



Special Lecture by H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Thailand on “How Can Thailand & India be Strategic Partners?”, 26 February 2024



47th Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis, President, 78th UN General Assembly (UNGA) on ‘Multilateralism for Peace, Prosperity, Progress & Sustainability’, 24 January 2024



48th Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN on ‘ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the Evolving Regional Architecture’, 12 February 2024



On the Occasion of IORA Day, Panel Discussion on ‘Securing the Indian Ocean Region: Towards a Cooperative, Prosperous, Sustainable and Peaceful Region’, 7 March 2024



ICWA-RIAC Dialogue on ‘India-Russia: Contours of Cooperation in a Changing World Order’, Moscow, Russia, 2 February 2024









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## **Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, Research & Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA, 4 January 2024**

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, New Delhi met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 04 January 2024 at Sapru House and presented a copy of the publication titled "Four Decades of RIS - Vision and Evolution".



## **Dr. Rafiq Dossani, Director, Center for Asia Pacific Policy (CAPP), RAND Corporation called on Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA, 10 January 2024**



Dr. Rafiq Dossani, Director, Center for Asia Pacific Policy (CAPP), RAND Corporation called on Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 10 January 2024 to discuss academic and research collaboration.



## Conference on 'Cartography Challenges in the Indo-Pacific' organized by India Foundation, 12 January 2024

India Foundation organised a conference on 'Cartography Challenges in the Indo-Pacific' on 12 January 2024. At the Conference, Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, chaired the second Panel Discussion. Ambassador Preeti Saran, Member, Governing Council, India Foundation, delivered the keynote address and Dr. Ram Madhav, President, India Foundation, delivered the Special Address.



## Third ICWA- IPIS Dialogue held in Tehran, Iran, 16 January 2024

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) held its Third Dialogue with its MoU partner the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Iran on 16 January 2024 in Tehran. The Dialogue focused on perspectives on the changing world order and bilateral ties. ICWA delegation was led by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG ICWA and IPIS delegation was led by Dr. Shirgholami, Vice President, IPIS. DG ICWA met Muhammad Hassan Shaykh al-Islami, President, IPIS as well as Mostafa Zamanian, Head, Centre for Strategic Studies, Tehran during the visit. She also held an interaction with the scholars of the Centre for Strategic Studies, Tehran.



In her opening remarks, Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA noted that India and Iran share historical and civilisational ties and have maintained a regular momentum of high-level interactions. India-Iran ties are not limited to political engagements but also have strong people-to-people dimension. A new world order is taking shape and today a multipolar world is in play. New power centres are emerging and there are realignments and rebalancing in relationships. India is clear that it will be a force for global good, a voice of the Global South, an engine of growth in the regional and global economy, and a trusted friend. India seeks to build friendships for achieving peace and stability in the region and beyond. India pursues an independent foreign policy by exercising strategic autonomy.

First session of the dialogue was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA. The Session focused on India-Iran bilateral relations. The speakers were Dr. Alireza Miryousefi, Director, 3rd Division for South Asia (Indian Subcontinent), MFA; Dr. F. R. Siddiqui, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Gholam Reza Ansari, Former Ambassador of Iran to India, and Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA. The participants reaffirmed that India and Iran relations are historic; shared history and close civilizational links provide a strong foundation to the relationship. Connectivity is a key pillar of bilateral ties between India and Iran and the two sides are focused on





providing momentum to the Chabahar project. The port has facilitated humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and consignments of other countries have also moved through Chabahar. India has supported the inclusion of Chabahar in INSTC. India and Iran share a long history of cooperation in the field of education. India has decided to include Farsi as one of the nine classical languages of India in the New Education Policy. There are new avenues for cooperation in agriculture, renewable energy, digital economy and digital-connectivity.

The second session was chaired by Dr. Shirgholami, Vice President, IPIS and focused on the India-Iran Perspective on Changing World Order. The speakers were Dr. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour, Senior Expert, IPIS, Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, Founder, Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies, Dr. Nabi Sonboli, Senior Expert, IPIS, and Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA. The participants discussed the emerging multipolarity amidst geopolitical flux and uncertainty and the need for reforms in multilateral institutions of global governance with the reform of the UN Security Council at its core. It was noted that Iran's membership of SCO and BRICS is a welcome development and India looks forward to closely cooperate with Iran in these foras. It was noted that India and Iran have a special responsibility to become the voice of the Global South. India appreciates Iranian high-level participation at the Voice of Global South Summits that it hosted last year. India's policy of zero tolerance for terrorism was noted. Both sides are aware of the several terror groups having been harboured, trained and financed in their shared neighbourhood. The Israel-Gaza conflict, the Ukraine conflict, tensions in the Red Sea and the re-emergence of piracy and maritime terrorism and the growing tensions in Indo-Pacific were discussed and the urgent need for de-escalation and recourse to dialogue and diplomacy was emphasized.

## Mr. Jussi Tanner, Director General, Consular Services, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland met Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, 17 January 2024

Mr. Jussi Tanner, Director General, Consular Services, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland met Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA on 17 January 2024 to discuss ICWA's work related to migration and mobility. He was accompanied by Dr. Tito Gronow, Minister, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Finland, New Delhi.





## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU), Raipur, 17 January 2024

ICWA and Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU), Raipur an institution named after the legal luminary Justice Mohammed Hidayatullah and established in 2003 in accordance with The Hidayatullah National University of Law, Chhattisgarh Adhiniyam, 2003 have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited HNLU Raipur on 3 December 2023 and announced the MoU between ICWA and HNLU Raipur. Hon'ble Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar is the President of ICWA. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 17 January 2024.

