faculty as well as through external experts. It regularly organizes an array of intellectual activities including conferences, seminars, roundtable discussions, lectures and brings out a range of publications. It has a well-stocked library, an active website, and publishes the journal 'India Quarterly'. ICWA has over 50 MoUs with international think tanks and research institutions to promote better understanding on international issues and develop areas of mutual cooperation. The Council also has partnerships with leading research institutions, think tanks and universities in India.



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