

# NEWSLETTER

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Panel Discussion on “Assessing the Ongoing Crisis in Pakistan”, 15 January 2025



2<sup>nd</sup> ICWA Young Scholars Conference on ‘India on the Rise: Foreign Policy in the Amrit Kaal’, 11 March 2025

Panel Discussion on “Non-Traditional Challenges in the Indo Pacific: Re-defining Maritime Security Situation in the Region and Elevating Cooperation”, 28 February 2025

Panel Discussion on “Fraying at the Edges? Rethinking Narratives on International Migration & Mobility in 2025”, 26 March 2025

52<sup>nd</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Republic of Armenia, 10 March 2025



51<sup>st</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev, Secretary General, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, 6 February 2025

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## Panel Discussion on 'Assessing the Ongoing Crisis in Pakistan', 15 January 2025



On 15 January 2025, ICWA hosted a panel discussion titled 'Assessing the Ongoing Crisis in Pakistan' at the Sapru House. The discussion was chaired by Amb. Anil Trigunayat, former Indian Ambassador to Jordan and Libya and High Commissioner to Malta. The panellists for the event were Shri Tilak Devasher (author and member of the National Security Advisory Board, India), Prof. Ajay Darshan Bahera (Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi) and Dr. Shalini Chawla (Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi). Nutan Kapoor Mahawar (Additional Secretary, ICWA) delivered the welcome remarks.

Amb. Trigunayat said that the Pakistani state has failed to protect its own people. 2024 was the world year in terms of its own losses, number of attacks and problems with neighbours, especially Afghanistan. Today's Pakistan can be defined by constant power struggles, human rights violations and aversion by the politicians to any genuine commitment to the public welfare. In the foreign policy domain, Pakistan has had a certain kind of nuisance value where it was able to encash it to its advantage with all the superpowers. Shri Devasher stated that Pakistan faces a plethora of problems and crises as it steps into 2025, but interestingly, there has barely been a time when Pakistan has not faced a series of crises. The country never faced so many serious problems all at the same time in the past: a series of political crises, a volatile economy and a security situation going from bad to worse. In the past Pakistan used to leverage its geographical position; today the global environment in which Pakistan's crises are being played out is unstable with mounting geopolitical tensions. US-China competition, the focus of major powers on wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and the unpredictability brought about by Donald Trump's impending second term in office.

Prof. Behera said that the political system in Pakistan is very different. The role of the military makes it very difficult to understand. The Imran Khan factor that has challenged the system is new. That has implications for civil-military relations. The dominance of the military, which has been there for decades, is being questioned now. Khan possesses neither solutions to Pakistan's issues nor a coherent vision or policy; however, his rhetoric and methods have been instrumental in galvanising a substantial segment of the populace.

Dr. Chawla opined that the biggest challenge for the Pakistani state at present is that it has cherished the narrative for decades that it's a state that's too dangerous to fail – 'The world cannot allow Pakistan to fail' – and this phase of the crisis has challenged that belief. The all-powerful military is being attacked by civilian political actors like Imran Khan as well as groups like the TTP and the BLA, which is undermining the role and status that it had maintained for the last seven decades.

## Panel Discussion on ‘Rising Tensions in the South China Sea: Cooperative Way Forward?’ 21 January 2025

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ICWA held a panel discussion on ‘Rising Tensions in the South China Sea: Cooperative Way Forward?’ on 21 January at #SapruHouse. It was chaired by Amb. Ashok Kantha a distinguished Fellow at Vivekananda International Foundation and Former Ambassador of India to China. Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli @Si\_Kondapalli, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Mr. Lucio III Pitlo, President, Philippine Association for Chinese Studies; Research Fellow, Asia Pacific Pathways to Progress Foundation, Inc.; and Dr. Rahul Mishra, Associate Professor, Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, were the panellists. At the discussion, welcome remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA.

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## Dr. James Gomez, Regional Director, and Mr. Sanjay Gathiya, Programme Manager of Asia Centre, Bangkok, visit to ICWA, 22 January 2025

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Dr. James Gomez, Regional Director, and Mr. Sanjay Gathiya, Programme Manager of Asia Centre, Bangkok, paid a courtesy visit to ICWA and met with Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA. They shared information about the work of their institution in ASEAN countries and explored possible opportunities for future collaboration with ICWA.



## Book Discussion on 'The Crossroads: Kashmir – India's Bridge to Xinjiang' by Prof. K. Warikoo, 23 January 2025

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ICWA organised a book discussion on 'The Crossroads: Kashmir—India's Bridge to Xinjiang' by Prof. K. Warikoo, Editor, Himalayan and Central Asian Studies, on 23 January 2025 at Sapru House. It was chaired by Amb. T.C.A. Raghavan, former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan. Shri Jayadeva Ranade, President, Centre for China Analysis and Strategy, and Dr. Ashok K. Behuria, Senior Fellow, MP-IDSA, were the discussants. At the discussion, welcome remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA.

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## 7<sup>th</sup> ICWA-Asia New Zealand Foundation (ANZF) and New Zealand India Research Institute (NZIRI) Track 1.5 Dialogue, Christchurch, New Zealand, 30-31 January 2025

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The 7<sup>th</sup> Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) – Asia New Zealand Foundation (ANZF) and New Zealand India Research Institute (NZIRI) Dialogue was held on 30-31 January 2025, in Christchurch, New Zealand. During the dialogue, discussions were held on three major themes: changing global geopolitics, perspectives on developments in respective regions, and India-New Zealand bilateral relations.

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In the inaugural session, the Indian High Commissioner to New Zealand, Neeta Bhushan, and New Zealand High Commissioner to India, Patrick Rata, addressed the Dialogue. It was noted that India-New Zealand relations are on an upward trajectory. The two countries have had over seven decades of friendly relations; 2024 has been a milestone year with engagement across all the sectors, a positive trend, which is expected to continue through 2025. India's importance in world geopolitics and the world economy is growing. Track II Dialogue provides a vital platform for free and frank discussions on both challenges and opportunities for bilateral relations and people-to-people ties.

On the New Zealand side, Ms. Suzannah Jessep, Chief Executive Officer, ANZF, and on the Indian side, Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, addressed the Dialogue as the heads of delegation. It was noted that there has been an unprecedented exchange of high-level contacts recently between India and New Zealand. Ongoing changes in regional and global geopolitics were discussed, and the need for a free and open Indo-Pacific was emphasised.

The first session focused on the theme Changing Global Geopolitics: Views from India and New Zealand. The session was moderated by Ms. Suzannah Jessep, Chief Executive Officer, ANZF. Lead discussants for the session were Prof. David Capie, Director, New Zealand India Research Institute, and Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Discussion, during the session, highlighted that the world at present is undergoing turmoil and uncertainty, with visible inflection points that will prove to be significant as the new world order emerges. The New Zealand side pointed out that emerging nationalism globally, especially in trade and economics tariffs, export controls, sanctions, and protectionism, is visible. Both sides agreed that multilateral institutions and international cooperation are under stress. China's aggressive posture in maritime East Asia, the South China Sea, and the South Pacific was discussed. India's leadership of the Global South was acknowledged. It was mentioned that it is in India's genes to play a role in world affairs.

The second session focused on the theme Perspectives on Developments in Our Regions. The session was moderated by Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra. Lead discussants for the session included Prof. Anne-Marie Brady, University of Canterbury, and Captain (Dr.) Gurpreet S. Khurana, Indian Navy (Retd). It was highlighted during the discussion that at present, the Indo-Pacific is, clearly, in the spotlight; whatever happens here will have echoes around the world. China's relations with the small island countries in the Pacific from the point of view of posing a challenge to New Zealand were discussed. The New Zealand side emphasised the need to look at the security and strategic angle of Antarctica. The Indian side highlighted that in the Indian Ocean region, India focuses on nuanced neighbourhood policy and the SAGAR narrative, and the Indian Navy and Coast Guard would like to be seen as the first responders and preferred security partners in the region.

The third session was on India-New Zealand Bilateral Relations: Ways Forward. The session was moderated by Dr. Julia Macdonald, Director (Research and Engagement), ANZF. Lead discussants for the session included Mr. Charles Finny, Partner, Saunders Unsworth, and Dr. Pragya Pandey, Research Fellow, ICWA. The discussion during the session highlighted that, given our shared values of democracy, freedom and shared commitment to the rule of law and a rules-based international order, there is a strong synergy for greater cooperation between India and New Zealand. It was pointed out that we should have more dialogue for deeper engagement at all levels. Tourism, education, sports, science and technology, energy, health sciences, agriculture technology, space, and fintech are areas that offer opportunities for furthering cooperation.





## Panel Discussion on 'Charting Futures: India's Evolving Role in Antarctic Governance and Exploration', 4 February 2025



ICWA held a panel discussion on 'Charting Futures: India's Evolving Role in Antarctic Governance and Exploration' 04 February at #SapruHouse. It was chaired by Dr. Rasik Ravindra, former Director, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR). Prof. Naresh Chandra Pant, Senior Professor (Retd), Department of Geology, Honorary Visiting Scientist, NCPOR; Dr. Rajoshree Ghosh, Research Fellow, Science and Geopolitics of Arctic and Antarctic-LIGHTS; and Dr. Stuti Banerjee, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA, were the panellists. At the discussion, welcome remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA.

## 9<sup>th</sup> India-Saudi Arabia Dialogue between ICWA and Prince Saud Al Faisal Institute of Diplomatic Studies (PSAIDS), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 5 February 2025



The ICWA, in collaboration with Prince Saud Al Faisal Institute for Diplomatic Studies (PSAIDS), organised their 9th Dialogue on 05 February 2025 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The Dialogue focused on India-Saudi perspectives on changing world order, regional issues and bilateral ties. A four-member delegation from ICWA visited PSAIDS, Riyadh, for the dialogue. The ICWA delegation was led by Deputy Director General ICWA, Shri L Prashant Pise, and the PSAIDS delegation was led by Director General, PSAIDS Dr. Moshabob Al Qahtani.

It was emphasised that, being historic partners, there is a need for India and Saudi Arabia to further strengthen their partnership, especially as the region is witnessing crises at various levels.

The first session of the Dialogue was chaired by Nojoud Bin Shraim and focused on the political and cultural bilateral relations. Dr. Ali Al Qarni, Head, Centre for Asian Studies, PSAIDS, and Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA, emphasised the need to enhance the media cooperation between the two countries, as it is an important tool for perception building. The potential for India and Saudi Arabia to cooperate in defence and space



sectors was highlighted by both sides. The Saudi side also underlined that India is an important country and should engage in the region more actively in terms of emerging as a security provider. The significance of cultural connection and the need for organising programmes to familiarise people with the culture and lifestyle of the other country were emphasised during the session. People-to-people ties form the base of bilateral partnerships, and the participants agreed that the two countries should focus on enhancing these ties.

The second session, chaired by DDG ICWA, focused on the economic ties, trade and investments, and Dr. Rajja Al Marzouqi, Chief Economic Advisor, Ministry of Economic and Planning and Faculty at Economic Division, PSAIDS, and Dr. Arshad, Research Fellow, ICWA, stressed the growing bilateral economic cooperation. The session focused on the significance of connectivity and relevance of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) in the region and beyond. The participants concluded that the success of IMEC depends on its efficiency in terms of cost and time. It was also mentioned that IMEC is a complement to the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chabahar. The speakers stressed that there is an opportunity for Indian companies to invest in the NEOM project, the Red Sea coastline development, and the 2034 World Cup infrastructure development.

The third and fourth sessions focused on the regional issues and the great power competition in the region. Dr. Abdullah Al Hamadi, Dr. Assad Al Shamlan, Director, Centre for European Studies, PSAIDS, and Dr. Fazzur Rahman Siddiqui, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA, delved into the regional and global issues of concern. The growing significance of multilateral institutions, such as BRICS & the Indo-Pacific was emphasised by the speakers. The dialogue concluded with emphasis on the regional crisis – the Syrian crisis, the Gaza war and the Yemen crisis are concerns for human security in the region & need the utmost attention of the global community.

## 51<sup>st</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev, Secretary General, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, 6 February 2025



The ICWA hosted H.E. Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, on 6 February 2025 for the 51st Sapru House Lecture on 'SCO and India: Strengthening Regional Synergies for Cooperation in Eurasia'. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, delivered the welcome remarks.

The address emphasised how the SCO is adapting to a rapidly changing global landscape by fostering regional stability and cooperation. It upholds the principles of openness and inclusivity, focusing on





combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism through joint military exercises and intelligence sharing, while also facilitating collaboration among diverse nations and organisations.

India plays a strategic role within the SCO by proposing new initiatives grounded in mutual respect and regional cooperation. It enhances connectivity through projects like the International North-South Transport Corridor and contributes to the region's soft power with cultural diplomacy efforts such as film festivals and yoga events. India's technological edge and policy initiatives position it as a key driver of regional trade, infrastructure, and cultural integration within the SCO framework.

The SCO is expanding into emerging areas, such as digital transformation, green economy, innovation, and financial integration, including the gradual adoption of national currencies in mutual trade. With shared economic interests, vast resources, and demographic potential, member states are working towards freer movement of goods and services. Tourism—particularly medical, ecological, and gastronomic—has also been identified as a key sector, with calls to simplify visa regimes to further people-to-people connections and sustainable development in the region.

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## CSCAP Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 6 February 2025

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The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) organised a one-day interaction on Myanmar, titled 'Exploring Pathways for Peace: CSCAP Informal Preliminary Meeting on Myanmar', in Bangkok on February 06, 2025. Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Research Fellow, ICWA, participated in the meeting on behalf of CSCAP-India.