## Interaction with a 4-member delegation from Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), Warsaw led by Mr. Wojciech Kononczuk, Director General-OSW, 18 January 2024

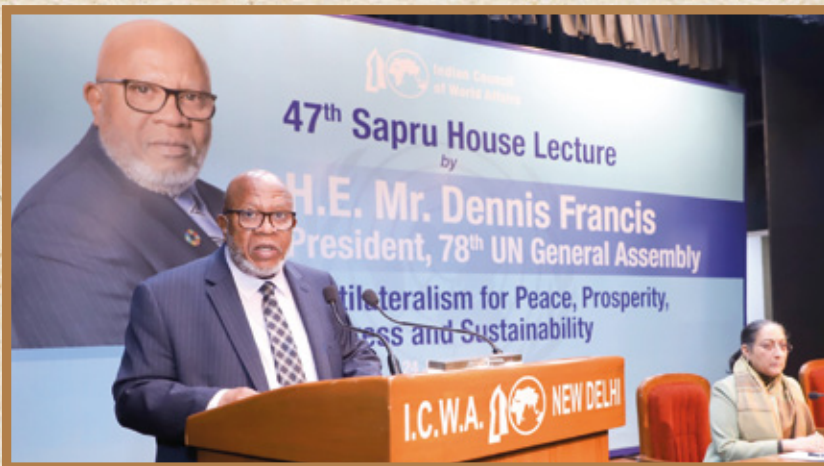


ICWA held an interaction with the Centre for Eastern Studies (OSW), Warsaw, Poland on 18 January 2024 at Sapru House. Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA chaired the interaction. The OSW delegation was led by Mr. Wojciech Kononczuk, Director. Discussions were held on India-Poland bilateral relations and regional and global issues of mutual interest.



## 47<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis, President, 78<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 'Multilateralism for Peace, Prosperity, Progress and Sustainability', 24 January 2024

ICWA organized the 47<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis, President of the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 'Multilateralism for Peace, Prosperity, Progress and Sustainability' at Sapru House on 24 January 2024. He highlighted the importance of effective multilateralism in the backdrop of growing uncertainties and strife in the world. He spoke of the threat before the international community from military takeovers that have repeatedly supplanted established orders across Western Africa; the war of aggression against Ukraine, the conflict in the Middle East, the crisis in Haiti and persistent violent conflict in such places as Yemen, Myanmar, & Sudan, resulting in massive internal human displacement. Along with these, he emphasized that the international community is faced with the threats of climate change, & sea-level rise, & unsustainable consumption & production patterns which continued to create



new layers of complexity. He spoke highly of the contribution of India to the United Nations peacekeeping forces, India's persistent calls for peace, India's focus on sustainability & its call for reformed multilateralism. The lecture was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, New York also spoke. The lecture was followed by a brief Q/A session.





## ICWA-RIAC Dialogue on India-Russia: Contours of Cooperation in a Changing World Order, Moscow, 2 February 2024

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) jointly organized their annual dialogue on 2 February 2024 in Moscow.

The inaugural remarks were delivered by H.E. Igor Ivanov-President, RIAC and former Foreign Minister of Russia; H.E. Pavan Kapoor, Ambassador of India to the Russian Federation; H.E. Denis Alipov, Ambassador of Russian Federation to India; Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh-DG, ICWA and Dr. Ivan Timofeev, DG, RIAC.



The Dialogue, held in three sessions, focused on new contours of cooperation between India and Russia in the backdrop of the ongoing global geopolitical flux where the world order is changing. Speakers noted that, despite the geopolitical turbulence, India and Russia have continued to strengthen their special and privileged strategic partnership on the basis of mutual trust and respect for each other's position.



The first session was on "Russian and Indian Perspectives on the Changing World Order." It was chaired by Dr. Andrey Kortunov, Academic Director, RIAC. Speakers in the session included Dr. Victoria Panova, Vice Rector of the Higher School of Economics (HSE) University and RIAC member; Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Maxim Kharkevich, Associate Professor of the Department of Global Political Processes, MGIMO University; Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor at

the Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Dr. Alexey Kupriyanov, Head of Center of Indian Ocean Region at IMEMO Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). Indian and Russian speakers presented their respective observations on the ongoing global geopolitical developments. Speakers exchanged views on the need for reforms in the existing multilateral institutions, such as the UN. They also exchanged views on developments in G20, SCO, BRICS, among others.

The second session of the Dialogue was on "Russian-Indian Economic and Strategic partnership." It was moderated by Dr. Alexey Kupriyanov. Speakers in the session were Dr. Andrey Klepach, Chief Economist, VEB.RF; Prof. Suba Chandran, Dean, School of Conflict and Security Studies, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS); Dr. Oleg Shutenko, Deputy Head, Committee on International Cooperation, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; Dr. Ivan Danilin, Head, Department of Science and Innovations, IMEMO RAS and Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva. Speakers highlighted the challenges and opportunities while increasing and diversifying bilateral trade in the new global environment, and exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in the domain of energy, including nuclear; financial and banking ties. Speakers also emphasized upon the crucial role of private sector to enhance trade and investment ties further. They also highlighted that there was a need to enhance people to people tie, particularly youth connects and between academic as well as research community.



The third session on the theme of "Increasing connectivity in Eurasia: local projects on a Global Scale," was moderated by Dr. Alexey Zakharov, Research Fellow at the International Laboratory of World Order Studies and New Regionalism at the HSE University. Speakers in this session included Dr. Athar Zafar, Senior Research Fellow at ICWA; Dr. Natalia Zadonskaya, Head, Sector of International Communication and Logistics of International Transport



Corridors of the ANO, Directorate of International Transport Corridors; and Prof. Suba Chandran- Dean, NIAS. Speakers highlighted the promising prospects for improving regional connectivity in Eurasia. The scope for cooperation in the Arctic by promoting economic and infrastructural collaboration in polar shipping, strengthening Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime corridor, International North South Corridor, transport investments in Chabahar, etc. were highlighted. Both sides underscored the need for increased connectivity and enhancing collaboration in Central Asia.



