



**INDO-PACIFIC RESEARCH NETWORK**

**Navigating the Future, Together**

# **INDO-PACIFIC FUTURE FORUM 2024**

**15-16 DECEMBER 2024**

**CONFERENCE BOOKLET**



**NIICE**

*Connecting Saagar to Sagar*

# **INDO-PACIFIC FUTURE FORUM 2024**

**15-16 DECEMBER 2024**

**Conference Booklet**



**NIICE**

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NEPAL INSTITUTE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Indo-Pacific Future Forum is the flagship event of the Indo-Pacific Research Network (IPRN) and the Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE). The theme of the two-day conference is *Connecting Saagar to Sagar*, where "Saagar" represents the Indo-Pacific region, and "Sagar" refers to Sagarmatha (Mount Everest). This forum aims to foster dialogue, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of strategic issues impacting the Indo-Pacific region by bringing together policymakers, scholars, and experts from around the world. The objectives of the forum are to strengthen regional cooperation, address geopolitical challenges, encourage multilateral engagement, and foster policy innovation.

The Indo-Pacific Future Forum 2024 will host approximately 100 participants from 30 countries across 20 sessions. The event will be streamed live on the NIICE Facebook page (@contactniice), Twitter (@contactniice), and YouTube (NIICE Nepal). Organizations and individuals are welcome to share the live stream or videos, but editing them to misrepresent statements or information is prohibited.

NIICE is an apolitical, independent, and non-partisan think tank. Therefore, the views, thoughts, and opinions expressed during the forum are those of the individual speakers and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the organization.

**Please Note:**

1. The Indo-Pacific Future Forum is an academic discussion. The chairs, moderators and panelists will speak in the open format without protocol precedence.
2. The profiles of speakers are arranged in order of appearance and the confirmation received. We have not followed any protocol, hierarchy or order.
3. The session are of **90-100 min talk time**. Each speaker will have 10 min to make their presentation. If you have powerpoint (slides) presentation, please send it to before 14 December to nice.kathmandu@gmail.com. Since there is back to back sessions, the **chairs/ moderators are requested to be very strict with time** so that there is some time for discussion and also prepare for the next session on time.
4. Time conversion might have some errors. Kindly convert it as per your time zone. Nepal Time is correct and final.
5. Kindly **join the Zoom Room 15 min before** the scheduled time. If you need any assistance, please contact our Conference Center.

## CONFERENCE CENTER

**For Participants Only (08:00- 23:30 hrs Nepal Time)**

Sumitra Karki (Director)

WhatsApp or Direct Call: +977-9840383300

Email: nice.kathmandu@gmail.com

**For Media and other Queries (8:00-21:00 hrs Nepal Time)**

Mira Rai (Research Associate)

Whatsapp: +977-9813147262

## ZOOM DETAILS

<b>ANCHOR ROOM</b>	<b>NAUTICAL ROOM</b>
<p><b>15 DECEMBER, SUN, DAY 1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining Free and Open Indo-Pacific</li> <li>2. India's Role in Shaping Indo-Pacific Architecture</li> <li>3. Role of Russia and China in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>4. South Asia in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>5. Future of QUAD and Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific</li> </ol> <p><b>16 DECEMBER, MON, DAY 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Maritime Security in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>7. Non-Traditional Security Threats in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>8. South East Asia in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>9. Maritime Connectivity and Trade in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>10. Future of the Indo-Pacific Strategy</li> </ol>	<p><b>15 DECEMBER, SUN, DAY 1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Indian Ocean and Maritime Security</li> <li>B. Leveraging the Blue Economy: Enhancing Trade Routes and Maritime Infrastructure in the Indian Ocean</li> <li>C. Climate Change and its Effects on the Indo-Pacific Nations</li> <li>D. Great-Power Competition in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>E. Emerging Challenges in the Indo-Pacific Region</li> </ol> <p><b>16 DECEMBER, MON, DAY 2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>F. Strategy, Security and Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>G. Addressing Non-Traditional Maritime Threats</li> <li>H. Security in the Indo-Pacific</li> <li>I. Small States in the Indo-Pacific</li> </ol>
<b>MEETING ID</b>	<b>MEETING ID</b>
<b>846 0731 1957</b>	<b>778 2748 3709</b>
<b>PASSCODE</b>	<b>PASSCODE</b>
<b>niicenepal</b>	<b>niicenepal</b>

Kindly **join the Zoom Room 15 min before** the scheduled time. If you need any technical assistance, please contact our Conference Team via WhatsApp or Direct Call.