The meeting was aimed at exploring the possibility of establishing a CSCAP Study Group on Myanmar. The final decision on the Study Group would be taken by the CSCAP Steering Committee meeting that is to be held in June 2025.

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## Janakpur Literature Festival, Janakpur, Nepal, 6–8 February 2025

Dr. Subodh Chandra Bharti, Research Associate, ICWA, represented the Council at the 6th edition of the Janakpur Literature Festival 2025, held in Janakpur, Nepal. He delivered a talk titled ‘सीता: बियाहक संस्कार आ परंपरा के समृद्ध साझा धरोहर क प्रतिरूप’ in Maithili, exploring the rich shared heritage of Roti-Beti relations between India and Nepal through cross-border marital rituals and traditions. The event was organised by the Nawa Mithila Foundation, Nepal, and supported by the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu. The event featured a diverse range of panel discussions addressing topics, including domestic politics, foreign policy, constitutional issues, federalism, and the rule of law. In addition, there were several literary events centered on the themes of literature, art, sports, music, and culture.



A significant session entitled ‘Nepal’s Foreign Policy and the Simanchal Region’ was moderated by Anil Giri, Chief Sub Editor of The Kathmandu Post. This session included distinguished panellists such as Dr. Indra Adhikari, an expert in international relations, and Tula Narayan Shaha, a renowned political analyst. A noteworthy presentation titled ‘Madhesh in the Eyes of the Centre’ was delivered by Santosh Pariyar, a Member of Parliament, which provided valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of the region. Furthermore, a compelling session on Hydropower Development and Regional Electricity Trade was conducted by Shri Kulman Ghishing, the former Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority. He discussed Nepal’s hydropower potential and its electricity trade with neighbouring countries India and Bangladesh.

Another panel discussion, titled ‘Opinion of Madhesh’, was moderated by journalist Tikaram Yatri and featured participants including Manish Suman (Member of the Madhesh Provincial Assembly), Yogesh Bhattarai (Member of the House of Representatives), and Dr. Amresh Kumar Singh (an Independent Politician and Member of the House of Representatives). Additionally, a discussion on ‘Constitution, Federalism, and the Rule of Law’ was facilitated by journalist Hari Bahadur Thapa, featuring insights from Justice Kalyan Shrestha, the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nepal. These events provided space for diverse perspectives and facilitated meaningful discussions on the socio-political landscape of Nepal.





## A two-day workshop organised under the Jean Monnet Module, co-funded by the European Union at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, 7–9 February 2025

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Ms. Ambi, Consultant and Research Lead at the Centre for Migration, Mobility and Diaspora Studies (CMMDS), ICWA, delivered an expert lecture on 'Migration-Governance: India-EU Partnership on Migration and Mobility' at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU).

The lecture was part of a two-day academic workshop on 'Indian Migration to the EU: Challenges and Prospects', organised under the Jean Monnet Module and co-funded by the European Union.

In her address, Ms. Ambi highlighted key collaborative initiatives undertaken under the

India-EU partnership, especially under the framework of safe, orderly, and regular migration. She drew attention to the ongoing work of CMMDS at ICWA through the INDIA-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM) Phase II project and reflected on the importance of fostering circular mobility, reimagining migration governance through conceptual clarity, and reinforcing migrant welfare in the context of a changing global workplace.

The workshop featured a distinguished line-up of speakers, including Ambassador Raj Kumar Srivastava, Dean, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), Ministry of External Affairs; Prof. Amitabh Mattoo, Dean, School of International Studies, JNU; Prof. Ummu Salma Bava, Chairperson, Centre for European Studies; and Prof. Binod Khadria, who delivered special remarks during the inaugural session. Other expert lectures were delivered by Prof. Bhaswati Sarkar (JNU), Dr. Sheetal Sharma (JNU), Prof. Basant Potnuru (FORE School of Management), and Prof. Debolina Kundu (National Institute of Urban Affairs).





## Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia, H.E. Mr. Ganbold Dambajav's, visit to ICWA, 11 February 2025

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia, H.E. Mr. Ganbold Dambajav, met with the Additional Secretary of ICWA, Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, to discuss academic collaboration.



## Ms. Marija Raus, Head of Silk Routes (South and West Asia), International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) (MoU partner of ICWA), visit to ICWA, 12 February 2025



Ms. Marija Raus, Head of Silk Routes (South and West Asia), International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) (MoU partner of ICWA), met Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, to discuss collaboration on international mobility and migration. AS Nutan Mahawar shared an overview of the work done by the Centre for Migration, Mobility and Diaspora Studies (CMMDS), the migration vertical of ICWA. They discussed the ongoing partnership under the India-EU CAMM Phase II Project and possible areas of work on facilitating circular mobility and regular pathways in the India-EU corridor.



## Special Lecture at Special Centre for National Security Studies (SCNSS), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 12 February 2025



The Special Centre for National Security Studies (SCNSS), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, organised a special lecture on 'Growing Instability in Pakistan: Implications for India' by Dr. Dhruvajyoti Bhattacharjee, Research Fellow, ICWA, on 12 February 2025.

Dr. Bhattacharjee spoke about the political and economic instability that marred the Pakistani federal government and the misgovernance of the federal government and their colonial mindset that has alienated the provinces in Pakistan except the province of Punjab. He spoke about how people have either taken recourse to constitutional means to protest against the seven-decade-long oppression. He also narrated about the various organisations who have taken up arms to fight the repressive Pakistan Army, which has all along taken steps of extrajudicial killings, years of unlawful detention or armed suppression against innocent civilians. He also stated how such instability is pushing the nation towards implosion that will have a serious impact on the region.

The lecture was attended by faculty and students from SCNSS and other centres from the university. The lecture was followed by an hour-long interactive question-and-answer session.

## National Seminar organised by the Department of Political Science, Ramjas College, Delhi University, 13 February 2025

Dr. Punit Gaur, Research Fellow, ICWA, participated as a speaker at the panel discussion on 'New Direction in India's Foreign Policy', organised by the Department of Political Science, Ramjas College, Delhi University, on 13 February 2025. In his address, Dr. Gaur pointed out that India's foreign policy has undergone a significant transformation over the past decade, a reflection of its growing strength and its ability to take on more global responsibility. The panel discussion featured the distinguished Prof. Sanjay Bhardwaj, Professor at the Centre for South Asian Studies, SIS, JNU, as a panellist and Mr. Vikas Kapoor, Associate Professor at Ramjas College, as the discussant.





## Panel Discussion on 'Current Instability in Bangladesh: Rewriting its History or Charting an Unpredictable Future?' 14 February 2025.



On 14 February 2025, ICWA hosted a panel discussion titled 'Current Instability in Bangladesh: Rewriting its History or Charting an Unpredictable Future?' at the Sapru House. The discussion was chaired by Ambassador Veena Sikri, former High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh. The panellists for the event were Prof. Sanjay Bharadwaj, Centre for South Asian Studies, SIS, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Dr. Smruti S. Pattanaik, Research Fellow, MP-IDSA, New Delhi and Ms. Sohini Bose, Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), Kolkata, who joined the discussion online. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar (Additional Secretary, ICWA) delivered the welcome remarks.

While charting the path of the discussion, AS Mahawar stated that Bangladesh's political culture is characterised by extreme repression and inadequate governance. Violent protests, strikes, street protests, looting and arson, destruction of private and public property, political imprisonment, and murders have been common during the last few months. Bangladesh is now seeing attempts to rewrite history following regime changes. Bangladesh's political culture is similar to that of Pakistan, as they have been conjoined twins for a quarter of a century. After the dismissal of the Awami League government, instead of calming the student community, political factions, and radical elements, the army-backed interim government is pursuing polarising agendas under the guise of democracy. While trying to stabilise bilateral relations, India continues to monitor the shared international border, as political and economic instability can lead to illicit activities, such as people trafficking, drug trafficking, and cattle smuggling. To prevent trafficking and infiltration, it is crucial to prioritise the safety of those on both sides of the border. Ambassador Sikri, while questioning the legitimacy of the interim government and its actions, raised numerous concerns like the use of mob justice, when ageing judges are forced to retire without due process, and the nature of the interim government, which includes consultants from Islamist organisations. The Jamaat-e-Islami is reported to have complete control of the situation. She said that country's economy is predicted to develop at half or less than half the rate of the previous year, affecting job opportunities. Hyperinflation is leading to a lack of investment, which has resulted in factory closures due to worker unrest over higher pay.

Prof. Bharadwaj stated about the two distinct forces active in Bangladesh: ethnocultural and political. These ethnocultural forces, known as the pro-Liberation War forces, believe in the inclusive spirit of 1971, based on Bengali nationalism, secularism, democracy, and socialism. They have been progressive in their efforts to bring cultural dynamics and inclusivity to Bengali culture. This has been challenged by some who believe in the ethno-religious framework. They believe in the same Islamic nationalists, especially Jamaat-e-Islam, present in East Pakistan, who attempted to create Urdu as the national language, replacing Bengali and Arabic scripts. They continue to polarise society and infuse radicalism, violence and anarchy into the social fabric. It has been reported that the Jamaat and radical forces, including the military establishment in Pakistan, are working and

collaborating closely to chart Bangladesh's future path. Dr. Pattanaik mentioned the haphazard functioning of the interim government, making attempts to alter the existing constitution. The political parties are divided on the road map for the upcoming election. The BNP believes that minor reforms can be implemented before the election, while major reforms can be left to the elected government. However, the Jamaat disagrees and is not seeking immediate elections. She mentioned how many people in Bangladesh use the term 'second independence' or 'second liberation', undermining the importance of the 1971 Liberation War as well as rewriting the nation's political history. Ms. Bose said that India-Bangladesh connections might go through rough patches, but both countries share history, culture, languages, food habits and geographical elements, such as transboundary rivers and maritime zones in the Bay of Bengal, which remain inextricably linked and cannot be altered by regime changes or government transitions. The long-standing partnership between these two countries has been disrupted by the current interim government in Bangladesh, led by Muhammad Yunus, who is dealing with economic and political turmoil. Currently, India and Bangladesh are in uncharted territory and will require time to deliberate on their diplomatic stance. The interim government's foreign policy choices reflect domestic turmoil and a quest for legitimacy.

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## **8<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference – IOC 2025 on 'Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership', Muscat, Oman, 16–17 February 2025**

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8<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Conference – IOC 2025 on "Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership", was organized by India Foundation, New Delhi in partnership with Foreign Ministry of Oman 16 - 17, February 2025. Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research of ICWA participated in the 8th Indian Ocean Conference organized by India Foundation, New Delhi and Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in partnership with Foreign Ministry of Oman on February 16-17, 2025 under the theme "Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership." It was attended by 27 Foreign Ministers and delegation from 47 countries.

Mr Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Albusaidi, the Foreign Minister of Oman gave the welcome remarks and Mr. Vivian Balakrishnan delivered the special remarks. The Keynote Address was given by S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India.

In the First plenary Session on Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership remarks were made by Mr. Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Iran, Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius, Vijitha Herath, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka, Hassan Ali Joho, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs, Kenya, Osman Saleh, Minister of Foreign Affairs Eritrea, D. N. Dhungyel, Minister of Foreign Affairs Bhutan, Penny Wong, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Australia.

In the Second Plenary Session was on Amplifying the Voice of Global South, remarks were shared by Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of UAE, Arzu Rana Deuba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, Sultan bin Saad bin Sultan Al Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Qatar, Abdulla Khaleel, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maldives, Errol Fonseka, Minister of Interior, Seychelles, Erywan Yusof, Second Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei.

The discussions focused on promoting regional cooperation, enhancing maritime security, amplifying the voice of the Global South, and tackling major challenges in the maritime sector. The conference explored strategies to improve trade corridors, ensure freedom of navigation, foster environmental sustainability, and leverage technological advancements for port security and governance.

## Panel Discussion on ‘Advancing Sub-Regional Cooperation: An Important Dimension of India’s Neighbourhood First Policy’, 18 February 2025



The ICWA hosted an insightful panel discussion on ‘Advancing Sub-Regional Cooperation: An Important Dimension of India’s Neighbourhood First Policy’ on February 18, 2025, at Sapru House. The session was chaired by Ambassador Harsh Vardhan Shringla, former Foreign Secretary of India, with distinguished panellists including Prof. S.D. Muni, Professor Emeritus, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Dr. Prabir De, Professor, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi; and Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar,

Distinguished Fellow, Council for Strategic and Defence Research, New Delhi.

In her welcome remarks, Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, emphasised that India’s ‘Neighbourhood First Policy’ has been essential in strengthening ties with neighbouring countries over the past decade. This policy is rooted in respect, dialogue, peace, and cultural exchange, guiding India’s diplomatic efforts to foster deeper relationships based on geographical, cultural, and economic connections. She also briefly highlighted that India does not adopt hegemonic approaches and believes that the stability and prosperity of its neighbours are linked to its own progress.

Amb. Shringla outlined six pillars for effective sub-regional cooperation: India’s leadership role, connectivity (infrastructure & digital), energy partnerships, regional security, and institutional strengthening. Prof. Muni emphasised India’s shift from SAARC to BIMSTEC and BBIN, citing challenges like internal political turbulence in neighbouring countries, India’s resource constraints, and competitive diplomacy from China. Dr. De spotlighted BBIN’s role in enhancing trade, noting significant cross-border economic integration, especially in India’s North-East, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. Capt. Parmar discussed the impact of regional instability on maritime security and connectivity, underlining the importance of trust, economic ties, and the need for robust maritime cooperation frameworks. The discussion reaffirmed India’s commitment to fostering regional stability, economic growth, and deeper ties through the Neighbourhood First Policy, leveraging initiatives like BIMSTEC, BBIN and the Colombo Security Conclave to advance sub-regional cooperation.