The closing remarks were made by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA & Dr. Ivan Timofeev, DG, RIAC. Post the Dialogue, Ambassador Singh & Dr. Timofeev signed the renewed ICWA-RIAC Memorandum of Understanding.

## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Asian Confluence (ASCON), 5 February 2024

ICWA and Asian Confluence (ASCON), Shillong have agreed to continue their collaboration in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. The Memorandum of Understanding was renewed on 5 February 2024 between ICWA and Asian Confluence (ASCON) which will be valid for a period of three years.



## ICWA-NEOSEC, Russia Closed Door Discussion on 'India-Russia Cooperation in the Arctic', 9 February 2024



ICWA Research Faculty held an interaction with a delegation from North European Open Science and Education Consortium (NEOSEC), Russia on 'India-Russia Cooperation in the Arctic' on 9 February 2024 at Sapru House. The Russian delegation was led by Dr. Anton Kovshov, Director, Arctic Centre, Karelia, Russia. The two sides discussed the growing importance of the arctic for strategic and environmental studies. The two sides also explored academic collaboration.

## 48<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN on 'ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the Evolving Regional Architecture', 12 February 2024

To celebrate a decade of India's Act East Policy, ICWA organized the 48<sup>th</sup> Sapru House Lecture on 'ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the Evolving Regional Architecture' by H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General, ASEAN on 12 February 2024 at Sapru House. The Lecture was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. DG, ICWA, in her welcome remarks, said that the visit by H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn comes at a time which marks the first decade since PM Modi enunciated India's Act East Policy in 2014. The last decade saw two milestones as regards India's Act East Policy – first,







in 2018, leaders of all the ten ASEAN countries were Chief Guests at the Republic Day Celebrations in India; secondly, in November 2022, India and ASEAN signed the Comprehensive Strategic Partners (CSP). SG, ASEAN emphasized that ASEAN has always been focused on the culture of dialogue and consultations and the strategy of external engagement. Resultantly, ASEAN currently has 11 dialogue partner countries, 7 sectoral dialogue partners and 5 development partners. Rising geopolitical and geo-economic competition is an area of concern for ASEAN and, taking this into account, ASEAN in 2019 came out with an 'ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific' and identified four priority areas: i) maritime

cooperation ii) sustainable development goals iii) connectivity and iv) economy. Dr. Hounn said that the ties with India, with whom ASEAN shares both land and maritime borders as neighbours, are based on 'trust' which is the key pillar that will result in deepening mutually beneficial cooperation. He said that ASEAN looks forward to working with India on new areas such as Green, Blue, Circular and Digital Economy- which is keeping in line with the shared outlook towards the Indo-Pacific region.

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## **Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 12 February 2024**

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ICWA and Gujarat University, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Gujarat University, Ahmedabad on 19 January 2024 and announced the MoU between ICWA and Gujarat University, Ahmedabad. Hon'ble Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar is the President of ICWA. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 7 February 2024.

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## **Interaction between Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA and Students of Indian Institute of Democratic Leadership (IIDL), Maharashtra, 14 February 2024**

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Director General, ICWA Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh held an interaction on 'Indian Foreign Policy and International Affairs' with the students of Post-Graduation Programme in Leadership, Politics and Governance of Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini Indian Institute of Democratic Leadership, Thane, Maharashtra on 14 February 2024 at Sapru House as part of their National Capital Study Tour 2024. The students were also briefed about the activities of ICWA.





## H.E. Mr. Dean Thompson, US Ambassador to Nepal met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA, 14 February 2024

H.E. Mr. Dean Thompson, US Ambassador to Nepal met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA on 14 February 2024 at Sapru House. Views were exchanged on regional and global topics of mutual interest.



## Panel Discussion on “Deciphering North East Asia’s Complex and Evolving Landscape: Quest for Regional Stability”, 16 February 2024

ICWA organized a Panel Discussion on “Deciphering Northeast Asia’s Complex and Evolving Landscape: Quest for Regional Stability” on 16 February 2024 at Sapru House. It was chaired by Ambassador Skand R. Tayal, Former Ambassador of India to Republic of Korea and Uzbekistan. Dr. Sandeep Kumar Mishra, Associate Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi; Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, Founder & Honorary Chairperson of Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies; & Dr. Namrata Hasija, Research Fellow Centre for China Analysis and Strategy were the discussants.







The Northeast Asia region, encompassing China, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Mongolia and Taiwan, is a crucial geopolitical landscape marked by historical tensions, economic interdependence, territorial disputes and growing strategic competition. This panel discussion delved into the key developments shaping the region, the emerging alliances and responses, as well as the underlying interests driving these strategic shifts. One of the key focuses was on the evolving trilateral security cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea, analysing its implications for regional stability. Conversely, the panel explored the growing strategic and tactical cooperation

between Russia, China and North Korea as a counter alliance, examining its potential impact on the regional security architecture. Additionally, the discussions analysed the attempts to revive the China-Japan-South Korea trilateral dialogue and assess its future trajectory in the face of shifting regional dynamics. The threat of North Korea's ongoing ballistic missile provocations, nuclear proliferation activities, and advancements in space technology was discussed. Based on the outcome of the Taiwan general elections in January 2024, the panel also examined the implications for the broader regional dynamics.