### Technical Assistance

Sumitra Karki : +977-9840383300  
Mira Rai : +977-9813147262  
Manila Prajapati : +977-9845548416  
Abhinav Dhakal : +977-9742439647



## **PARTNERS**

- Arzuh International, Queensland, Australia.
- Bangladesh Center for Indo-Pacific Affairs, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Indo-Pacific Program, Wilson Center, Washington DC, USA.
- Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Institute of National Security Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- Mashariki Research and Policy Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.
- NatStrat, New Delhi, India.
- National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, India.
- The Graduate School of International Studies, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea.
- Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies, Kanagawa, Japan.

**PROGRAM**  
**SCHEDULE**

09:15-11:15 hrs KATHMANDU

12:30-14:30 hrs TOKYO

11:30-13:30 hrs BEIJING

03:30-05:30 hrs LONDON

09:00-11:00 hrs NEW DELHI

14:30-16:30 hrs SYDNEY

06:30-08:30 hrs MOSCOW

22:30-00:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC (-1 Day)

## SESSION 1

### Maintaining Free and Open Indo-Pacific

**Moderator: Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**, *Research Director, Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement.*

- **Sumitra Karki**, *Director, Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Welcome Remarks.*
- **Hon. Ababu-Terrah Namwamba**, **EGH**, *Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya.*
- **H.E. Leann Johnston**, *Australian Ambassador to Nepal.*
- **Admiral Karambir Singh**, *Chairman, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Cleo Paskal**, *Foundation for Defense of Democracies, USA.*
- **Capt. (Retd.) Teruaki Aizawa**, *Associate Professor, Department of Leadership and Military History, National Defense Academy, School of Defense Sciences, Japan.*
- **Admiral Pradeep Chauhan**, *Director General, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Tobiáš Lipold**, *Research Fellow, Sinopsis, Czech Republic, **European Perspective on the Indo-Pacific Region.***



Day 1

15 DEC 2024

10:15-12:15 hrs KATHMANDU

13:30-15:30 hrs TOKYO

12:30-14:30 hrs BEIJING

04:30-06:30 hrs LONDON

10:00-12:00 hrs NEW DELHI

15:30-17:30 hrs SYDNEY

07:30-09:30 hrs MOSCOW

23:30-01:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC (-1 Day)

## SESSION A

### Indian Ocean and Maritime Security

**Chair: Dr. Medha Bisht**, *Associate Professor, South Asian University, India.*

- **Dr. Frederic Grare**, *Senior Research Fellow, National Security College, Australian National University, Australia.*
- **Dr. Sitakanta Mishra**, *Associate Professor, Pandit Deendayal Energy University, India, Nuclear Dimension of Indo-Pacific Geopolitics.*
- **Mauro Bonavita**, *Lecturer, King's College London, UK.*
- **Dr. Md. Shariful Islam**, *Associate Professor & Chairperson, Department of IR, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh.*
- **Urbi Das**, *Jadavpur University, India, India-US Relations amidst the Maritime Great Game in the Indo-Pacific.*



ZOOM ID 778 2748 3709

PW: niicenepal



Day 1

15 DEC 2024

11:15-13:15 hrs KATHMANDU

14:30-16:30 hrs TOKYO

13:30-15:30 hrs BEIJING

05:30-07:30 hrs LONDON

11:00-13:00 hrs NEW DELHI

16:30-18:30 hrs SYDNEY

08:30-10:30 hrs MOSCOW

00:30-02:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 2

### India's Role in Shaping Indo-Pacific Architecture

**Chair: Amb. Anil Trigunayat**, *Former Indian Diplomat and Distinguished Fellow at Vivekananda International Foundation, India.*

- **Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha**, *Former Commander in Chief, Indian Navy & Chairman Trustee, India Foundation, **Unfolding of Geopolitics in the Indian Ocean.***
- **Dr. Rajeswari (Raji) Pillai Rajagopalan**, *Resident Senior Fellow, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Australia.*
- **Captain Sarabjeet Singh Parmar (Retd)**, *Distinguished Fellow, Council for Strategic and Defence Research, India.*
- **Dr. Pooja Bhatt**, *Associate Professor, Jindal School of International Affairs, OP Jindal Global University, India,*
- **Dr. Astha Chadha**, *Associate Professor, Ritsumeikan University, Japan, **India-Japan strategies in the Indo-Pacific.***
- **Dr. Premesha Saha**, *Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India.*