## Talk by Mr. Upendra S. Baghel, Former IPS Officer, 21 February 2025



On 21 February 2025, ICWA hosted a talk on 'Application of International Criminal Laws in Conflict Type Situations and Underlying Politics: Focus on Syrian Situation' by Mr. Upendra S. Baghel (Former IPS Officer). The event was moderated by Shri L Prashant Pise, Deputy Director General, ICWA, and the event was attended by the in-house faculty at ICWA. Mr. Baghel spoke about the nature of conflicts and their resolutions and, in this regard, discussed the differences between armed conflicts, wars and conflicts related to freedom struggles/self-determination, boundary disputes, internal (domestic) issues and social-political-cultural factors. The talk was followed by a brief question-and-answer session.

## Interaction with the Students from Jawaharlal Nehru University, 25 February 2025

As part of ICWA's youth outreach, a visit of JNU students was organised on 25 February 2025 at Sapru House to understand the role of think tanks and ICWA's contribution in promoting studies on #InternationalRelations and #ForeignPolicy. Students also visited the Sapru House Library.



## International Conference by Embassy of India, Ankara (Türkiye), Political, Economic and Social Research Foundation (SETA) and Centre for India-West Asia Dialogue (CIWAD), Ankara, Türkiye, 26–27 February 2025



On 26–27 February 2025, the Embassy of India in Ankara (Türkiye), in collaboration with the Ankara-based think tank Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) and the New Delhi-based think tank International Dialogue and Diplomacy Foundation (IDDF) and the Centre for India-West Asia Dialogue (CIWAD), organised a two-day international conference on ‘India-Türkiye Relations: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives – Opportunities and Challenges’. The conference featured participation from distinguished scholars and diplomats. Apart from the inaugural and concluding sessions, there were four thematic sessions focusing on key issues, including regional and global order, perspectives on the Global South, and bilateral relations between India and Türkiye. Dr. Fazzur Rahman, Senior Research Fellow at ICWA, participated as a representative of the ICWA. During a closed-door think tank forum discussion, he emphasised the historical foundation that both India and Türkiye can build upon to diversify their bilateral ties and build mutual trust. Highlighting the need for strengthening ties and overcoming traditional hurdles, he suggested a gradual approach - starting with building economic ties.

## ICWA-GISR, Qatar (Global Institute for Strategic Research) Seminar, 27 February 2025



The ICWA, in collaboration with the Global Institute for Strategic Research (GISR), Doha, organised a seminar on India-Qatar relations on 27 February 2025 at Sapru House. The seminar focused on India-Qatar perspectives on





changing world order, regional issues and bilateral ties. A four-member delegation from GISR visited ICWA for the seminar. The ICWA delegation was led by DDG ICWA, Shri L Prashant Pise, and the GISR delegation was led by Executive Director, GISR Ambassador Mohamed Ali Chihi. It was noted in the opening remarks that India and Qatar are historic partners and there is a need to take this partnership further.

The first session of the seminar focused on India-Qatar bilateral relations with emphasis on energy, trade and investment, India-Qatar soft diplomacy, culture, expatriates and people-to-people ties. The session was chaired by Dr. Logan Cochrane, Associate Professor, College of Public Policy, Hamad bin Khalifa University, and the speakers from GISR were Mr. Muhammad al Mahmeed, Head of International Cooperation, Qatar Tourism, and Mr. Mudassar Ali Baig, Research Fellow, GISR. Speakers from ICWA were Mr. Atul Aneja, Former Editor, India Narrative, and Dr. Lakshmi Priya, Research Fellow, ICWA. The two sides emphasised the existing ties between the two countries and stressed the need to provide momentum to the ties by focusing on culture and people-to-people connections. The participants also agreed that tourism is an important area with the potential for cooperation. Apart from that, the two sides expressed satisfaction with the growing economic ties between the two countries and discussed the possibilities of cooperating in areas beyond hydrocarbons.

The second session of the seminar focused on the perspectives of India and Qatar on the changing global and regional dynamics. The session was chaired by Ambassador Sanjay Singh, former Secretary, the Ministry of External Affairs of India, and the speakers from ICWA were Professor Chintamani Mahapatra, Founder of the Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies; Dr. Md. Muddassir Quamar, Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Dr. Anwesha Ghosh, Research Fellow, ICWA. The speakers from GISR were Dr. Logan Cochrane and Dr. Chris Doyle, Director, Council for Arab-British Understanding (virtual mode). The session focused on the changing global order and rise of a multipolar world, changing regional dynamics, the significance of the Abraham Accords, perceptions of the Gaza war and Syria, the impact of the Yemen crisis, the need for reconstruction of Syria and the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The two sides discussed the vitality of a multipolar world order and India's emergence as a top economic power. The possibility for Qatar to be part of IMEC was also discussed in the session. Further, the session also threw light on the increasing use of coding, chatbots, humanoids and robotics in various fields.



## International Conference on ‘Bridging the Future: Exploring New Horizons in Korea-India Relations’ by Sejong Institute and Embassy of India, Seoul, South Korea, 27 February 2025



Dr. Tunchinmang Langel, Research Fellow, ICWA, attended the 1st edition of the International Conference on ‘Bridging the Future: Exploring New Horizons in Korea-India Relations’ as a panellist. The international conference was organised by the Sejong Institute and the Embassy of India, Seoul, Republic of Korea, and held in Seoul on 27th February 2025. The event was sponsored by The Asia Foundation. The International Conference also witnessed participation by Yong-Joon LEE, Chairman, Sejong Institute; Amb. Amit Kumar, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Korea; Hee-sang KIM, Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Young-kwan Yoon, Chairman, Asan Institute for Policy Studies (Former Minister of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade). Dr. Langel spoke on ‘India and ROK: Charting New Course in the Changing Global Order’.

## Panel Discussion on ‘Non-Traditional Challenges in the Indo-Pacific: Re-defining Maritime Security Situation in the Region and Elevating Cooperation’, 28 February 2025



ICWA held a panel discussion on ‘Non-Traditional Challenges in the Indo-Pacific: Re-defining Maritime Security Situation in the Region and Elevating Cooperation’ at Sapru House on 28 February. It was chaired by Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha, Chairman of the Trustee Board, India Foundation, Former Flag Officer Commander-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command and Chief of Integrated Defence Staff. Commodore Abhay Kumar Singh, Research Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi; Prof. Jagannath Panda, Head, Stockholm Centre for South Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs (SCSA-IPA), Stockholm; Marianne Peron-Doise, Director of Research, The French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (IRIS), Paris; and Ms. Swati Ganeshan, Consultant Energy Transition, Climate Policy, International Affairs, were the panellists. At the discussion, welcome remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA.



## Interaction with Official(s) of Vietnam Foreign Ministry, 3 March 2025

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Mr. Le Dinh Tinh, Director General, Department of Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vietnam, met Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, at Sapru House on 3 March 2025. The two sides discussed the growing geopolitical uncertainty and intensifying global competition. AS Nutan Kapoor Mahawar highlighted the achievements of India's Act East Policy, articulated by PM Modi in 2014, and how India's engagement with ASEAN and Vietnam has become broad-based and diversified. She emphasised the convergence between India's Indo-Pacific approach and ASEAN's vision, reinforcing regional cooperation. On the bilateral front, Mr. Le Dinh Tinh acknowledged India as a reliable security and defence partner, appreciating India's training for Vietnam's military personnel. AS Mahawar also noted the similarities between India's strategic autonomy and Vietnam's 'Four No's' foreign policy, underscoring shared principles in their diplomatic approaches and the rising trajectory of their bilateral relationship.

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## Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) Workshop on 'Maritime Domain Awareness', Colombo, Sri Lanka, 5 March 2025

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Under the rubric of the Academic Group of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), a workshop on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) was organised by Geopolitical Cartographer, a Sri Lankan think tank, in collaboration with the Embassy of Japan, Sri Lanka, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the Sri Lankan Navy, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 05 March 2025. The event was attended by representatives from the UNODC, Sri Lanka Navy, Japan Coast Guard, Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), Gurugram, India, Maldives National Defence Force, and the India Council of World Affairs (ICWA). Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director (Research), and Mr. Keshav Verma, Research Associate, participated in the workshop. During the workshop, Dr. Ray emphasised the importance of multilateral cooperation in MDA, capacity building, trust-building, and the establishment of MDA networks to enhance maritime security and maintain good order at sea. Mr. Verma highlighted the critical role that the space sector can play in effective maritime domain awareness. The inaugural address was delivered by Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and President of Geopolitical Cartographer, who underscored Sri Lanka's critical role in MDA and its ongoing efforts to strengthen maritime security. The workshop also featured a demonstration of Vessel Boarding, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) conducted in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Navy and UNODC at Dikkowita Fisheries Harbour, Colombo, which involved representatives from Japan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and India. At the conclusion of the workshop, remarks were given by the Deputy Minister of Defence, Sri Lanka, Mr. Aruna Jayasekara, who reiterated the need for a comprehensive maritime strategy in Sri Lanka. Participants also had the opportunity to share perspectives on MDA and related topics during an informal meeting.



## 52<sup>nd</sup> Sapru House Lecture by H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Republic of Armenia, 10 March 2025



On March 10, 2025, H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, delivered the 52nd Sapru House Lecture at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in New Delhi. His address, titled "Armenia and India in a Changing World: Strengthening Ties, Security Futures," underscored the evolving dynamics of Armenia-India relations and the broader geopolitical landscape. Amb. L. Prashant Pise, the Deputy Director General, delivered the opening remarks.

Marking the 30th anniversary of the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between the two nations, the lecture reviewed the progress made in political dialogue, trade, and cultural engagement, while outlining ambitions for broader collaboration in sectors like IT, pharmaceuticals, green energy, and tourism.

Minister Mirzoyan highlighted the historical and cultural bonds that underpin the Armenia-India relationship, emphasizing Armenia's strategic decision to view its ties with India from a long-term perspective. He attributed the strengthening of bilateral relations to the active efforts and leadership of Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar. Concrete outcomes of this partnership were seen in areas like economic development, defence cooperation, education, and cultural exchanges.

A significant portion of the lecture was dedicated to Armenia's regional security concerns and its peace-building initiatives. Minister Mirzoyan elaborated on Armenia's "Vision for Peace and Partnership," which includes efforts to negotiate a peace treaty with Azerbaijan based on mutual respect for sovereignty and non-aggression. He also introduced the "Crossroads of Peace" project, aimed at enhancing regional trade and transportation connectivity as part of Armenia's broader push for economic integration and cooperation in the South Caucasus.

In addition to India, Armenia is actively strengthening relations with other global and regional players. The Minister spoke about Armenia's deepening ties with Iran and Georgia, upgrading the Armenia-Georgia relationship to a strategic level, and maintaining strong, naturally aligned relations with Iran. Furthermore, Armenia has developed meaningful engagements with the U.S. and the EU, as exemplified by the trilateral meeting in April 2024 and the signing of the Armenia-U.S. Strategic Partnership Charter. Its continued involvement in the Eurasian Economic Union and efforts to enhance ties with Russia, Central Asia, and China also reflect Armenia's multipronged foreign policy.



## CSCAP Meeting, Singapore, 10–11 March 2025

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The first meeting of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Study Group on Biosecurity and Health Security in the Asia-Pacific was held in Singapore on 10–11 March 2025. Prof. Atanu Basu, Scientist G (Retd.), ICMR National Institute of Virology, Pune, participated in the meeting on behalf of CSCAP-India.

The meeting deliberated upon the following themes: (a) emerging biosecurity and health security threats in the Asia-Pacific, (b) pandemic preparedness and response in the Asia-Pacific, (c) biosecurity implications of modern biotechnologies, (d) national frameworks and regional mechanisms on biosecurity, (e) verification, compliance and confidence-building measures supporting the implementation of the biological weapons convention, and (f) roundtable discussion on biosecurity governance in the Asia-Pacific and RSIS presentation of the report on the emerging biosecurity landscape in Southeast Asia.

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## Second ICWA Young Scholars Conference on ‘India on the Rise: Foreign Policy in the Amrit Kaal’, 11 March 2025

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The ICWA hosted the Second ICWA Young Scholars Conference on the theme ‘India on the Rise: Foreign Policy in the Amrit Kaal’ on 11 March 2025 at Sapru House. The conference saw the participation of young research scholars from seven universities from across India and seven universities from the National Capital Region, who came together to discuss how Indian foreign policy will contribute to the vision of a developed nation by 2047. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.



In her opening remarks, Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, highlighted that the world was at present ridden with conflicts, deep polarisation and intense geopolitics and that, in the Indian mindset, this state of the world is best captured in the phrase ‘global churn’ for it aligns with the ‘samudra manthan’ of Hindu mythology, which symbolises ‘the churn in the ocean’ or the churn between the positive and the negative forces to release amrit or nectar of life, nectar of improved living. It is for this reason that Prime Minister Modi had named the period of 25 years from now till 2047 as Amrit Kaal, or the period when the nectar of life flows. It is in this period that India will strive to grow and redefine its destiny amidst the intense geopolitical churn in the world by riding on the positive and confronting and relegating into oblivion the negative. She further elaborated upon two propositions related to the rise of India, viz., (1) as India rises, it will not rise alone; and (2) as India rises, a new world order will emerge – the two are coterminous with each other. She said that the period of Amrit Kaal will see the emergence of new institutions and new goals in both the domestic and foreign policy arenas as well as the emergence of new habits in governance and diplomacy.