## **Dr. Gladden Pappin, President, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, Budapest, Hungary met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA, 19 February 2024**

Dr. Gladden Pappin, President, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, Budapest, Hungary met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 19 February 2024 at Sapru House to discuss regional and global issues of mutual interest. Hungarian Institute of International Affairs is ICWA's MoU Partner.







## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Indraprastha College for Women, 19 February 2024

ICWA and Indraprastha College for Women, Delhi, established in 1924 and a constituent college of the University of Delhi and its oldest women's college have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Indraprastha College for Women on 7 February 2024 and announced an MoU between ICWA and Indraprastha College for Women. Hon'ble Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar is the President of ICWA. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 19 February 2024.

## Interaction with H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General, Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), 20 February 2024

ICWA held an interaction with H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General, Conference on 'Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)' on 20 February 2024 at Sapru House. He was accompanied by Ambassador Mr. Arkady Koshcheev seconded by the Russian Federation to the CICA Secretariat and the representative from the Embassy of Kazakhstan in India. The interaction was chaired by Director General, ICWA

Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh. ICWA is the nodal think tank in India for participation in the CICA Think Tank Forum. During the meeting, Ambassador Kairat Sarybay noted India's key role in CICA and expressed appreciation for ICWA's role in the CICA Think Tank Forum. Discussion was held on areas which the CICA Think Tank Forum could focus on such as gender parity, sustainable connectivity, and energy security.







## Interaction with H.E. Mrs. Iryna Borovets, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine, 21 February 2024



ICWA Research Faculty held an interaction with H.E. Mrs. Iryna Borovets, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine on 21 February 2024 at Sapru House. DFM Borovets gave a talk on the Ukraine-Russia conflict and presented her views on the Ukraine Peace Plan, Ukraine's prospects for joining NATO and EU accession, Ukraine's relations with the US, etc. The talk was followed by a Q/A Session. DFM Borovets was accompanied by Ambassador of Ukraine to India H.E. Dr. Oleksandr Polishchuk. The interaction was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA.

## Dr. Seyed Emamian, Co-founder & Senior Advisor, Governance and Policy Think Tank, Iran met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA, 21 February 2024

Dr. Seyed Emamian, Co-founder & Senior Advisor, Governance and Policy Think Tank, Iran met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 21 February 2024 to discuss bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest and academic collaboration.







## Interaction with Prof. Emanuela Claudia Del Re, European Union Special Representative for the Sahel, 22 February 2024

ICWA Research Faculty held an interaction with Prof. Emanuela Claudia Del Re, European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Sahel on 22 February 2024 at Sapru House. EUSR delivered a talk on the situation in the Sahel region and EU's approach. The talk was followed by a Q/A session. The interaction was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA.



## Meeting with Mr. W.T. Bartoszewski, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, 23 February 2024

Mr. W.T. Bartoszewski, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 23 February 2024 at Sapru House. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthened India-Poland bilateral relations in political, economic and defense areas. Secretary of State Bartoszewski and DG, ICWA also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest including the Ukraine conflict, situation in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific.







## Meeting with Dr. Farid Shafiyev, Ambassador, Chairman of the Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center) Azerbaijan, 23 February 2024

Ambassador Dr. Farid Shafiyev, Chairman of the Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center) met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA on 23 February 2024 at Sapru House. The two sides explored possibilities for institutional collaboration between ICWA and AIR and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interests, including the situation in the Caucasus and pathways to regional stability and security. The two sides reaffirmed the importance of further strengthening



the bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction at the progress in ties in trade, energy and connectivity sectors. Ambassador Shafiyev was accompanied by H.E. Elchin Huseynli, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to India.

## Dr. Thomas F. Lynch III, Distinguished Research Fellow, National Defense University, USA met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG ICWA, 23 February 2024

Dr. Thomas F. Lynch III, Distinguished Research Fellow from Institute of National Strategic Studies (INSS) of the National Defense University, USA met Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA on 23 February 2024 at Sapru House. Views were exchanged on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.





## Special Lecture by H.E. Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Thailand on “How Can Thailand & India be Strategic Partners?”, 26 February 2024

Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Mr Sihasak Phuangketkeow delivered a Special Lecture at ICWA on 26 February 2024 on the theme ‘How Can Thailand and India be Strategic Partners?’. He was in India as part of the visiting delegation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Parnpree Bahiddha-Nukara. During the Special Lecture, he noted that transformative changes were taking place in the world today and the balance of power is shifting from the West to East. The Indo-Pacific is witnessing two profound developments: the rise of China and the rise of India. Indo-Pacific is growing in economic importance and in



strategic importance. Freedom of navigation, security of sea lanes and maritime security are important issues in the Indo-Pacific. India and Thailand share a common vision of the Indo-Pacific. They both stand for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order. India and Thailand both belong to the one strategic space of the Indo-Pacific. He said that it was now time to elevate the India-Thailand bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership & that Economic Partnership, Connectivity & Maritime Cooperation are key pillars of enhanced India-Thailand relations. The Special Lecture was chaired by Amb Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA.

## Panel Discussion on “Sahelian Politics at Crossroads: Governance and Security Challenges Ahead”, 29 February 2024





ICWA held a Panel Discussion on "Sahelian Politics at Crossroads: Governance and Security Challenges Ahead" on 29 February 2024 at Sapru House. It was chaired by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. Dr. Shaji Sadasivan, Assistant Prof., Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad; Dr. Moushumi Basu, Associate Prof., School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director (Research), ICWA were the panelists.