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PW: niicenepal



Day 1

15 DEC 2024

12:15-14:15 hrs KATHMANDU

15:30-17:30 hrs TOKYO

14:30-16:30 hrs BEIJING

06:30-08:30 hrs LONDON

12:00-14:00 hrs NEW DELHI

17:30-19:30 hrs SYDNEY

09:30-11:30 hrs MOSCOW

01:30-03:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION B

### Leveraging the Blue Economy: Enhancing Trade Routes and Maritime Infrastructure in the Indian Ocean

**Chair: Admiral Pradeep Chauhan**, *Director General, National Maritime Foundation, India.*

- **Mahadevan Shankar**, *Honorary Adjunct Fellow, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Dr. Daisuke Kawai**, *Deputy Director Economic Security Research Program, Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology (RCAST), University of Tokyo, Japan.*
- **Dr. Md Shanawez Hossain**, *Associate Professor, Global Studies & Governance, Independent University, Bangladesh.*
- **Dr. Ulupi Borah**, *Senior Fellow, Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, New Delhi, India.*
- **Mrittika Guha Sarkar**, *School of International Service, American University, USA.*
- **Nafisa Nazin Lutf**, *Lecturer, Department of International Relations, Bangladesh University of Professionals, Bangladesh.*
- **Mahesh Ganguly & Mohd. Hadi Raza**, *MMAJ Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, India, Canal Conundrum and Indo-Pacific: Kra Canal Project in the Geopolitical Rivalry between China and India.*



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Day 1

15 DEC 2024

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18:30-20:30 hrs SYDNEY

10:30-12:30 hrs MOSCOW

02:30-04:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

### SESSION 3

## Role of Russia and China in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Dr. Jagannath Panda**, *Professor, University of Warsaw, Poland.*

- **Prof. Dr. Anuradha M. Chenoy**, *Former Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, **Chinese and Russian Counter Reaction to the US in the Indo Pacific.***
- **Dr. Peng Nian**, *Director of Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies, Hong Kong.*
- **Dr. Gudrun Wacker**, *Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (German Institute for International and Security Affairs), Germany.*
- **Dr. Ekaterina Koldunova**, *Associate Professor, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russia.*
- **Michael Kovrig**, *Senior Adviser, Asia, International Crisis Group, Belgium, **China's Game of Influence in the Pacific Islands.***
- **Dr. Petr Topychkanov**, *Head of Sector for New Challenges in South and Southeast Asia, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russia, **Nuclear Dimensions of Regional and External Competitive Relations in the Indo-Pacific Region.***
- **Dr. Roger Chifeng Liu**, *Assistant Professor, National Sun Yat-sen University, Taiwan.*

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Day 1

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19:30-21:30 hrs SYDNEY

11:30-13:30 hrs MOSCOW

03:30-05:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION C

### Climate Change and its Effects on the Indo-Pacific Nations

**Chair: Dr. Abhiruchi Ojha**, *Assistant Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia, India.*

- **Prof. Rajib Shaw**, *Professor, Keio University, Japan.*
- **Dr. Dhanasree Jayaram**, *Assistant Professor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India.*
- **Judith Mwaniki**, *Director, Consortium of Economic Research and Development Studies, Kenya.*
- **Dr. Ornela Cuci**, *Former Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment of Albania.*
- **Dr. Marufa Akter**, *Department of Global Studies and Governance, Independent University, Bangladesh.*
- **Genevieve Donnellon-May**, *Oxford Global Society, UK.*
- **Jayantika Rao Tiruvaloor Viavoori**, *Research Associate, Delhi Policy Group, India*



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18:30-20:30 hrs TOKYO

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15:00-17:00 hrs NEW DELHI

20:30-22:30 hrs SYDNEY

12:30-14:30 hrs MOSCOW

04:30-06:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 4

### South Asia in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Dr. Deepak Prakash Bhatt**, *Chairperson, Global Centre for Climate and Security Governance, Nepal.*