In her keynote address, Professor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, highlighted that the Amrit Kaal is a vision for a transformed India. India’s foreign policy during this period represents a shift towards establishing itself as a Viksit Bharat, or a developed India, by the centenary of its independence, and the phase is not just about domestic transformation but about asserting India’s thought leadership globally. She outlined four strategic goals that India has outlined for itself. The first is multi-alignment; the second is engagement with the Global South. Third is India’s geopolitical location near key trading points and energy routes, and last, providing leadership in crisis situations by being the first responder. She highlighted that India’s aspirations to be a leading power are not about dominance but about shouldering greater



responsibilities in international affairs. Internal strength as a foundation for external influence: India's rising economy, technological progress, military modernisation and cultural resurgence provide the foundation for its expanded global presence. India's foreign policy is a dynamic interplay of tradition and modernity, blending its civilisational ethos with pragmatic global strategies. Describing India as a feminist civilisation state, she said that, unlike the Abrahamic religions, Hindu philosophy believes that chaos leads to creativity. We do not look at the world in binaries but in concentric circles. She urged the young scholars to explore and build new narratives based on the traditions and ethos unique to India.



The first technical session on Indian Foreign Policy and Changing Geopolitics was chaired by Dr. Atul Mishra, Associate Professor and Head of the Department, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Shiv Nadar University, Noida. The session had the participation of speakers from the Central University of Jammu and the North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong. The speakers highlighted that ideas such as Vishwa Guru, Vishwa Mitra and Viksit Bharat are not new to India but have found international relevance due to the geopolitical contests that have fragmented the global landscape. It was pointed out that as a civilisational state, India's culture plays a very important role in shaping its foreign policy and tradition of statecraft and governance. It was stated that India's growing economic strength has provided it with the necessary leverage to enhance its strategic efforts and its global standing. Reformed multilateralism, which aligns with contemporary realities, is another crucial area. The need to overcome domestic contradictions to global aspirations and the need to synergise domestic and global strategies were emphasised.

The second technical session on Indian Foreign Policy and India as a Net Security Provider was chaired by Captain (IN) Yogendra Prakash Sharma, Deputy Director, National Maritime Foundation, Delhi. The speakers in this session were from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam; Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal; and Central University of Gujarat, Vadodara. The speakers of the session discussed the evolution of India as a 'Net Security Provider' over the last decade or so, particularly in the context of the Indo-Pacific. India is positioned at the crossroads of the Indian and Pacific Oceans and has increasingly recognised its responsibility to ensure regional stability and contribute to maintaining peace and security in the region. In this context, it is deepening its engagements with the island nations in the Indo-Pacific. India has made steady progress in its contributions to maritime security cooperation. India's increasing role as a first responder in the region and its anti-piracy and anti-maritime terrorism operations were noted. India's defence collaboration with countries in the Indo-Pacific, its military-to-military ties, and initiatives such as Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiatives (IPOI) and SAGAR were elaborated upon to outline its approach to a peaceful, prosperous, and safe region.





The third technical session on India's Foreign Policy and Development Cooperation was chaired by Dr. Dhananjay Tripathi, Chairperson and Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, South Asian University, New Delhi. The speakers in the session were from Dr. Hari Singh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar, and the University of Allahabad, Prayagraj. The speakers highlighted that development cooperation has become a defining pillar of India's foreign policy. India's development cooperation has deep historical roots, dating back to ancient times, when it engaged in knowledge exchanges with its neighbours and beyond. The spread of Buddhism to Southeast Asia, trade along the Silk Route, and maritime links with Africa and the Middle East are early examples of India's civilisational outreach. The contemporary approach of India is rooted in the principles of South-South cooperation, mutual benefit, and respect for sovereignty. India's development partnerships prioritise capacity-building, infrastructure development, and technology transfer rather than creating economic dependencies. In the context of Africa, it was pointed out that development partnerships with the countries of Africa have strengthened trade and economic relations through capacity-building projects and infrastructure projects, people-to-people ties through educational and cultural exchanges and provided a platform to address shared concerns such as poverty alleviation and climate change mitigation. Development with Dignity was pointed out as a core objective of the Global South. The conference also saw an active participation of students from universities in Delhi NCR, viz., Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University, Jamia Millia Islamia University, South Asian University, Ashoka University, Shiv Nadar University and Amity University.



## Shri V. Srinivas, Special Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, and Secretary, DARPG and DoPPW, visit to ICWA, 11 March 2025

Shri V. Srinivas, Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances and Department of Pensions & Pensioners Welfare, Government of India, met Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA at Sapru House on 11 March 2025. Shri V. Srinivas presented a copy of the book titled 'Viksit Bharat @2047: Governance Transformed', recently published by the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels, in collaboration with DARPG. Edited by Dr. C.K. Mathew, Shri S.N. Tripathi, Prof. C. Sheela Reddy, & Dr. A.P. Singh, the book has contributions by former & serving civil servants on subjects related to public governance and public administration in India, such as democracy, constitution, decentralisation, gender inclusion, social justice, citizen empowerment, etc. Additional Secretary Mahawar thanked Shri V. Srinivas & highlighted how India's experience in governance and administration & recommendations contained in the book for reforms towards the objective of Viksit Bharat can also prove to be valuable when it comes to sharing India's strengths with the countries of the Global South.



## Interactive Session between a delegation from MoU partners in New Zealand ANZF-NZIRI and Research Faculty of ICWA, 17 March 2025

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ICWA Research Faculty held an interaction with its MoU partners ANZF (Asia New Zealand Foundation)-NZIRI (New Zealand India Research Institute) delegation from New Zealand on 17 March 2025 at Sapru House. The New Zealand delegation was led by Prof. David Capie, Director of NZIRI and Centre for Strategic Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, while the Indian side was led by Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research, ICWA. Prof. Capie delivered his remarks on New Zealand's outlook on foreign policy, followed by key intervention from ICWA research faculty members on India's relations with its neighbouring countries and the Indo-Pacific. The talk was followed by a question-and-answer session.

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## Talk by Ms. Olha Vorozhbyt, Expert, Ukrainian Prism & Visiting Lecturer, Ukrainian Catholic University (Lviv, Ukraine), 17 March 2025

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ICWA, in collaboration with the Foreign Policy Council 'Ukrainian Prism', organised a talk on the theme 'Heading Towards the New Level Indo-Ukrainian Relations in the Era of Shaky Geopolitics' at Sapru House on 17 March 2025. Opening remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, and Dr. Hanna Shelest, Director of Security Studies, Ukrainian Prism.

The talk was delivered by Ms. Olha Vorozhbyt, journalist and affiliated expert at Ukrainian Prism. Ms. Nataliya Butyrskaya, affiliated expert, Ukrainian Prism, also participated in the discussion. The deliberations focused on the ground situation in Ukraine and the current state of India-Ukraine bilateral ties. The talk was followed by a question-and-answer session.

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## **H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General, Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) visit to ICWA, 18 March 2025**

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H.E. Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General, Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), met with Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, at Sapru House to discuss ICWA's engagement with the CICA Think Tank Forum. ICWA is the nodal think tank from India for representation in the CICA Think Tank Forum since 2021, nominated by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

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## **Dr. Saeed Khatibzadeh, President, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Iran, visit to ICWA, 18 March 2025**

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Dr. Saeed Khatibzadeh, President, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Iran, met Shri L. Prashant Pise, Acting Director General, ICWA, on 18 March 2025 at Sapru House to discuss academic collaboration. He was accompanied by Dr. Alireza Khoda Gholipour, Head of Groups of Asian and European Studies, IPIS.

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## ICWA-CMI (Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation), Finland Round Table Discussion, 19 March 2025



ICWA, in collaboration with the Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation (CMI), Finland, organised a roundtable discussion on the theme 'Geopolitical Trends in Conflicts and Approaches to Dialogue and Cooperation' at Sapru House, New Delhi, on 19 March 2025.

In the opening session, remarks were made by Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, and Dr. Janne Taalas, Chief Executive Officer, CMI. Speakers introduced their respective organisations and shared their perspectives on the various global and regional geopolitical developments. Speakers highlighted the fragmented and divided nature of world geopolitics and dwelt on the emerging world order, which is taking shape in the wake of various conflicts and crises. Both sides noted that there is a rise in international geopolitical competition as well as a turn towards multipolarity. At the same time, there is an erosion of multilateralism wherein the existing multilateral institutions, like the UN have proved to be ineffective in resolving conflicts. In this context, the need for reforms to improve global governance was highlighted.

During the roundtable discussion, interventions were made by experts from CMI and ICWA on the current trends in global geopolitics with a focus on Europe, West Asia, and South and Southeast Asia. Discussants from the CMI included Dr. Jane Taalas, Chief Executive Officer, CMI; Mr. Alex Virtanen, Asia Head, CMI; Mr. Mikko Patokallio, Senior Manager, CMI; and Dr. Renata Dwan, Senior Advisor, CMI. Discussants from the ICWA included Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary ICWA; Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee, Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Anwesha Ghosh, Research Fellow, ICWA, and Dr. Subodh Bharti, Research Associate, ICWA. The discussion focused on European security, including the Ukraine war, OSCE, UN and peacemaking; India's neighbourhood, including the developments in Myanmar and Afghanistan and the South China Sea; and India's regional initiatives, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) and Colombo Security Conclave (CSC). The ICWA delegation highlighted India's role as a responsible regional and global player and explained New Delhi's position of prioritising peace over war and of advocating inclusive dialogue and diplomatic efforts to resolve any conflict. The delegation also highlighted India's peace efforts in the neighbourhood and beyond, including the humanitarian assistance the country readily provides in times of crises and its role in UN peacekeeping. The CMI delegation highlighted the impact of the Ukraine crisis on European security architecture, in particular its impact on increasing European expenditure on defence and security. Against the backdrop of Finland's recent NATO membership, CMI also highlighted how the traditional concept of neutrality had collapsed for them. Both sides agreed on the need to reduce the space for ambiguities, especially with regard to frozen conflicts.

The closing remarks were made by Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, and Dr. Janne Taalas, Chief Executive Officer, CMI.

## Talk by Dr. Gladden Pappin-President, the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs (HIIA), 19 March 2025



ICWA hosted a talk by Dr. Gladden Pappin, President, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs (HIIA), on 'U.S. under Trump 2.0 and Implications for Europe and the World' on 19 March 2025 at Sapru House. It was chaired by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA. The deliberations focused on the US strategic review under the Trump presidency, including his administration's foreign policy objectives and priorities. The talk was followed by an interaction with ICWA Research Faculty.

## Ms. Susanna Minato-Torkler, Senior Manager, International Markets, Federation of German Industries in Berlin (BDI), visit to ICWA, 19 March 2025

Ms. Susanna Minato-Torkler, Senior Manager, International Markets, Federation of German Industries in Berlin (BDI), met Amb. Prashant Pise, Acting Director General, ICWA, on 19 March 2025 at Sapru House to discuss India's perspective on the shifting world order and changing geopolitical and geoeconomic situation, its impact on India's foreign, security, and economic policy, and China's growing dominance and disparate global supply chains. They explored India's role in the Global South and concrete areas for Indo-German trade and investment collaboration, including AI, digitalisation, and defence diversification. Strengthening economic ties and innovation partnerships was a key focus of the discussions.





## Eighth ICWA-RIAC (Russia International Affairs Council) Dialogue, 20 March 2025



The ICWA and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) organised their eighth annual dialogue on 20 March 2025 at Sapru House, New Delhi. The Dialogue focused on sharing the Indian and Russian perspectives on the changing dynamics in the world order as well as new and existing frontiers of cooperation between India and Russia.

The inaugural remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA; Dr. Ivan Timofeev, Director General, Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC); Mr. Roman Babushkin, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Russia in India; and Mr. Nikhilesh Giri, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India in Russia. Speakers noted that India-Russia mutual trust and resilience are exemplary. Despite the ongoing geopolitical flux, India and Russia have continued to expand the scope of their bilateral relations. The Indian side shared assessments regarding the political, security and economic situation in its neighbourhood; the Russian side shared assessments regarding the situation in Ukraine and prospects for peace, Trump politics, and US-China strategic competition.

The first session focused on the theme 'Changing Dynamics in the Global Order'. It was chaired by Prof. Sanjay Pandey, Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, JNU. Speakers included Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Maxim Suchkov, Director of the Institute for International Studies, MGIMO University; Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director (Research), ICWA; Dr. Ivan Timofeev, Director General, RIAC; and Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA. Speakers shared views on the changing world order and agreed that the world is already multipolar and that this is an increasing trend. The world order is experiencing rebalancing with changing great power equations. A commitment to multilateralism was reiterated, and the need to advance reforms of institutions of global governance, including the UN, was highlighted. A discussion was held on the desirable characteristics of the emerging New World Order. The role of plurilateral institutions, such as BRICS, SCO, and G20 in enhancing multilateral cooperation was emphasised. The two sides also noted that Eurasia was a region of common interest and called for approaches for promoting security and development in the region.