Discussions were held on recent developments in the Sahel region, and their implications for the peace, security, stability and prosperity of the region. In her remarks, Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, DG, ICWA highlighted that the three landlocked countries - Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger are all rich in natural resources including gold and uranium. They have witnessed military coups and now this triad is driving a narrative in the Sahel. Firstly, they have constituted the Association of Sahel States and secondly, they have withdrawn their ECOWAS membership. Dr. S. Shaji, Assistant Professor, University of Hyderabad, highlighted how conflict in the region has triggered migration and around 5.5 million people have been displaced in Sahel in the last few years. Dr. Moushumi Basu, Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University said that, though there were a number of international organizations working in the Sahel such as the UN peacekeeping missions, African Union Sahel Strategy, Sahel Security Unit of the European Union and G5 Sahel, there wasn't much focus on the needs and requirements of the people of the region. Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research, ICWA, emphasized upon the implications of the three countries moving out of ECOWAS as well as the spread of terrorist outfits in the region.

## Panel Discussion on 'Changing Dynamics in South Caucasus and its Implications', 1 March 2024



ICWA held a Panel Discussion on "Changing Dynamics in South Caucasus and its Implications" on 1 March 2024 at Sapru House. At the discussion, welcome remarks were delivered by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. It was chaired by Ambassador Achal Malhotra, Former Ambassador of India to Armenia. Prof. Ajay Patnaik, Former Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Prof. Sanjay K Pandey, Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies, JNU, New Delhi; Prof. Akhlaque Ahmad, Chairperson, Centre for Persian & Central Asian Studies SLL&CS, JNU, New Delhi were the panelists. Panelists spoke about the long and complex history of the South Caucasus. They said that a geopolitical shift is occurring in the South Caucasus. The region is entering a new era as a result of the conflict in Ukraine and the recent settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Discussion was held on the changing dynamics in the external alignments of the three countries in the region as well as on the intra-regional interaction and engagement. Panelists concluded that the regional countries were presently closely monitoring the developments in Ukraine and the dynamics of Russia-West relations for possible implications for the South Caucasus region and their relationship with their immediate neighborhood.





## On the Occasion of IORA Day, Panel Discussion on 'Securing the Indian Ocean Region: Towards a Cooperative, Prosperous, Sustainable and Peaceful Region', 7 March 2024



On the occasion of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) Day, ICWA held a Panel Discussion on "Securing the Indian Ocean Region: Towards a Cooperative, Prosperous, Sustainable and Peaceful Region" on 7 March 2024 at Sapru House. Welcome Remarks were delivered by Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. Ms. Paramita Tripathi, Joint Secretary (IP), MEA, India delivered the special remarks. The Panel Discussion was chaired by Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Professor and Dean, South Asian University. Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, PVSM, AVSM (Retd.) Distinguished Fellow, Delhi Policy Group and Capt. Sarabjeet Singh Parmar, Distinguished Fellow, United Service Institution of India were the panelists. At the discussion it was highlighted that India is deeply engaged with IORA and will emerge as a leading player in the region. India's engagement with the littoral states in the IOR is deep. Maritime safety and security are of paramount significance and India's role as a development partner and first responder has been appreciated worldwide. There is no doubt that the prosperity and wellbeing of the Indian Ocean Region is closely interlinked with the security, more importantly, the maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region. The Indian Ocean plays a crucial role in the development and prosperity of the region by supporting trade and sustaining livelihoods. The speakers talked about the major chokepoints in the region i.e. Strait of Hormuz, Malacca strait and Bab el Mandeb and highlighted recent disruptions in the Red Sea on account of piracy, terrorism and geopolitical tensions. Panelists also emphasised that securing the Indian Ocean Region requires a collective approach and, in this endeavour, IORA did commendable work. IORA has the responsibility and the potential to bring countries together to work to achieve their shared vision for the Indian Ocean Region of making it a space marked by cooperation, sustainable development, peace and prosperity.

## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Hindu College, University of Delhi, 7 March 2024

ICWA and Hindu College, University of Delhi have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Hindu College on 15 February 2024 and announced the MoU between ICWA and Hindu College. Hon'ble Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar is the President of ICWA. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 7 March 2024 between ICWA and Hindu College.



## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Maharashtra National Law University (MNLU), Nagpur, 7 March 2024

ICWA and Maharashtra National Law University (MNLU) Nagpur have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 1 March 2024 between ICWA and MNLU, Nagpur, which will be valid for a period of three years.

## Book Discussion on 'The Indentured & Their Route' by Ambassador Bhaswati Mukherjee, 12 March 2024

ICWA held a Book Discussion on 'The Indentured and Their Route' by Ambassador Bhaswati Mukherjee, Former Permanent Representative of India to the UNESCO and Former Ambassador of India to the Netherlands on 7 March 2024 at Sapru House.

Welcome remarks were delivered by Chair Ambassador Vijay Thakur Singh, Director General, ICWA. Ambassador Amitava Tripathi, Former Ambassador of India to Switzerland and Brazil; Ambassador Veena Sikri, Former Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh and Malaysia and Ambassador Skand Tayal, Former Ambassador of India to Republic of Korea and Uzbekistan were the discussants. The discussion focused on indentured labour migration from India which started after the abolition of slavery by the British in 1833 as an experiment of the British who made people sign contracts called 'Girmits' and gave them false hopes for wages, food, etc. These labors were shipped in inhuman conditions to Africa, Asia and the Caribbean countries to work on plantations in severe conditions. The system of Girmits was abolished in 1917.



The discussion brought out the story of the Girmitiyas longing to return home and their trials and tribulations, focusing also on the women labourers and noted that the book critically underlines the importance of memory in historical narrative. The presence of Bhojpuri language and other cultural practices in countries like Surinam, Guyana, etc. show the continuing impact of the Indian heritage on the indentured labour and serve as pillars to strengthen India's bi-lateral relationships with these countries.