- **Dr. Monish Tourangbam**, *Director, Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies, India.*
- **Prof. Dr. Agnieszka Kuszewska-Bohnert**, *Associate Professor, Jagiellonian University, Poland, **India's Role in Shaping Indo-Pacific Architecture: the European Perspective.***
- **Asanga Abeyagoonasekera**, *Executive Director, South Asia Foresight Network, USA.*
- **Dr. P. Krishnan**, *Director, Bay of Bengal Program-Inter-Governmental Organization, India.*
- **Mira Rai**, *Research Associate, Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Nepal.*
- **Dr. Hasith Kandaudahewa**, *Independent Analyst, Canada, **Sri Lanka in the Indo-Pacific: Charting the Path Forward.***
- **Dr. Abhishek Pratap Singh**, *Assistant Professor, University of Delhi, India.*
- **Dr. Karmveer Singh**, *Assistant Professor, University of Rajasthan, India, **India's Soft Power Diplomacy towards Southeast Asia.***



Day 1

15 DEC 2024

16:15-18:15 hrs KATHMANDU

19:30-21:30 hrs TOKYO

18:30-20:30 hrs BEIJING

10:30-12:30 hrs LONDON

16:00-18:00 hrs NEW DELHI

21:30-23:30 hrs SYDNEY

13:30-15:30 hrs MOSCOW

05:30-07:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION D

### Great-Power Competition in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Dr. Sakti Prasad Srichandan**, *Assistant Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.*

- **Dr. Roger Kangas**, *Academic Dean, Near East South Asia (NESAS) Center for Strategic Studies, US.*
- **Dr. Alexey Kupriyanov**, *Head of the Center of the Indo-Pacific Region, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russia.*
- **Dr. Pascal Abb**, *Senior Researcher, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, Germany.*
- **Prof. Shahab E. Khan**, *Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Center for Indo-Pacific Affairs, Bangladesh.*
- **Dr. Uma Purushothaman**, *Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.*
- **Gitanjali Sinha Roy**, *Assistant Professor, Jindal School of International Affairs, OP Jindal Global University, India.*



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Day 1

15 DEC 2024

17:15-19:15 hrs KATHMANDU

20:30-22:30 hrs TOKYO

19:30-21:30 hrs BEIJING

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17:00-19:00 hrs NEW DELHI

22:30-00:30 hrs SYDNEY

14:30-16:30 hrs MOSCOW

06:30-08:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 5

### Future of QUAD and Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Styopa Safaryan**, *Founder and Director, Armenian Institute of International and Security Affairs, Armenia.*

- **Professor Geoffrey Till**, *S. Rajaratnam Professor of Strategic Studies, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore.*
- **Prof. Dr. Sato Yoichiro**, *Dean, Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan.*
- **Prof. Dr. Swaran Singh**, *School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.*
- **Dr. Ernest Gunasekara-Rockwell**, *US Department of the Air Force, USA.*
- **Lucas Myers**, *Senior Associate, Indo-Pacific Program, Wilson Center, USA.*

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Day 1

15 DEC 2024

18:15-20:15 hrs KATHMANDU

21:30-23:30 hrs TOKYO

20:30-22:30 hrs BEIJING

12:30-14:30 hrs LONDON

18:00-20:00 hrs NEW DELHI

23:30-01:30 hrs SYDNEY

15:30-17:30 hrs MOSCOW

07:30-09:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION E

### Emerging Challenges in the Indo-Pacific Region

**Chair: Dr. Shantesh Kumar Singh**, *Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.*

- **Lt. Gen (Retd.) Harinder Singh**, *Former GOC of Indian Army, Importance of Land Factor in the Indo-Pacific.*
- **Kashif Anwar**, *Independent Researcher, India, China's Outreach and India's Role in Global Chips Industry in the Indo-Pacific Region.*
- **Dr. Shambhavi Thite**, *Senior Doctoral Fellow, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, Reassessing Central Asia's Role in the Indo-Pacific Security Framework.*
- **Dr. Sanghamitra Kalita & Dr. Devi Roy**, *Faculty, University of Mysore & Guest Faculty, Delhi University, India, India-Japan Strategic Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.*
- **Dr. Sania Makna**, *Assistant Professor, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, India, Geopolitics of Quad and Beyond: Assessing India's Regional Partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.*
- **Dr. Ghulam Ali**, *Deputy Director of Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia's Deepening Engagement in the Asia-Pacific.*
- **Vijay Prasad Jayshwal**, *Assistant Professor, Tribhuvan University, Deconstructing the People's Narratives on Major Issues in Indo-Pacific Strategy.*