The second session of the Dialogue focused on ‘Dimensions of India-Russia Collaboration: Factoring Economic, Energy, and Connectivity Ties’. It was chaired by Ms. Julia Melnikova, Head, Asia and Eurasia Program, RIAC. Speakers included Dr. Ivan Timofeev, Director General, RIAC; Mr. Amit Bhandari, Senior Fellow, Gateway House; Dr. Lydia Kulik, Head of India Studies, Moscow School of Management & Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Oriental Studies RAS; Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA; Mr. Igor Makarov, Head, School of World Economy, HSE University and Mr. Aman Kumar, Research Associate, ICWA. Speakers deliberated on expanding the scope of economic engagement between the two countries while addressing barriers to bilateral trade. The need to sustain the recent growth in bilateral trade was emphasised. Both sides shared their views on the prospects for an India-EAEU FTA and also discussed the scope for financial cooperation, including settlements in national currencies and joint investments. The discussion was held on the impact of US sanctions. Recent trends in the reconfiguration of Russian supply chains in favour of India were noted. Avenues for bilateral cooperation in the agriculture sector and enhancing food security were discussed.

The third session focused on ‘Emerging Frontiers of India-Russia Bilateral Collaboration’. It was chaired by Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra, Founder & Honorary Chairperson, Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies and Editor, India Quarterly. Speakers included Dr. Athar Zafar, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Julia Melnikova, Head, Asia and Eurasia Program, RIAC; Dr. Stuti Banerjee, Senior Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Alexey Kupriyanov, Head of Centre of the Indo-Pacific Region, IMEMO, RAS; Dr. Pragya Pandey, Research Fellow, ICWA; Dr. Irina Strelnikova, Associate Professor, HSE University & Senior Researcher, Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, RAS; and Mr. Aman Kumar, Research Associate, ICWA. Speakers underscored the need to enhance connectivity linkages to enhance India-Russia bilateral cooperation as well as to improve regional connectivity in Eurasia. Speakers also highlighted the prospects for cooperation in the Arctic and Russian Far East for mutual benefit and environmental stability. Both sides shared views on the Indo-Pacific and explored convergences in their outlook.

The closing remarks were made by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary ICWA, and Dr. Ivan Timofeev, DG, RIAC.



## Interaction with Mr. Yuichi Yoshida, Research Fellow, Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), 21 March 2025

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ICWA hosted Mr. Yuichi Yoshida, Research Fellow, at the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA). During his talk on the theme ‘Japan’s Perspective on the Evolving Geopolitics in the Context of the Indo-Pacific’, Mr. Yoshida outlined the changes in the US-Japan alliance after the election of President Trump and the challenges before Japan in the Indo-Pacific region, which include Russia and China. He also spoke of the use of new technologies such as drones in warfare. Elaborating on India and Japan relations, he highlighted the close cultural linkages but also highlighted the need for increased focus within Japan to invest in the political and strategic spheres of the relations. During the discussion, he elaborated on the role of Japan in the Indo-Pacific with respect to the Pacific Island nations, China-Taiwan relations and emerging technologies and opportunities and challenges for India-Japan partnerships in the defence sector.

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## Interaction with the 20<sup>th</sup> batch of the Master’s Programme in Political Leadership and Government (MPG 20) from the MIT School of Government (MIT SOG), Pune, 21 March 2025

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Ambassador Prashant Pise, Acting Director General, ICWA, held an interactive session with the future political leaders studying at the MIT School of Government, Pune, on various aspects of India’s foreign policy in the current geopolitical and geoeconomic situation and Indian diplomatic initiatives to tackle these challenges. This was the 20th batch of the Master’s Programme in Political Leadership and Government from MIT School of Government, Pune, visiting Sapru House, ICWA, on 21 March 2025, as part of their orientation programme.

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## Interaction with scholars from the Applied Policy Research Institute of Armenia (APRI Armenia), 21 March 2025

Scholars from the Applied Policy Research Institute of Armenia (APRI Armenia) visited the Council on 21 March 2025 to hold an interaction with the Research Faculty. Dr. Athar Zafar, SRF, ICWA, and Ms. Nvard Chalikyan, Research Fellow, APRI Armenia, delivered introductory remarks. From ICWA, Dr. Punit Gaur, RF, Dr. Himani



Pant, RF, Dr. F.R. Siddiqui, SRF, Dr. Lakshmi Priya, RF, and Mr. Aman Kumar, RA, participated in the interaction. The APRI Armenia experts included Dr. Sergei Melkonian and Mr. Davit Antonyan. The discussion focused on India-Armenia relations, recent developments in the South Caucasus, regional connectivity, the SCO, economic partnerships, changing geopolitics, security, and global strategic issues. The ICWA scholars informed the Armenian side about India's approach to the neighbourhood regions of Central Asia, South Caucasus, connectivity (including through Chabahar) and Eurasia, and multilateral institutions. The Armenian side talked about the progress and difficulties in boundary negotiations with Azerbaijan and the agreement with Turkey. Yerevan's evolving relationship with long-term partner Russia and its engagement with the West, and its relations with its neighbours, especially Iran and Turkey, were also mentioned.



## Dr. Patryk Kugiel, Senior Analyst, PISM, Poland, and Lecturer at Warsaw University, and Ms. Małgorzata Wejsis-Gołębiak, Director, Polish Institute, New Delhi, visit ICWA, 21 March 2025



Dr. Patryk Kugiel, Senior Analyst, PISM, Lecturer at Warsaw University, and Ms. Małgorzata Wejsis-Gołębiak, Director, Polish Institute, New Delhi, visited ICWA on 21 March 2025. Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director (Research), ICWA, and Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA, participated in the meeting. Both sides discussed global and regional issues and shared their ideas on new projects to expand ICWA-PISM collaboration.



## International Forum on ‘Myanmar Beyond 2025: Challenges and Opportunities in the Multipolar World’ by the ‘Myanmar Narrative’ Think Tank, Naypyitaw, Myanmar, 21 March 2025



ICWA Research Scholars Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Research Fellow, and Dr. Mehdi Hussain, Research Associate, participated in the International Forum on ‘Myanmar Beyond 2025: Challenges and Opportunities in the Multipolar World’, organised by the newly established Myanmar Narrative Think Tank in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 March 2025. The daylong forum was inaugurated by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council & Prime Minister of Myanmar, along with the Minister of Information of Myanmar, U Maung Maung Ohn, and other dignitaries. Experts on geopolitics and geoeconomics from India, Russia, China, Italy, Nepal, Japan, Thailand, and Myanmar participated in the discussions. The prime minister and SAC chairman emphasised Myanmar’s commitment to strategic autonomy in its foreign policy to foster national development amid emerging opportunities in a multipolar world. He also said that Myanmar is committed to a multiparty federal democracy.

## Dr. Piotr Antoni Świtalski, Head of Mission of Poland to India, visit to ICWA, 24 March 2025

Dr. Piotr Antoni Świtalski, Head of Mission of Poland to India, met with Amb. Prashant Pise, Acting Director General, ICWA, on 24 March 2025 at Sapru House for a discussion on issues of mutual interest, including the strengthening of academic collaboration.



## Ambassador of Jordan, H.E. Mr. Yousef Mustafa Ali Abdel Ghani, visit to ICWA, 24 March 2025

Ambassador of Jordan, H.E. Mr. Yousef Mustafa Ali Abdel Ghani, met with Ambassador Prashant Pise, Acting Director General of ICWA, on 24 March 2025 at Sapru House to discuss issues of mutual interest, including academic collaboration.



## Roundtable Discussion on ‘Unleashing the Blue Economy Potential in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR): Way Forward for the IORA’, 25 March 2025



Roundtable Discussion on “Unleashing the Blue Economy Potential in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR): Way Forward for the IORA” was held on 25 March 2025, at Sapru house. Welcome remarks were given by Welcome Remarks by Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA. The round table was chaired by Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia, Former Director General, ICWA and Former Ambassador of India. The lead speaker was Prof. S.K. Mohanty, Professor,

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). The discussants were Dr. Sulagna Chattopadhyay, Editor-in-Chief, Geography and You (G'nY), President, SaGAA and Secretary General, LIGHTS; Dr Jessica Fraser, Senior Lecturer at the Nelson Mandela University (NMU), South Africa And Admiral Jayantha Perera (Retd.), Sri Lanka Navy.

Discussions focussed on how under India's Chairmanship, we hope to see a further strengthening of cooperation within the grouping for greater security and prosperity of the IOR and for making the Indian Ocean a free, open and inclusive space. India's chairmanship will seek to address challenges stemming from climate change, marine pollution, overfishing and IUU fishing, overexploitation of resources of the ocean and biodiversity losses. Blue economy estimation is crucial because it contributes significantly to GDP, trade, employment, high growth and resilient. Present national income accounting unable to capture activities in the sectors such as NAC, ISIC. It was



stated that for IORA, we need integrated governance model which takes into account the impact of climate change, land use policy, socio-economic conditions, also plastic waste and pollution.



## Conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between ICWA and Kristu Jayanti College (KJC), 25 March 2025

The ICWA, an institute of national importance under the ICWA Act, 2001, located in New Delhi, and Kristu Jayanti College (KJC), affiliated with Bengaluru North University, recognised by UGC and re-accredited with 'A++ grade' by NAAC in December 2021, established in 1999 and located in Bengaluru, have concluded an MoU. The MoU provides for collaboration in conducting joint activities, such as seminars, studies, and publications for expanding awareness and knowledge in international affairs and Indian foreign policy, also offering internships to students of KJC.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 25 March 2025 between ICWA and KJC, which will be valid for a period of three years.

## Panel Discussion on 'Fraying at the Edges? Rethinking Narratives on International Migration & Mobility in 2025', 26 March 2025



ICWA convened a high-level panel discussion at Sapru House on 26 March 2025 to critically explore the evolving discourse on migration and mobility in a post-pandemic and geopolitically shifting world.

The session was chaired by Amb. Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Professor of Diplomatic Practice, Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P. Jindal Global University, and Former Secretary (Overseas Indian Affairs), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The panel included leading migration scholars and practitioners: Prof. Binod Khadria, President, Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT) and Co-convenor, Metropolis Asia-Pacific (MAP); Mr. Sanjay Awasthi, Head of Office, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), India; Prof. S. Irudaya Rajan, Chair, International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD); and Mr. Karan Deep Singh, Independent Journalist and former Staff Reporter with The New York Times. The welcome remarks were delivered by Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA. The event was coordinated by Ms. Ambi, Consultant and Research Lead, Centre for Migration, Mobility and Diaspora Studies (CMMDS), ICWA.

The panel engaged in critical conversations on unpacking and rethinking current definitions of migration and mobility, the dynamics of circular migration, challenges in the global workplace, and the need for enhancing migrant well-being and inclusion. Speakers stressed the importance of strengthened international cooperation and joint responsibility among both origin and destination countries to build equitable and future-ready migration governance frameworks.





### Two-day International Conference by the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, 9–10 January 2025



The ICWA, as part of its outreach programme, supported the two-day conference titled India's Foreign Policy Under Modi 3.0: Challenges and Opportunities (09–10 January 2025) organised by the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. The conference saw the participation of a number of senior academics and scholars along with students from universities across the country. The Council was represented by Dr. Stuti Banerjee, Senior Research Fellow, who gave the special address in the Valedictory Session, which also included addresses by Dr. Sebastian Domzalski, Charge d'Affairs, Embassy of Poland, New Delhi; Prof Sanjay Srivastava, Vice Chancellor, MGCU, Bihar; and Prof Prakash Singh, Director, South Campus, Delhi University. The conference examined India's foreign policy in the past decade and sought to understand the challenges and opportunities that India's foreign policy will face as it contributes to realising the dream of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

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### Two-day International Conference (in Hindi) by St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Mumbai, 20–21 January 2025



A two-day international conference in Hindi on the topic 'Global Scenario of Hindi' was organised on 20–21 January 2025 at St. Xavier College (Autonomous), Mumbai. The ICWA, New Delhi, sponsored the conference. This event was a collaborative effort of the ICWA, New Delhi; the Department of Hindi, St. Xavier College,

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Mumbai; the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra; and the Union Bank of India. Their collective efforts played a significant role in its organisation, demonstrating a shared commitment to the promotion of Hindi. Dr. Punit Gaur, representing the ICWA, introduced the conference topic and its contemporary relevance. He shared the Council's research on international issues with an Indian perspective, especially work done in the Hindi language, which is instrumental in reaching out to the Indian diaspora.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Damodar Khadse, an eminent Hindi writer from Pune whose words inspired the audience. The Principal, Dr. Rajendra Shinde, inaugurated the conference. Esteemed speakers like Ms. Lillia Khovaeva from Moscow, Russia; Dr. Alka Dunpath from Mauritius; Prof. Fatta Ram Nayak; Dr. Asha Naithani Dayama (Ex-HOD, Hindi); and Dr. Shirin Qureshi from Colombo, Sri Lanka, shared their views at the inaugural session, leaving the audience motivated and inspired.

The conference was a platform for diverse discussions, conducted in three parallel sessions (a total of six), with a special yoga session in the gymkhana. Prof. Dr. Anil Singh, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Mumbai, was the chief guest for the valedictory function. Prof. Dr. Karuna Gokarn, Vice Principal (Academics), presented the vote of thanks. More than 100 participants from home and abroad attended the conference, engaging in intellectually stimulating discussions on a wide range of topics.