## Second India-ROK 2+2 Dialogue (ICWA-RIS and KNDA-KIEP), 19-20 March 2024



The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the KNDA-ICWA Bilateral Dialogue was held on 19 March 2024 at Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA), Seoul, South Korea organized by KNDA. The theme was “ROK-India’s Strategic Trust in the Indo-Pacific”. The Bilateral Dialogue held two sessions. The first session was “Perspectives on Regional Strategic Architecture in the Indo-Pacific”. The second session was on “Ways to Improve Strategic Trust between Korea and India”. The 2<sup>nd</sup> ROK-India (KNDA-KIEP and ICWA-RIS) 2+2 Policy Dialogue was held on 20 March 2024 at the KNDA Hall, 12th Floor, Diplomatic Center, Seoul, South Korea, it was organized by KNDA and KIEP. The theme was “ROK and India: Partners of Strategic Trust in the Indo-Pacific”.

The Policy Dialogue held three sessions. The first session was “Perspectives on Regional Strategic Architecture in the Indo-Pacific”. The second session was on “Ways to Strengthen ROK-India’s Strategic and Security Trust in the Indo-Pacific”. The third session was on “The Rise of the Global South and ROK-India Development Partnership”. During the discussions, panelists discussed the main characteristics of the ongoing geopolitical trends within the Indo-Pacific, the primary factors driving and the resulting consequences of the evolving strategic dynamics in this area. They exchanged views on the geopolitical competition between the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific and its implications. They delved into the key priorities for the India-ROK special strategic partnership moving forward. The discussions also focused on how South Korea and India, two countries that have impressive experience in development, have much to offer to the Global South through triangular and multilateral development cooperation mechanisms. The two sides discussed ways to strengthen the RoK-India development partnership on the world stage and RoK’s efforts to contribute to India’s development journey.

## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Gautam Buddha University (GBU), 27 March 2024

ICWA and Gautam Buddha University, Noida, have agreed to collaborate in pursuit of their goal of expanding awareness and knowledge on international affairs and Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Gautam Buddha University on 24 December 2023 and announced the MoU between ICWA and Gautam Buddha University. Hon'ble Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar is the President of ICWA. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 27 March 2024 between ICWA & Gautam Buddha University.





## OUTREACH EVENTS

### Two-day National Seminar on “G20 Presidency and India’s Global Leadership Role” by IGNOU and CSIR, 10-11 January 2024

IGNOU & CSIR hosted a National Seminar in collaboration with ICWA on "G20 Presidency and India's Global Leadership Role" on 10- 11 January 2024. Shri Amitabh Kant delivered the keynote address. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, SRF, ICWA presented a paper on Reformed Multilateralism and G20. ICWA supported the Seminar under its university outreach programme.



### Two-Day Foreign Policy Awareness Programme on “Nuclear Doctrine of India” & “Does G20 Presidency Help India in Becoming a Global Leader” by Centre for International Relations and Governance, Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, Maharashtra, 12-13 January 2024



Centre of International Relations & Governance, Maharashtra National Law University, Nagpur, Maharashtra in association with ICWA organized “Foreign Policy Awareness Programme” on 12-13 January 2024. Shri Hitesh Rajpal, Director, ICWA and Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra delivered the keynote address. The welcome address was delivered by Prof. (Dr.) Vijender Kumar, VC, MNLU, Nagpur. Students of MNLU, Nagpur overwhelmingly participated in debate, essay and quiz competitions.



## 1<sup>st</sup> RGNUL Young Scholars Conference, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Patiala, Punjab, 17 February 2024



In collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Patiala, Punjab held its First Young Scholars Conference on the theme "Emerging Trends in India's Foreign Policy Towards West Asia & Africa" on 17 February 2024. At the Conference, a total of 40 scholars presented 29 papers over 7 parallel technical sessions in a round-table format. The proceedings of the conference were guided by 8 foreign policy experts.

## Two-day National Seminar on “India's Neighbourhood First Policy: Accomplishments and Challenges”, Department of Defence & Strategic Studies, Dharma Samaj College, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, 17-18 February 2024

A two-day National Seminar on “India's Neighbourhood First Policy: Accomplishments and Challenges” was organized by Department of Defence & Strategic Studies, Dharma Samaj College, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh on 17-18 February 2024 in collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs.



The Seminar was chaired by Shri Vijay Agarwal, President, Society and Management Committee, D.S. College. Scholars from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Assam presented more than 20 research papers. Dr. Athar Zafar, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA also participated in the seminar.



## Three-day International Conference on “Changing Dynamics of India’s Foreign Policy: Challenges and the Way Ahead”, Kanoria PG Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Jaipur, Rajasthan, 19-21 February 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, Kanoria PG Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Gandhi Circle, Jaipur, Rajasthan held a 3-day International Conference on “Changing Dynamics of India’s Foreign Policy: Challenges and the Way Ahead” on 19-21 February 2024. Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director (Research) participated from ICWA. The Conference was held under ICWA's Outreach Programme.

## Two-day National Conference “Increasing Importance of Science in Foreign Policy”, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Koni, Bilaspur, Chhatisgarh, 20-21 February 2024



In collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs, Department of Chemistry, Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Koni, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh organized a 2-day National Conference on “Increasing Importance of #Science and #Technology in Foreign Policy” on 20-21 February 2024. Dr. Stuti Banerjee, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA represented the Council.





## Two-day National Seminar on “BRICS as a Global Alternative – Prospects and Concern for India”, Netaji Institute for Asian Studies, Kolkata, West Bengal, 22-23 February 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, Netaji Institute for Asian Studies (NIAS), Kolkata, West Bengal organized a two-day National Seminar on “BRICS as a Global Alternative - Prospects and Concern for India” on 22-23 February 2024. Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA represented the Council.