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Day 2

16 DEC 2024

09:15-11:15 hrs KATHMANDU

12:30-14:30 hrs TOKYO

11:30-13:30 hrs BEIJING

03:30-05:30 hrs LONDON

09:00-11:00 hrs NEW DELHI

14:30-16:30 hrs SYDNEY

06:30-08:30 hrs MOSCOW

22:30-00:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC (-1 Day)

## SESSION 6

### Maritime Security in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Dr. Amit Gupta**, *Senior Advisor, Forum of Federations, Canada.*

- **Cmde (Retd.) Anil Jai Singh**, *Vice President, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Prof. Dr. Ian Hall**, *Professor, Government and International Relations, Griffith University, Australia.*
- **Dr. John F. Bradford**, *Executive Director, Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies, Japan.*
- **Dr. Tess Newton Cain**, *Lowy Institute, Australia, Maritime Security in the Pacific Islands Region.*
- **Abhijit Singh**, *Senior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India.*
- **Divya Rai**, *Research Associate, Delhi Policy Group, India.*

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10:15-12:15 hrs KATHMANDU

13:30-15:30 hrs TOKYO

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10:00-12:00 hrs NEW DELHI

15:30-17:30 hrs SYDNEY

07:30-09:30 hrs MOSCOW

23:30-01:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC (-1 Day)

## SESSION F

### Strategy, Security and Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**, *Research Director, Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Nepal.*

- **Amb. Pankaj Saran**, *Former Deputy National Security Advisor of India & Convenor, NatStrat, India.*
- **Dr. Tomohiko Taniguchi**, *Special Adviser to Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe & Specially Appointed Professor at the University of Tsukuba, Japan.*
- **Prof. Jeffrey S Payne**, *Assistant Professor, Near East South Asia (NESAs) Center for Strategic Studies, US.*
- **Prof. John Blaxland**, *Professor of International Security & Intelligence Studies, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, Australia.*
- **Shihoko Goto**, *Director, Indo-Pacific Program, Wilson Center, USA.*
- **Dr. Pichamon Yeophantong**, *Associate Professor, Australian War College, Australia.*



11:15-13:15 hrs KATHMANDU

14:30-16:30 hrs TOKYO

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16:30-18:30 hrs SYDNEY

08:30-10:30 hrs MOSCOW

00:30-02:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 7

### Non-Traditional Security Threats in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Col. MBB Nalin Herath**, *Overlooking Director General & Acting Director (Research), Institute of National Security Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka.*

- **Prof. Brendan M Howe**, *Dean, Graduate School of International Studies, Ewha Womans University, South Korea*, ***Second-tier Actor Leadership and New Cooperative Models in NTS Promotion***
- **Dr. Pavithra Jayawardena**, *Senior Lecturer, Department of International Relations, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.*
- **John J Vachaparambil**, *Associate Fellow, National Maritime Foundation, India*, ***IUU Fishing in the IOR: Legal Implications for India.***
- **Harriet Njoki Mboce**, *HSC, Advocate, Faculty of Law, University of Nairobi, Kenya.*
- **Dr. Chime Youdon**, *Associate Fellow, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Irfan Yar**, *Founder, Afghanistan Security Institute, Afghanistan.*



12:15-14:15 hrs KATHMANDU

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17:30-19:30 hrs SYDNEY

09:30-11:30 hrs MOSCOW

01:30-03:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION G

### Addressing Non-Traditional Maritime Threats

**Chair: Dr. Avinash Anil Godbole**, *Professor, OP Jindal Global University, India.*

- **Brigadier (Retd.) Dr. Robert G. Kabage**, *Mashariki Research and Policy Centre, Kenya.*
- **Dr. Suchana Apple Chavanich**, *Professor, Department of Marine Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.*
- **Captain Kamlesh Kumar Agnihotri (Retd.)**, *Senior Fellow, National Maritime Foundation, India.*
- **Rajdeep Mukherjee**, *Policy Analyst, Bay of Bengal Programme - Inter-Governmental Organisation, India.*
- **Dr. Aparna**, *Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Central University of Jharkhand, India.*
- **Dr. Sampa Kundu**, *Consultant, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, India.*





13:15-15:15 hrs KATHMANDU

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10:30-12:30 hrs MOSCOW

02:30-04:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 8

### South East Asia in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Captain Sarabjeet Singh Parmar (Retd.),** *Distinguished Fellow, Council for Strategic and Defence Research, India.*