## Two-day International Conference by UGC Centre for Maritime Studies, Pondicherry University, 29–30 January 2025



On 29–30 January 2025, ICWA, in collaboration with the UGC Centre for Maritime Studies, Pondicherry University, and the Indian Council of Social Science Research, had an in-depth discussion on the #Andaman and #Nicobar Island chain. Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, RF, ICWA, in the inaugural session, highlighted the strategic location and also highlighted the ecological and environmental sensitivities of the A&N island chain. During a technical session, Dr. Sripathi highlighted the role that A&N plays in India's foreign policy engagement, especially with respect to Southeast Asian countries and India's Neighbourhood First Policy, Act East Policy, SAGAR and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.



## First NIAS Annual Myanmar Conclave ‘Myanmar in 2025: Internal Crises and External Relations’ by NIAS, Bengaluru, and Maharaja’s College, University of Mysore & Pondicherry University, Mysore, 29–30 January 2025

The UGC Centre for Maritime Studies, in collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), organised a one-and-a-half-day National Seminar titled India’s Andaman & Nicobar Islands: Multidimensional Perspectives in Puducherry on January 29-30, 2025. The one-and-a-half-day seminar has seen the participation of scholars and experts.

The Inaugural Address was delivered by Amb. Rajiv Bhatia and a Keynote Address by Dr (Mrs.) Malini V Shankar, IAS (Retd.), Vice Chancellor, Indian Maritime University, Chennai. This was followed by Shri Shishir Priyadarshi, President, Chintan Research Foundation, New Delhi and Prof. Abhay Kumar Singh, Professor and Dean, School of Historical Studies, Nalanda University, Rajgir, delivering the Guest of Honour addresses. Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Research Fellow, representing ICWA, made special remarks. The conference was attended by researchers and scholars from institutions in Delhi as well as throughout the country.

## Two-day International Conference by KONGU Engineering College, Perundural, Erode, Tamil Nadu, 30–31 January 2025

In collaboration with ICWA, the Department of Management Studies, Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai, Erode, Tamil Nadu, organised an International Conference on ‘India’s Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Navigating Global Challenges and Opportunities’ on 30–31 January 2025. Dr. Himani Pant, Research Fellow, ICWA, delivered a ‘Special Address’ in the inaugural session of the conference where she highlighted India’s foreign policy priorities and approach to global developments. Welcome remarks in the session were delivered by Dr. P. Karthikeyan, HOD, Department of Management Studies, Kongu Engineering College; Prof. V. Balusamy, Principal, Kongu Engineering College; and Mr. A.K. Ilango, Correspondent, Kongu Engineering College. The keynote speech was delivered by Prof. Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University.



## One-day Inter College Debate Competition by Mata Sundri College for Women, New Delhi, 3 February 2025

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Department of Political Science, IQAC and Internal Committee, Mata Sundri College for Women, University of Delhi, in collaboration with ICWA, organised an inter-collegiate debate competition on the theme 'India as a global power or a developmental partner' under the 'Foreign Policy Awareness Scheme' of ICWA on 3 February 2025. Shri Hitesh Rajpal, Director, ICWA, delivered the keynote address, interacted with students and faculty, and distributed certificates and prizes to the winners as well as participants of the debate competition. The welcome address was delivered by Prof. (Dr) Harpreet Kaur, Chairperson/Principal, Mata Sundri College for Women, and Prof. Madhuri Sharma. Engaging debates were judged by Prof. Sheetal Sharma, Prof. Mahesh Ranjan Debata and Dr. Gurdeep Kaur. Students of various colleges of the University of Delhi participated in the debate competition and contributed their arguments.

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## Two-day National Seminar by the Department of Political Science, Central University of Haryana, Jant, Pali Village, Mahendergarh, Haryana, 6–7 February 2025

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A two-day national seminar titled 'We, The People @75: Navigating Social Justice and Global Peace' was organised by the Department of Political Science, Central University of Haryana, Jant, Pali Village, Mahendergarh, Haryana, 6–7 February 2025, in collaboration with ICWA. The inaugural session was graced by the hon'ble VC of CUH, Prof. Tankeshwar Kumar, HOD dept of Political Science. Rajeev Kumar Singh, Prof. Manish from the Central University of Gujrat. Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty, RF ICWA, represented the organisation and delivered some facets on ICWA and Indian foreign policy.

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## Two-day National Seminar by Institute for the Study of Developing Areas (ISDA), (An Autonomous Body Registered Under Society's), T.C. 4/64-2, Continental Gardens, Kowdiar, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, 13–14 February 2025

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In collaboration with the ICWA, a two-day seminar titled 'Recent Developments in India's Neighbourhood: Aspects and Implications' was organised at the Central University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, on 13–14 February 2025 with the support of the Institute for Study of Developing Areas (ISDA), Kowdiar, Thiruvananthapuram. The seminar was inaugurated by the Honourable Governor of Kerala, Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, with the presidential address delivered by the Honourable Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Kerala, Prof. Vincent Mathew, and Amb. (Retd.) T.P. Sreenivasan. Mr. Girisanker, Research Associate, ICWA, delivered the felicitation address in the inaugural session, emphasising India's commitment to regional cooperation under the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and advocating for inclusive growth and stability in South Asia.

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## Two-day International Conference by School of International Studies and Diaspora, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, 17–18 February 2025

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On 17 and 18 February 2025, in collaboration with ICWA, the School of International Studies and Diaspora (SISD), Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, conducted a two-day international conference on 'India Ideas@2047: Emerging Contours of Foreign Policy and Security Strategies'. On the occasion, Prof. Lakhaji Bhai Malav and Prof. Darshana Bhatt were welcomed as the guests of honour. Prof. Sanjeev Sharma, the chief guest at the conference, delivered the inaugural address. Mukesh Kumar, RA, ICWA, addressed the audience on India's Foreign Policy and its Growing Domestic Capabilities in the Defence and Critical Sectors.

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## One-day seminar by MoU partner Department of Defence and National Security Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh, 18 February 2025

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In collaboration with ICWA, the Department of Defence and National Security Studies, Punjab University, organised a one-day seminar focusing on Emerging Security Paradigms of the Greater West Asian Region on 18 February 2025 at Chandigarh, and the following points emerged from the dialogue: There are speculations about whether all six GCC countries would be signing the Abraham Accords in the near future. Bahrain and the UAE have signed the accords, while Saudi Arabia was on the verge of signing before the October 7 Hamas operation. The pace of economic diversification in the region is another important trend, and recently we have seen most of these countries, especially the GCC countries, focusing on reducing their dependence on hydrocarbons. Apart from promoting renewable and clean energy consumption at the local level and focusing on green hydrogen, the countries are diversifying their economy by promoting the tourism and education sector. The fall of Assad is a phenomenal and consequential event underlining Turkey's efforts to re-emerge, break in Iran's axis of resistance, and dent in Moscow's influence in the region.

In terms of hard-core security at the national level, despite their dependence on external actors, these countries are aiming to localise their defence production, as highlighted in their visions. And there is a potential for India to enhance defence cooperation with the regional countries. Space is another sector for cooperation for India. Recently Gulf countries have shown interest in space programmes, with the UAE having launched the Hope Probe in 2020 and set to launch the mission to the asteroid belt in 2028. Human security is a major concern in the region, and we are aware of the death and suffering of people on account of the Gaza war, the Syrian crisis and the Yemen conflict. Yemen is going through the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with a quarter million people losing their lives. Decades of civil war in Yemen have displaced 4.5 million people from their homes and pushed over 17 million people into acute hunger. Additionally, 12 million children are in need of food, water, shelter and medicine. It is estimated that 0.6 million people lost their lives in the Syrian conflict.



## Two-day International Conference by Amity School of Language, Amity University, Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, 20–21 February 2025

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In collaboration with the ICWA, Amity School of Languages, Lucknow, hosted an international conference on 'Indian Knowledge Systems and Foreign Policy' on 20th February 2025, which brought together domain experts, scholars, and policymakers to explore the wide relevance of India's intellectual traditions in shaping present-day international diplomatic strategies.

Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director of Research, represented ICWA at this conference. She spoke on the theme of the conference on how the Indian knowledge system intersects with Indian foreign policy and our understanding of the world. She highlighted how ICWA's objective in promoting an Indian narrative of foreign policy has been contributing to the Indian knowledge system. Amb. Deepak Vohra, Shri Rai Mahimapat Ray, Prof. Rajanish Kumar Mishra, JNU, and Prof. Krishna Mohan Pandey, BHU, delivered keynote and theme-based speeches in the inaugural and technical sessions. The conference aimed to strengthen India's role in global diplomacy based on India's ethos and values, paving the path for future research and strategic partnerships.



## One-Day International Conference by Christ University, Bangalore, and Chennai Centre for China Studies (C3S), 24 February 2025

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Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, delivered the inaugural address at the International Conference on 'A Decade of Act East Policy: Impact on India-ASEAN Relations and Regional Dynamics' co-organised by ICWA's MoU partners Christ University, Bangalore, and Chennai Centre for China Studies (C3S) on 24 February 2025.

In her address, she outlined the growing importance of India's ties with ASEAN and the Southeast Asian countries, the achievements of ten years of India's Act East Policy in promoting cooperation in traditional and non-traditional areas of security in addition to a focus on political, economic and cultural synergies between India's Indo-Pacific vision and ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific and the way forward. Consul General of Malaysia, Chennai, HE Mr. Saravana Kumar Kumaravasagam delivered the special address. Malaysia holds the current chairmanship of ASEAN and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) framework.

## Two-day International Conference by the Centre for African Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 24–25 February 2025

On 24–25 February 2025, the ICWA, in collaboration with the Centre for African Studies, JNU, hosted the International Conference on 'Emerging Dynamics in India-Africa Partnership: Challenges and Issues'. The event featured a keynote speech by Prof. Ummu Salma Bava, Dean (Acting), SIS, JNU, and Prof. J. M. Moosa, Chairperson, Centre for African Studies. The inaugural session was graced by Amb. Prof. Anil Sooklal, High Commissioner of South Africa to India (Guest of Honour), and Mr. Sevala Naik Mude, IFS, Additional Secretary (Central and West Africa), MEA, Government of India (Chief Guest). Nandini Khandelwal, RI, ICWA, delivered a special remark on the evolving India-Africa relationship and presented a paper titled 'Unlocking Africa's Rare Earth Potential: Opportunities for India Malawi Strategic Engagement'. She highlighted the need for integrated supply chains between India and Africa in the critical minerals sector, including the rare earth elements, addressing China's dominance using the India-Malawi partnership as a case study.





## Two-day International Conference by South Asia Foundation, Varanasi, U.P. at IIC, New Delhi. 26–27 February 2025

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A two-day international conference, ‘Fostering India-Nepal Ties and Neighbourhood Diplomacy: Relevance of Buddha’s Teachings’, was held on 26–27 February 2025, at India International Centre, New Delhi. The conference was jointly organised by the Lumbini Buddhist University, Nepal, and the South Asia Foundation, in collaboration with the ICWA, the Embassy of India in Kathmandu and the Embassy of Nepal in New Delhi. The event featured a diverse range of panel discussions. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, and Dr. Subodh Chandra Bharti, Research Associate, ICWA, represented the Council. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar delivered the inaugural remarks, highlighting the relevance of Buddhist thought in contemporary international relations and foreign policies. She emphasised the connection between Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as the shared heritage of India and Nepal. Dr. Subodh presented a paper on ‘Bridging Borders Through the Buddhist Circuit’.

The key speakers at the inaugural session included H.E. Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma, the Ambassador of Nepal to India; Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri, the Former Ambassador of India to Nepal; Prof. Abhay Kumar Singh, Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University; Prof. Subarna Lal Bajracharya, Vice Chancellor of Lumbini Buddhist University (addressed virtually); and Prof. Priyanka Upadhyaya, UNESCO Chair for Peace at BHU. Other notable speakers during the panel discussions included Sh. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, former Foreign Minister of Nepal; Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat and Dr. Swarnim Wagle, members of Parliament of Nepal; Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha from MPIDSA; Prof. Sanjay K. Bhardwaj from JNU; Amb. Pankaj Saran; and various distinguished speakers from universities in India, such as JNU, BHU, DU, and MIT World Peace University.

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## One-day International Conference International Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies (ICIPS), Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana, 27 February 2025

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In collaboration with the ICWA, a one-day National Conference on ‘India and IORA: Pathways Ahead’ was organised in hybrid mode by the International Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies (ICIPS) and the Department of Economics, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana, on 27 February 2025. Ms. Paramita Tripathi, Joint Secretary (Indo-Pacific), Ministry of External Affairs, addressed the conference virtually as the chief guest. HE Professor Anil Sooklal, High Commissioner, Republic of South Africa to India, also addressed the conference virtually in the inaugural session.

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Dr. Pragya Pandey, Research Fellow, ICWA, represented the Council and delivered remarks in the inaugural session where she spoke on the theme of the conference, focusing on the important role IORA plays in institutionalising engagements, strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development in a holistic, integrated manner in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). She also highlighted that India has played an active role in the IORA since its inception, and later this year, India will be taking over the chairmanship of IORA once again.

The discussion at the conference highlighted that IORA is important for India, and India is vital for IORA. The speakers also focused on critically analysing IORA's performance since 1997 and deliberated upon IORA's outlook on the Indo-Pacific along with the outlooks on other regional groupings as well as individual countries' positions on the Indo-Pacific.