## Two-day National Conference on “Security Environment, and Development in the Indo-Pacific: Challenges & Opportunities for India”, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha, 23-24 February 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, Department of Political Science, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha organized a two-day National Conference on “Security Environment, and Development in the Indo-Pacific: Challenges and Opportunities for India” on 23-24 February 2024. Dr. Pragya Pandey, RF, ICWA represented the Council.





## National Conference on “India and the Global South: Issues, Engagement and Challenges”, Somaiya Vidyavihar College, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 11 March 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, S K Somaiya College, Somaiya Vidyavihar College, Mumbai, Maharashtra organized a National Conference on India and the Global South: Issues, Engagement, and Challenges on 11 March 2024. The conference participants deliberated on a broad range of issues concerning India's relations with the Global South, development partnership, and new and emerging areas of cooperation. Dr. Stuti Banerjee, SRF, ICWA represented the Council. The Conference was held under the Council's university outreach programme.

## Two-day National Seminar in hindi on “नई चुनौतियों के परिप्रेक्ष्य में भारत-चीन संबंध”, DAV (PG) College, Kanpur, UP, 16-17 March 2024

In collaboration with ICWA, DAV (PG) College, Kanpur, UP organized a National Seminar on “नई चुनौतियों के परिप्रेक्ष्य में भारत-चीन संबंध” on 16-17 March 2024. The Seminar participants deliberated on a range of issues concerning India's relations with China under new and emerging circumstances. Maj. Gen Prithi Singh (Retd) delivered his remarks as the Chief Guest in the Inaugural session and Ambassador Deepak Vohra spoke in the Valedictory session as the Chief Guest. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, SRF, ICWA represented the Council and spoke on the subject. The Seminar was held under the Council's university outreach programme.







## Two-day International Conference on “The 6<sup>th</sup> Bodh Gaya Global Dialogues 2024 with a special focus on India-South Korea Relations: Exploring and Building on the Buddhism Connect Commemorating 50 years of their diplomatic relationship”, Nalanda University, Nalanda, Bihar, 16-17 March 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, Deshkal Society-Nalanda University organised a two-day International Seminar on “Landscape Enlightenment: Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Nalanda” on 16-17 March 2024 at Nalanda, Bihar. At the Seminar, Dr. Lakshmi Priya, RF, ICWA spoke at the session on "Strengthening Relationship between India and South Korea through Buddhism and Bodh Gaya". The seminar was organized under ICWA's University Outreach Programme.

## National Conference in Hindi on “भारतीय विदेश नीति: हिन्द-प्रशांत क्षेत्र”, Digvijai Nath Post Graduate College, Gorakhpur, UP, 18-19 March 2024



In collaboration with ICWA, Digvijai Nath Post Graduate College, Gorakhpur, UP organized a two-day National Seminar on " भारतीय विदेश नीति: हिन्द-प्रशांत क्षेत्र " on 18-19 March 2024. Dr. Punit Gaur, RF, ICWA represented the Council. The seminar was organized under ICWA's University Outreach Programme.





## Research Interns at ICWA



Anushka  
Pondicherry University



Md Shaqib Ali  
Pondicherry University



Aleena T Sabu  
Pondicherry University



Rishita Verma  
Pondicherry University



Nandini Khandelwal  
Pondicherry University



Nithyakalyani Narayanan, V,  
Amity University, Uttar Pradesh

## ICWA Publications Issue Briefs

1. Syamkumar V, Conflict Situation in South Sudan and Related Challenges in Humanitarian and Human Rights Situation (08 January 2024)
2. Dr. Stuti Banerjee, The United States and Africa: Bridging the Gap (15 January 2024)
3. डॉ. अतहर ज़फ़र, शंघाई सहयोग संगठन और भारत: एक परिप्रेक्ष्य (18 January 2024)
4. Dr. Punit Gaur, Renewed Western Interest in Central Asia (25 January 2024)
5. Dr. Teshu Singh, Rising China-Philippines Tension in the South China Sea (29 January 2024)
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11. Dr. Punit Gaur, CICA: Towards a New Paradigm for Peace, Security and Stability in Asia (20 February 2024)
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15. Dr. Anwesha Ghosh, UN's Second Afghanistan Conference in Doha minus Taliban: Objective and Outcome (01 March 2024)
  16. Nithyakalyani Narayanan. V, Exploring the Dynamics of Child Soldiering, Transformative Justice, and Policy Mandates in Africa (04 March 2024)
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## Viewpoints

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  3. Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty, Trends in Foreign Policy of Argentinian President Javier Milei- Between Ideology and Economic Concerns (23 January 2024)
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  5. Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Brunei Darussalam @40 (25 January 2024)
  6. Dr. Anwesha Ghosh, Taliban hosts 'Afghanistan Regional Cooperation Initiative' Meeting in Kabul (31 January 2024)
  7. Dr. Samatha Mallempati, Thailand PM's Visit to Sri Lanka: A Step towards Enhanced Cooperation (13 February 2024)
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## Special Reports

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1. Anubha Gupta, Game of Drones: Understanding their Increasing Use (27 March 2024)
2. Dr. Stuti Banerjee, 2024 Domestic Elections: Shaping National Foreign Policy Approaches and International Politics (15 February 2024)





3. Dr. Pragya Pandey, Situation in the South Pacific: Regional Developments and Geopolitical Shifts (23 January 2024)
  4. Dr. Tunchinmang Langel, Assessment of the Security Environment in the Northeast Asia Region (19 January 2024)
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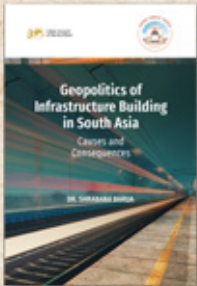
## ICWA Guest Columns