- **Capt. Kentaro Furuya,** *Adjunct Professor, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies Professor, Japan Coast Guard Academy, Japan.*
- **Dr. Kei Koga,** *Associate Professor, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.*
- **Dr. Rahul Mishra,** *Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India.*
- **Dr. Bill Hayton,** *Associate Fellow, Chatham House, UK.*
- **Dr. Stephen R Nagy,** *Japan Institute for International Affairs & Professor, International Christian University, Japan.*
- **Joanne Lin Weiling,** *Senior Fellow, ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.*
- **Lucio III Blanco Pitlo,** *Visiting Scholar, National Chengchi University, Taiwan.*
- **Satria Rizaldi Alchatib,** *Doctoral Researcher, Victoria University of Wellington & Founder, Regional Security Society (RESET), Indonesia.*



Day 2

16 DEC 2024

14:15-16:15 hrs KATHMANDU

17:30-19:30 hrs TOKYO

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11:30-13:30 hrs MOSCOW

03:30-05:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION H

### Security in the Indo-Pacific

**Chair: Maj Gen (Retd.) BK Sharma**, *Director, United Service Institution of India.*

- **Dr. Vo Xuan Vinh**, *Deputy Director General in Charge, Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam.*
- **Dr. Satoru Nagao**, *Fellow (Non-Resident) at Hudson Institute, USA.*
- **Dr. Swasti Rao**, *Former Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, India.*
- **Dr. Tomasz Łukaszuk**, *Professor, Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland.*
- **Dr. Bhagya Senaratne**, *Academic Consultant, Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Sri Lanka.*
- **Dr. Tanvi Kulkarni**, *Policy Fellow, Asia-Pacific Leadership Network, South Korea, **Nuclear Risks and Threats in the Indo-Pacific.***



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PW: niicenepal

Day 2

16 DEC 2024

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20:30-22:30 hrs SYDNEY

12:30-14:30 hrs MOSCOW

04:30-06:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 9

### Maritime Connectivity and Trade in the Indo-Pacific

Chair: Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar, *Former Indian Diplomat.*

- **Admiral Jayantha Perera**, *Former Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, Colombo, Sri Lanka.*
- **Raj Mohabeer**, *Officer In-Charge at the Indian Ocean Commission, Mauritius.*
- **Dr. Vithiyapathy Purushothaman**, *PostDoc Candidate, Shenzhen University, China, **The Future of the Free Trade Agreements in the Indo-Pacific Region.***
- **Dr. Asantha Senevirathna**, *Senior Lecturer, Department of Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka.*
- **Ayadoure S Stalin**, *Research Scholar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, **Future Pathways for the Shrimp Industry in the Indo-Pacific: Navigating Between Import Restrictions and Market Access.***
- **Rahul Kumar Sharma**, *Research Fellow, Central University of South Bihar, India, **Decoding the Geo-strategic Implications of Bangladesh Crisis over Sub-regional Connectivity.***

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16:15-18:15 hrs KATHMANDU

19:30-21:30 hrs TOKYO

18:30-20:30 hrs BEIJING

10:30-12:30 hrs LONDON

16:00-18:00 hrs NEW DELHI

21:30-23:30 hrs SYDNEY

13:30-15:30 hrs MOSCOW

05:30-07:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

**SESSION I****Small States in the Indo-Pacific**

**Chair: Dr. Harinda Vidanage**, *Director, International Relations at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka.*

- **Md. Saifullah Akon**, *Research Scholar, Osaka University, Japan & Assistant Professor of Japanese Studies, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh*, **Small State, Big Challenges: How Bangladesh is Coping with Indo-Pacific Dynamics.**
- **Dr. Zeno Leoni**, *Lecturer in Defence Studies, King's College London. UK.*
- **Dr. Niloy Ranjan Biswas**, *Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.*
- **Dr. Barbara Kratiuk**, *Assistant Professor, Vistula University, Poland.*
- **Jumel G. Estrañero & Atty. Fatima J. Saquilayan**, *De La Salle University, Philippines*, **West Philippine Sea Flashpoint: A Geopolitical Enmesh in Meta-Narratives of US, China, Japan, and the ASEAN.**
- **ASM Tarek Hassan Semul**, *Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies*, **“Great Game” in the Indo-Pacific: Balancing Behaviour of Small States in South Asia.**