## Two-day National Conference by Political Science Programme, D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University, 8–9 March 2025



In collaboration with ICWA, a two-day national conference titled 'Global Political Economy: Current Trajectory, Future Challenges' was held on 8–9 March 2025 at Goa University. The conference was organised by D.D. Kosambi School of Social Sciences and Behavioural Studies, Goa University. Ms. Avni Sablok, Research Associate & Social Media Coordinator, represented the Council and delivered special remarks on the conference



theme. She deliberated that the future prospects of the Global Political Economy (GPE) need to be examined in light of ongoing geopolitical tensions on the themes of trade wars, emerging technologies, the creation of digital currencies and reforming the multilateral system. She further underscored that India's growing economy, strategic partnerships, and leadership in the Global South are poised to play a crucial role in shaping the future of the global economic and political landscape. Dr. Rahul Mukerji, Prof. & Chairman, Modern Politics of South Asia, Heidelberg University, Germany, delivered the inaugural address on 'India's Emergence in the Global Political Economy: The Significance of Embedded Liberalism'.

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## One-day International Conference by Kristu Jayanti College (Autonomous), K. Narayanapura, Kothanur PO, Bengaluru, Karnataka, 11 March 2025

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On 11 March 2025, ICWA in collaboration with Kristu Jayanti College Autonomous, Bangalore, hosted an international conference on 'Gender Mainstreaming – Feminist Foreign Policy Approaches in the Context of South Asia'. This 11th International Conference on Gender Mainstreaming – Feminist Foreign Policy Approaches in the Context of South Asia, organised by Kristu Jayanti College Autonomous, brought together global experts, scholars, and practitioners. Ms. Avni Sablok, Research Associate & Social Media Coordinator, represented the Council and delivered an inaugural address on the conference theme. She underscored that recently, the concept of Feminist Foreign Policy (FPP) has gained increasing attention in both academic and political spheres, and India has also readjusted the 'gender-sensitive lens' by shifting the focus from 'women development' to 'women-led development' energised by '#NariShakti' during its G20 Presidency. Dr. Esther Fitzpatrick, The University of Auckland, New Zealand, and Dr. Simi Mehta, PhD, CEO & Editorial Director IMPRI Impact and Policy Research Institute, were the keynote speakers for the conference. Dr. Anuradha Chenoy, Centre for Russia and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and Ms. Ambika Vishwanath, Co-founder, Kubernein Initiative, Maitri Fellow, were the speakers for the technical sessions on the conference theme.

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## Two-day International Conference by the Department of International Relations, School of Social Sciences, Central University of Jharkhand, Cheri-Manatu, Ranchi, Jharkhand, 19–20 March 2025

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In collaboration with ICWA, the Department of International Relations, School of Social Sciences, Central University of Jharkhand, organised a two-day international conference on March 19–20, 2025. The theme of this conference was ‘Indian Knowledge Traditions and Sustainable Connectivity Vision: South and Southeast Asia as Conduit for Regional Integration and Development’.

The inaugural address was given by Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, and the presidential address was delivered by Prof. Kshiti Bhusan Das, Vice Chancellor of Jharkhand Central University. The keynote address was given by Dr. Rajiv Nayan, Senior Research Associate, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, Development Enclave, New Delhi (MAKAIAS, Kolkata Representative), and a special address was delivered by Vice Chancellor of Ranchi University, Shri Ajit Kumar Sinha. The ICWA representative, Dr. Samatha Mallempati, Research Fellow, delivered a felicitation address. The two-day international conference covered various aspects of connectivity in South and Southeast Asia. In various sessions, faculty members from various universities across India as well as from countries such as Sri Lanka and Japan have presented their research papers. Professor Rajkumar Kothari, Vice Chancellor, Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata & Professor of Political Science, Diamond Harbour Women’s University, West Bengal, and Professor Swaran Singh, Professor, Centre for International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, presented on the relevance of the Indian knowledge system. Parallel sessions were also conducted along with main panel discussions for young scholars and researchers to present their research papers.

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## Two-day International Seminar by the Department of Gandhian and Peace Studies, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Bihar, at IIC, New Delhi, 19–20 March 2025

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A two-day international seminar on ‘India’s Rising Soft Power: Strategic Dimensions and Global Outreach’ was organised by the Department of Gandhian and Peace Studies, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar, at the Indian International Centre, New Delhi, on 19–20 March 2025. The International Seminar was financially supported by ICWA. Dr. Athar Zafar, Senior Research Fellow, represented the Council at the seminar. Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Member of Parliament, was the guest of honour in the inaugural session, which was chaired by Prof. Sanjay Srivastava, Vice Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi Central University (MGCU), Bihar. The





keynote speaker was Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNC, New Delhi, while Prof. Kumkum Dhar, Chairperson, Pandit Birju Maharaj Kathak Sansthan, Lucknow, addressed the gathering as a special guest. CSIR President, Prof. Aswini Mohapatra, former Dean, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi, delivered his remarks. ICWA Representative, Dr. Athar Zafar, spoke about ICWA and its academic activities.

The Valedictory Session was chaired by Prof. Sanjay Srivastava, VC, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar. The special guest was Amb. Raj Kumar Srivastava, Dean, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi. The Guest of Honour was Prof. Mazhar Asif, Vice Chancellor, Jamila Millia Islamia, New Delhi, and the CSIR Representative was Dr. Abhishek Srivastava, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi. The seminar convenor was Dr. Aslam Khan, MGCU, Bihar.

The deliberations during the two days covered diverse issues under various session themes: 'India's Global Outreach: A New Era of Multilateral Engagement', 'Philosophical and Ideological Foundation of India's Soft Power', 'India's Soft Power Diplomacy: Challenges and Opportunities', 'India's Soft Power in the New World Order', 'Key Agencies and Institutional Framework in India's Soft Power Strategy', 'Cultural and Spiritual Linkages of India's Soft Power', 'India's Soft Power: Global Footprints', 'Soft Power in Action: Tools and Effects of India's Cultural Diplomacy', 'Texts and Tools of India Soft Power', 'New Horizons in India's Soft Power: Emerging Tools and Trends', 'Indian Diaspora as a Soft Power Asset', 'Regional Diplomacy: Strengthening Ties with Regional Countries', 'Public Diplomacy and Communication in India's Soft Power', 'Leveraging Multilateral Institutions for India's Soft Power Influence', and 'Public Diplomacy Strategy and Design'. The seminar was attended by scholars from various institutions from different parts of India and abroad.

## One-day International Conference by Shailendra Education Society's Arts, Commerce and Science College, Shailendra Nagar, Shailendra Vidhyalya Marg, Dahisar (East), Mumbai, at University of Mumbai, Mumbai, 20 March 2025

Shailendra Education Society's Arts, Commerce & Science College, affiliated to the University of Mumbai, in collaboration with ICWA, organised an International Conference on the theme 'Emerging World Order: India-USA' at Pherozechah Mehta Bhavan, Department of Civics and Politics, Kalina Campus, University of Mumbai, with the support of the Conference Grant scheme of ICWA on 20 March 2025. Shri Hitesh Rajpal, Director, ICWA, delivered the special address and spoke about key aspects of the changing world order, India's growing role amidst the geopolitical shifts, the USA's role, the evolving India-USA partnership, challenges and



opportunities, as well as the road ahead. The welcome address was delivered by Principal (Dr) Swati Pitale, Shailendra College, Mumbai, and the keynote address was delivered by Prof. Santishree Pandit, Vice Chancellor, JNU. The inaugural session was followed by eight technical sessions and concluded by a valedictory session, addressed by Prof. Seshadri Chari, Professor Emeritus, Savitribai Phule Pune University, and chaired by Prof. Dilip Mohite, Department of Political Science, M. S. University, Baroda.



## One-day National Conference by the Department of Political Science, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, Assam, 21 March 2025

In collaboration with ICWA, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, Assam, organised a one-day National Conference on 'India's Diplomatic Renaissance: Progress and Potential' on 21st March 2025. Keshav Verma, Research Associate at ICWA, represented the Council at the conference, which was part of ICWA's University Outreach Programme. During his address, Keshav Verma discussed the legacy of ICWA and highlighted India's diplomatic transformation, emphasising its assertive foreign policy, regional cooperation, and growing global influence.





## One-day International Seminar by Thanthai Periyar Government Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, 21 March 2025

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The International Seminar on India-Africa Partnership: Achievements and Opportunities Towards Sustainable Economic and Business Development was held on 21st March 2025 at the Thanthai Periyar Auditorium. Sponsored by the ICWA, Government of India, the event was organised by the PG & Research Department of Commerce, Thanthai Periyar Government Arts and Science College, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. The seminar brought together scholars, researchers, academicians, and industry experts to deliberate on the evolving partnership between India and Africa.

The welcome address was delivered by Dr. V. Saroja, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Commerce. Following this, the thematic address was presented by Dr. C. Paramasivan, the Organising Secretary and Associate Professor. Dr. Arshad, Research Fellow, ICWA represented the Council and addressed the gathering. Dr. K. Vasudevan, Principal of the college, delivered the presidential address, emphasising the role of academia in fostering international relations and sustainable business practices.

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## One-day National Conference by the Department of International Studies, S. K. Somaiya College, Somaiya Vidya Vihar University, Mumbai, 27 March 2025

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In collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs, Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Mumbai organized an international conference on 'India-Africa Development Partnership: Envisioning a Sustainable Future, Expanding Engagement' on 27 March 2025. The conference brought together domain experts, academics, policy makers from India and Africa to discuss and debate on modalities and the emerging frontiers of India Africa Development cooperation.

Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research, represented ICWA in the conference. She spoke on the theme of the conference highlighting the paradox of Africa's development and growth, and how India's partnership with Africa aligns with Africa's Agenda 2063. She





further outlined how their partnership aims to achieve shared goals of sustainable development and create opportunities for both regions amidst shifting geopolitical dynamics.

Amb T P Sreenivasan, Prof V N Rajshekaram Pillai, Vice Chancellor, Prof Gulshan Sachdeva, Chief Coordinator Dakshin, and Dr Dinoj Upadhyay delivered keynote and theme-based address.

Dr Nivedita Ray also participated in the inaugural session of the Youth IR Conclave on 'Contours of Indian Foreign Policy' held on 28 March 2023 at Somaiya Vidyavihar University. She spoke on India's Foreign policy outlook and how the perspectives of youth are important in shaping and impacting India's Foreign policy.



## Two day National Seminar titled "India Bangladesh Relations in Recent Period: Challenges and Possibilities " by National Post Graduate College, Barhalganj, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, 26-27 March 2025

A National Seminar in Hindi titled "India-Bangladesh Relations in Recent Period: Challenges and Possibilities" was organized by National Post Graduate College, Barhalganj, Gorakhpur in collaboration with ICWA on 26-27 March 2025. Prof. Shri Prakash Mani Tripathi, ex VC, Indira Gandhi Tribal University, Amarkantak IGNTU was the Chief guest in the Inaugural Session. Dr. Dhruvajyoti, RF, represented the Council in the Seminar. He addressed





the students on the recent instability in Bangladesh, its internal political and economic developments, their impact on bilateral relations and the way forward.

## Two-day International Conference by Deshkal Society and Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi, 29–30 March 2025

A two-day international event titled '7th Edition Bodh Gaya Global Dialogues 2025' was organised by Deshkal Society with Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in association with ICWA on 29 and 30 March 2025 at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The Inaugural Session was graced by HE Major General Vetsop Namgyel, Ambassador, Royal Bhutanese Embassy, New Delhi; Dr. DM Mulay, Author, Diplomat and Former Secretary, GOI; and Ambassador Sanjay Kumar Verma, Chairperson, RIS, New Delhi. The first day had three sessions, themed Buddhist Philosophy and Teaching of Buddhism, Envisioning the Buddhist Circuits: Locality, Heritage Making and Sustainability and Buddhist Monuments, Heritage and Beyond. It was followed by a cultural evening. The second day started with a special session themed India-Vietnam Relations: Exploring and Building on the Buddhism Connect and Emerging Areas of Cooperation. It was chaired by Ambassador Ranjit Rae, former Ambassador of India to Hungary, Nepal and Vietnam. Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee, RF, ICWA, presented a paper titled 'Bringing Buddhism Back as a Pillar of India's Diplomatic Culture: Forging New Avenues of Cooperation'. The session was followed by a film screening, a book discussion and a conversation. The Valedictory Address was delivered by Shri Ram Bahadur Rai, President, IGNCA, New Delhi.