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1. Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan and Prof. Parmeshwar Krishnan Iyer, Shashi Shekhar Vempati, 'Emerging Technologies and Indian Diplomacy: Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors, Nanotechnology' (17-January 2024)
  2. Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan, 'Management of Ocean Space Around India and the High Seas Treaty' (12 January 2024)
  3. Lt Gen Syed Ata Hasnain (Retd), Member, National Disaster Management Authority, Government of India, 'G20 and Disaster Risk Reduction' (12 January 2024)
  4. Dr. Sankalp Gurjar, 'The Crisis in Red Sea and Gulf of Aden: Strategic, Economic, Political and Maritime Dimensions' (12 January 2024)
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## Sapru House Paper

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### **Dr. Shrabana Barua, Geopolitics of Infrastructure Building in South Asia: Causes and Consequences**

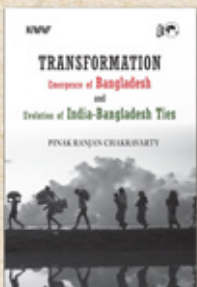
Dr. Shrabana Barua,

(Indian Council of World Affairs 2024)

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By Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty,

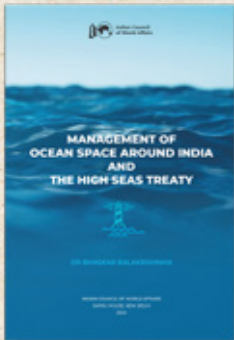
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## Special Publications



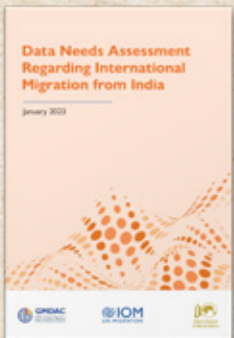
### 'Management of Ocean Space Around India and the High Seas Treaty'

By Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan  
(12 January 2024)



### 'Emerging Technologies & Indian Diplomacy: Artificial Intelligence, Semiconductors, Nanotechnology'

By Shashi Shekhar Vempati,  
Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan and  
Prof. Parmeshwar Krishnan Iyer  
(17 January 2024)



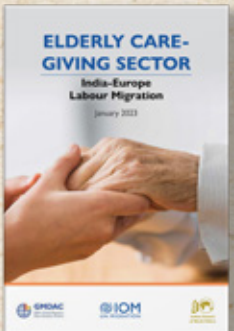
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(21 February 2024)



### ICWA- IOM Special Publication on Strategic Recommendations to Improve International Migration Data Management Frameworks in India

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### Special Publication on Finland under ICWA- IOM Project on India-Europe Labour Migration

(21 February 2024)



### Special Publication on Poland under ICWA-IOM Project on India-Europe Labour Migration

(21 February 2024)



### Special Publication on Spain under ICWA- IOM Project on India-Europe Labour Migration

(21 February 2024)





## India Quarterly A Journal of International Affairs

Volume 80, Issue 1, January 2024

### Editorial

We begin the 80<sup>th</sup> issue of the India Quarterly with a sense of déjà vu. Looking at the state of the world in January of 1945, the editor of the first issue of the Quarterly remarked on a 'time of exceptional difficulty in India and the world's history', a difficulty he put down to 'the lack of a sense of direction that men (sic) do not know whether they are marching to a secure peace and plenty, or to recurring war and economic insecurity...' (IQ No.1, January 1945). Eighty years later, we seem no nearer to a sense of direction. The last year alone has seen two devastating conflicts where world institutions and powerful actors have exhibited a singular lack of will in keeping the peace. Fundamentalist ideologies and neo-nationalisms have raised old spectres, and states have teetered to balance economic interests and security while confronting an increasingly insecure and complex world. This is despite the fact that most issues of survival now fall into the realm of the global and look to peace, not war, for solutions. How states, leaders and policymakers address these issues is the subject of the articles in this issue.

In our neighbourhood alone, the contradiction between Islamicist ideologies and development creates conflict, as does the rise of new nationalist agendas. Since 2021, in its second coming, the Taliban in Afghanistan has confronted a whole new set of seemingly intractable political problems, threatening to put any rational policy at risk. Any hope that an enabling economic environment could emerge on the back of its mineral resources, an important national asset, would require a new kind of Taliban wedded to nation-building, development and commitments to a global net zero agenda, as one author argues. Further down the Himalayas, the assertion of 'Nepali Nationalism' raises claims to territory and the demands to define boundaries. However, even as some worlds close off, others open up to older, historically obscured meanings of connectivity and community. Here, as another article argues, the Bay of Bengal region could build on local connections to revive a dynamic history while

providing relevance to its geographical position in the current geopolitical context of the Indo-Pacific.

Even as policymakers grapple with a host of increasingly complex issues, policies and actors are open to greater scrutiny today. As another set of articles argues, from diverse positions, media now has an interface with policymaking institutions which could create new pressures and fashion policy in unprecedented ways, the global human rights regime penetrates domestic social policies in uncomfortable ways, forcing states to respond or defend postures in international institutions, hindsight provides insights into the failure of hard power to meet foreign policy objectives, and soft power objectives can often be met by practices and models which lie outside the frame of conventional foreign policy. Significantly, when the history of foreign policy is written, scholars and researchers are now questioning how archives are curated, what bureaucratic pathways documents take or do not take, and the context of decisions rather than succumb to partisan views of success and failure. If the direction of the world remains unclear, the pattern of policymaking, at least, is not.

### Prof. Madhu Bhalla

Editor, India Quarterly







## 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, round table 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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