# RESEARCH INTERNS AT ICWA

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Eddula Varshitha  
Pondicherry University



Aishwarya Upreti  
University of Rajasthan



Saumyasingh Kshatriya  
Pondicherry University



Nandini Khandelwal  
Pondicherry University



Farhan Khan  
Jamia Millia Islamia



Aditi Mishra  
Amity University  
Noida



Julia Jose Thachil  
Central University of  
Gujarat



Ms. Ritika Mourya  
Pandit Deendayal  
Energy University  
Gandhinagar



Sugandhi  
Jamia Millia Islamia



Mrityunjay Goswami  
Jindal School of  
International Affairs



Ms. Aishwarya Jinde  
Jawaharlal Nehru  
University



Ms. Manaswita  
Jawaharlal Nehru  
University



Ms. Monya Sudersanam  
Monash University



# ICWA PUBLICATIONS ISSUE BRIEFS

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1. Cross-Strait Relations under Donald Trump 2.0, Dr. Teshu Singh | 27 February 2025
  2. The Regime Formation in Post-Assad Syria: Prospects and Challenges, Dr. Arshad | 19 February 2025
  3. Two Decades of Electoral Democracy in Iraq: An Assessment, Farhan Khan | 18 February 2025
  4. The North Will Remember: DeepSeek and the Bigger Questions Around Artificial Intelligence in International Politics, Anubha Gupta | 17 February 2025
  5. The Ouster of Assad: Why Now and What Is Next in Syria, Dr. Fazzur Rahman Siddiqui | 12 February 2025
  6. Contest over the Panama Canal- An Emerging Geopolitical Flashpoint, Arnab Chakrabarty | 10 February 2025
  7. Narco-trafficking Across Indo-Myanmar Border and its Implications on India's Security, Barbie Basumatary | 10 February 2025
  8. Morocco's India Outreach: Prospects for Defence Industry Cooperation, Mukesh Kumar | 6 February 2025
  9. The Growing Influence of JNIM in West Africa: Threats to Benin, Togo and Ghana, Ingale Utkarsh Ajay | 6 February 2025
  10. Seven Years of Saudi Arabia's NEOM Project: Prospects and Challenges, Sugandhi | 24 January 2025
  11. Twenty Years of Quad: Building Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, Dr. Stuti Banerjee | 20 January 2025
  12. UN Cybercrime Treaty: The Year Cyber and Multilateralism Stole the Show, Anubha Gupta | 14 January 2025
  13. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing in Latin American Waters by China's Distant Water Fleet- Concerns, Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty | 7 January 2025
  14. Understanding the ICC's Arrest Warrants to Political Leadership in the Israel-Hamas Conflict, Dr. Arshad | 7 January 2025
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## VIEWPOINTS

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1. Russia's Unclear Nuclear Southward Engagement, Dr. Sripathi Narayanan | 12 March 2025
  2. Fissures in the MAS- Changing Political Landscape of Bolivia, Dr. Arnab Chakrabarty | 12 March 2025
  3. Taliban Officials Undertake First Diplomatic Visit to Japan, Dr. Anwesha Ghosh | 28 February 2025
  4. How is Russia engaging with the new regime in Syria?, Aman Kumar | 20 February 2025
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5. Gas and Politics: The US LNG Exports to Europe, Saumyasingh Kshatriya | 20 February 2025
  6. BRICS Expansion in ASEAN and Indonesia's Entry, Dr. Mehdi Hussain | 19 February 2025
  7. Xi Jinping's Visit to Macao, Varshitha Eddula | 18 February 2025
  8. 2021 Military Coup in Myanmar and Its Impact along the India-Myanmar Border Region, Leivon Victor Lamkang | 7 February 2025
  9. Contextualising Arunachal Pradesh in India's Development and Security Framework, Bengia Mero | 7 February 2025
  10. US Sanctions on Russian Oil: Assessing the Impact on Trade Dynamics and Global Energy Markets, Aravindhan G | 6 February 2025
  11. The Aero India Programme: Catalysing Aerospace to Boost India's Defence Export Ambitions, Lipun kumar Sanbad | 6 February 2025
  12. ISRO Successfully Executes Satellite Docking Experiment, Keshav Verma | 28 January 2025
  13. Russia's Growing Engagement with the Alliance of Sahel States, Julia Jose Thachil | 22 January 2025
  14. Ivory Coast Joins the Wave: The Declining French Influence in Francophone Africa, Nandini Khandelwal | 20 January 2025
  15. India's Foreign Secretary Meets the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan to Discuss Bilateral Relations, Dr. Anwesha Ghosh | 16 January 2025
  16. ASEAN with Malaysia at the Helm and 2025, Dr. Sripathi Narayanan | 14 January 2025
  17. Advancing the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, Aditi Mishra | 13 January 2025
  18. A Perspective on Kyrgyz-Tajik Border Agreement, Dr. Punit Gaur | 7 January 2025
  19. Central Asian Countries' Rendezvous with BRICS, Dr. Athar Zafar | 6 January 2025
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## GUEST COLUMNS

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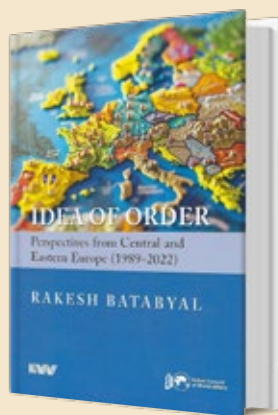
1. 'Media Influences in Myanmar Peace Process', Lt. Gen. Min Naing is Secretary, National Solidarity & Peace-making Negotiation Committee, Myanmar | 08 February 2025
  2. 'India's Notices to Pakistan to 'Modify' the Indus Water Treaty: Causes and Implications', Dr. Shrabana Barua | 06 February 2025
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# SPECIAL REPORTS

1. Three Years of Ukraine War: An Overview of the Current Situation and International Peace Mediation Efforts, Dr. Himani Pant & Aman Kumar | 04 March 2025
2. India-Vietnam Civilisational Linkages: Remembering Kalinga and Cham of the Past and the Present, Dr. Dhruvajyoti Bhattacharjee | 18 February 2025
3. India-Singapore Semiconductor Supply Chain: Complementary and Resilient, Dr. Mehdi Hussain | 18 February 2025
4. Into the Ideas and Politics of Viktor Orban, Aman Kumar | 18 February 2025
5. India-Latin America Nuclear Cooperation, Girisanter SB | 18 February 2025
6. Changing Foreign Policy of Smaller Gulf States: A Case Study of Kuwait, Dr. Lakshmi Priya | 13 February 2025

## ICWA BOOKS



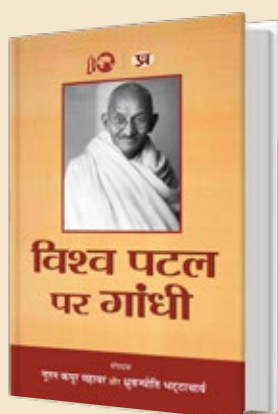
### **Idea of Order: Perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe (1989-2022)**

By Rakesh Batabyal  
(Indian Council of  
World Affairs; KW  
Publishers, 2025)



### **Impact of Foreign Investment Flows on Indian Economy in the Post Liberalisation Era**

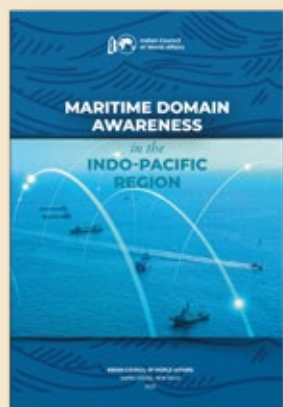
By Dr. Tom Jacob  
(Indian Council of World  
Affairs; KW Publishers,  
2025)



## विश्व पटल पर गांधी

नूतन कपूर माहवर और ध्रुब्ज्योती भट्टाचार्य, संपादक  
(भारतीय वैश्विक परिषद; प्रभात प्रकाशन, 2025)

# SPECIAL PUBLICATION



## Maritime Domain Awareness in the Indo-Pacific Region

By Dr. Sripathi Narayanan, Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar (Retd), Mr. Abhijit Singh, Cdr. (Dr.) Arnab Das, Dr. Vijay Sakhuja and Mr. Keshav Verma

(Indian Council of World Affairs)

## India Quarterly A Journal of International Affairs

Volume 81, Issue 1, January – March 2025

### Editorial

It is an annual ritual to celebrate the new year with expectations of better days ahead. Governments look forward to carrying on their productive activities with promises of delivering their best to the citizens. International organisations express hope for rapid conflict resolutions and foster cooperative relations among nations.

But as we entered the year 2025, the wars in Europe and West Asia did not portend any timely solutions. The global political economy showed no signs of improvement. The countries of the Global South suffering from massive debt burdens had little hope of receiving suitable relief.

The American voters chose Donald Trump as their 47th president with a massive mandate, which promised a peaceful transition of power in Washington, D.C. However, this decision of the American voters brought newer uncertainties for the world. In a way, the US presidency works like a barometer of the direction of big power relations for at least four years. With the return of Trump to the White House, American allies and adversaries appeared to

be in for another four years of uncertainty and unpredictability during the Trump 2.0 administration. The future of the global struggle against climate change is in question now. European allies of the United States have got a hint of the risk to NATO's resilience from President Trump's statements on restoring US control over Panama and purchasing Greenland from Denmark. Stability of North America is already disturbed by Trump's desire to rename the Gulf of Mexico and the idea of making Canada the 51st state of the US. China has already begun preparations for confronting the Trump 2.0 administration on the tariff issue. The durability of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) is also doubtful. The Israeli wars against HAMAS in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the bombing of Syria in the aftermath of regime change and Tel Aviv's limited missile exchanges with Iran had already altered the geopolitical landscape of West Asia and the Persian Gulf region. The challenges posed by the Yemeni Houthis to peaceful shipping in the Red Sea have persisted, despite repeated missile strikes on their hideouts and camps.



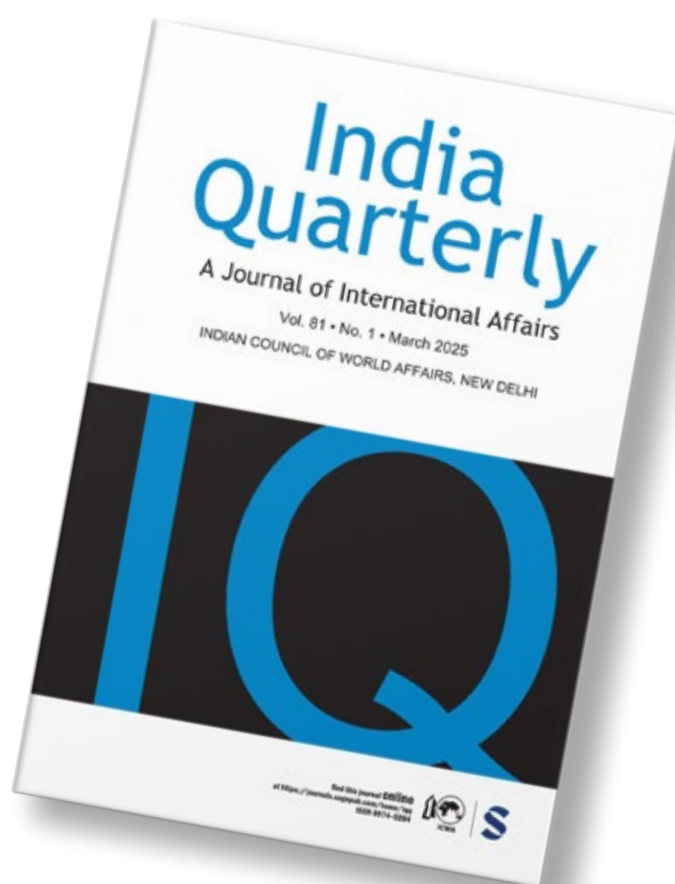
All indications are clearly discernible that the year 2025 is going to be yet another year of persistent efforts to end armed conflicts through open negotiations and backdoor deals. Efforts towards strengthening a multipolar world through multilateralism will continue in the face of the Trump 2.0 administration's efforts to make America a dominant actor in world affairs.

The present issue of the journal contains a lead article on the complex climate change issues to highlight the plights of the climate refugees and the need for a new legal framework to safeguard the interests of people's resilience due to environmental factors. Given the persistent volatility of the West Asian geopolitics that affect global energy security in very many ways, an article in this issue analyses the role of the regional middle powers to navigate a turbulent ecosystem where external powers are traditional players. A review essay on Iranian foreign policy has been included. It explains the domestic challenges and external pressures on Iranian rulers who try to deftly navigate through these complexities. One of the international groupings that openly seeks to work towards a multipolar global order and opposes unilateralism has been BRICS. Membership in BRICS has extraordinarily increased, and in years to come, its potential differences with the West-dominated global political economy are likely to deepen. An article in this issue explains the role of BRICS in the global agricultural landscape and analyses the implications of agricultural practices of BRICS countries.

While the attention of the international community at the moment is focused on the Ukraine War and its consequences and the strategic upheavals in the West Asian region, terrorism endures to threaten societies and disrupt peace. The ability of HTS, a designated terrorist network, with origins in ISIS, to overthrow the Assad regime in Syria has rung an alarm bell. In fact, Donald Trump during his first administration had declared victory over ISIS. This global terrorist organisation is currently weak but not dead! The return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan and consolidation of its rule signals that ISIS presence in Southwest Asia may further increase. The article on Afghanistan is about the governing structure under the Taliban rule and views and expectations of common people in that country.

Yet another article is about the political crisis in Myanmar that not only has implications for ASEAN but also for South Asia. It analyses the implications of Rohingya refugees in Jammu and Kashmir and its national security implications.

The world is always in a state of flux, and challenges confronting the international community are always in abundance that require scholarly studies and research to understand and suggest measures to resolve conflicts and promote peace and cooperation. India Quarterly looks forward to receiving scholarly articles to achieve those goals.



**Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra**  
Editor, India Quarterly

## ABOUT ICWA

The ICWA was established in 1943 by a group of eminent intellectuals led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Dr. H.N. Kunzru. Its 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 organises an array of intellectual activities, including conferences, seminars, roundtable discussions and lectures, and brings out a range of publications. It has a well-stocked library and an active website and publishes the journal 'India Quarterly'. ICWA has over 50 MoUs with international think tanks and research institutions to promote a better understanding of international issues and develop areas of cooperation. The Council also has partnerships with leading research institutions, think tanks and universities in India.



**Mentor & Editor** : Ms. Nutan Kapoor Mahawar, Additional Secretary, ICWA, Sapru House, New Delhi.  
**Managing Editor** : Dr. Nivedita Ray, Director Research, ICWA, Sapru House, New Delhi.  
**Assistant Editor** : Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee, Research Fellow, ICWA, Sapru House, New Delhi.

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