17:15-19:15 hrs KATHMANDU

20:30-22:30 hrs TOKYO

19:30-21:30 hrs BEIJING

11:30-13:30 hrs LONDON

17:00-19:00 hrs NEW DELHI

22:30-00:30 hrs SYDNEY

14:30-16:30 hrs MOSCOW

06:30-08:30 hrs WASHINGTON DC

## SESSION 10

### Future of the Indo-Pacific Strategy

**Chair: Dr. Namrata Goswami**, *Professor, Johns Hopkins University, US.*

- **Dr. Amit Gupta**, *Senior Advisor, Forum of Federations, Canada.*
- **Nilanthi Samaranyake**, *Visiting Expert, United States Institute of Peace, USA.*
- **Dr. Miao Ji**, *Research Fellow, China Foreign Affairs University, China.*
- **Antoine Levesques**, *Research Fellow, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, UK.*
- **Dr. Eva Pejsova**, *Japan Chair, Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy, Brussels School of Governance, Belgium.*
- **Lisa Curtis**, *Senior Fellow and Director, Indo-Pacific Security, Center for New American Security, USA.*
- **Dr. George I. H. Cooke**, *Executive Director, Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka.*
- **Brendan Donnelly**, *Fellow, Consortium of Indo-Pacific Researchers, USA.*
- **Dr. Scott Edwards**, *Research Fellow, Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies, Japan.*



# PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

*(In Order of Appearance or Confirmation Received)*



### **Hon. Ababu-Terrah Namwamba, EGH**

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya*

Hon. Ababu Terrah Namwamba, EGH, is a distinguished Kenyan politician, international lawyer, and advocate for youth development and human rights. He has served in various high-profile roles, including Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Sports, and the Arts, and as Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) in Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2018. Namwamba is the leader of the Labour Party of Kenya, a position he has held since 2016. A seasoned parliamentarian, Namwamba represented his constituency in Kenya's 10th and 11th Parliaments, where he chaired key committees such as the Parliamentary Select Committee on Constitutional Review, the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee, and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). He is known for sponsoring a record number of Private Member's Motions and Bills during his parliamentary tenure. As Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs, Namwamba played a pivotal role in passing the Sports Act, establishing the National Youth Council, and reforming the National Youth Service (NYS) and Youth Enterprise Fund. An accomplished scholar, Namwamba holds an LLM from American University, a Diploma in Legal Practice from the Kenya School of Law, and an LLB from the University of Nairobi. Recognized for his contributions, Namwamba received Kenya's highest civilian honor, the Elder of the Golden Heart (EGH), in 2012.



### **Admiral Karambir Singh (Retd)**

*National Maritime Foundation*

Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, IN (Retd), was India's 24th Chief of the Naval Staff and is the Chairmanship of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, and the College of Naval Warfare, Mumbai. He has served in the Directorate of Naval Air Staff at the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy) and has been Captain (Air) and Officer-in-Charge of the Naval Air Station at Mumbai. Admiral Singh has served as the Chief of Staff of the Eastern Naval Command and as a Vice-Admiral, he was the Director-General, Project Seabird. Thereafter, he was appointed as the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff. He assumed Command of the Indian Navy on 31 May 2019, serving until his retirement from active service on 30 November 2021. The Admiral was honoured with the prestigious award of the "Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star (2nd Highest order)" by the government of Japan for his dedication to strengthening the collaborative efforts between India and Japan in the realm of national defense, particularly in the context of achieving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.



### **Cleo Paskal**

*Foundation for Defense of Democracies*

Cleo Paskal is a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at Foundation for Defense of Democracies focusing on the Indo-Pacific region, in particular, the Pacific Islands and India. She has testified before the US Congress, regularly lectures and moderates for seminars for the US military, and has taught at defense colleges in the United States, United Kingdom, India, Canada, and Oman. From 2006 to 2022, she was an associate fellow at Chatham House, London, where, among other responsibilities, she was research lead on the multi-year futures project "Perspectives on Strategic Shifts in the Indo-Pacific 2019-2024." She is widely published in the academic and popular press.





**Capt. (Retd.) Teruaki Aizawa**  
*National Defense Academy of Japan*

Teruaki Aizawa is an Associate Professor at the National Defense Academy of Japan in Yokosuka, Japan. A retired Captain of Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), he is an expert in maritime security studies. He was a Mine Warfare Officer, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Diver, and served in important positions such as Commanding officer of JS Hachijo. He also has various experiences as a government official and academic researcher, including as the Assistant Director of the National Security Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Senior Research Fellow of the Military History Center, National Institute of Defense Studies. He retired from the JMSDF in March 2016, and then worked as a specialist in the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the MOFA, and The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, as a research fellow of the Ocean Policy Research Institute. After that, He have been in current position since October 2020.



**Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan (Retd)**  
*National Maritime Foundation*

Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan is the Director-General of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. He has been the principal evaluator of the Navy's battle-tactics, the Head of the Naval Training Team at the Defence Services Staff College, and the Principal Director of Naval Operations. As a Flag Officer, he was the Navy's first Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Foreign Cooperation & Intelligence). As a Vice Admiral, he has been Chief of Staff of the Western Naval Command and he has been commended three times by the President of India for sustained distinguished service. Apart from being on the visiting faculty of the higher-command establishments of all three of India's defence services, as also triService establishments such as the College of Defence Management, Hyderabad and the National Defence College, New Delhi, he has also been advising the government through his interaction with the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy), the Ministry of External Affairs, the National Security Council Secretariat, and the Joint Intelligence Committee. He is, in addition, a prolific writer with over 85 published professional articles and papers, and, a respected Adviser and Fellow of several important think-tanks including the Ananta-Aspen Centre; the Forum for Strategic and Security Studies; and, the Centre for Advanced Strategic and Security Studies.



**Tobiáš Lipold**  
*Sinopsis*

Tobiáš Lipold holds a master's degree in Sinology from Charles University, where he is currently pursuing a PhD focused on the Chinese Communist Party's discourse on civilization and the concept of "civilization states." Since 2020, he has been a researcher at Sinopsis, a Czech think tank specializing in sinological research on the CCP, its foreign interference, and integrating these findings into public discourse. His previous research has explored topics such as academic exchanges with the People's Republic of China and the CCP's bureaucratic systems. Recently, his work has expanded to include the PRC's activities in the South Pacific, specifically in Melanesia. He is currently based in Taipei.



**H.E. Leann Johnston**

*Australian Ambassador to Nepal*

H.E. Johnston is Ambassador of Australia to Nepal. He is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Acting Australian High Commissioner in Abuja. She has previously served overseas in Fiji, France, Spain, Afghanistan, Kenya, Sweden, Germany, Türkiye and New Zealand. H.E. Johnston has a Bachelor of Arts from the Australian National University



**Sumitra Karki**

*Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement*

Sumitra Karki is the Director at Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement. She served as the Program Coordinator and Research Associate from July 2017 to April 2024. Her research focus is on issues related to Gender, Non-Traditional Security Issues and Geopolitics of China and South Asia. She was a Faculty at Modern Kanya Multiple College, Kathmandu. She holds Master's in Sociology from Tribhuvan University. She has co-edited 'Human Rights and Human Security in South Asia' published by Adroit Publishers, New Delhi. She is the editor of the newsletters published by NIICE and regularly contributes to national and international dailies.



**Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**

*Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement*

Dr. Pramod Jaiswal is the Research Director at NIICE. He is Visiting Fellow at Sandia National Laboratories, Cooperative Monitoring Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, US; Senior Fellow at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi; Non-Resident Fellow at India Studies Center, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand and Senior Research Fellow at Institute for National and International Security, Belgrade. He is also an alumnus of the Near East South Asia Center, National Defence University, Washington DC. Previously, he was Researcher at South Asian Studies, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok and Manohar Parikkar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. He is the Member of the Editorial Board, Journal of International Affairs, Kathmandu; Member of the Academic Committee at the Pangoal Institution, Beijing; Member of International Advisory Committee, Journal of Liberty and International Affairs, Macedonia; and member of Subject Committee of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University. He holds Masters, M. Phil and PhD from School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is the recipient of Silver Jubilee Scholarship and SAARC Doctoral Fellowship from Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Government of India. He has authored, edited and co-edited around two dozen books on China and South Asia affairs.



**Dr. Medha Bisht**  
*South Asian University*

Dr. Medha Bisht holds PhD from Diplomatic Studies Division, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research interests include philosophy and theory of International Relations, water governance and diplomacy at international, transboundary and local scales, transnational networks in International Relations (with special focus on water, climate and energy sector), Asian diplomatic thought and qualitative methods. Her book, 'Kautilya's Arthashastra: Philosophy of Strategy' has been published by Routledge (London and New York 2020). Before joining SAU, she was an Associate Fellow at MP-IDS, an independent think tank under the Ministry of Defence, and Research Associate with Institute for Social Studies Trust, an NGO with special consultative status with ECOSOC UN. She has also taught at Kumaon University, Uttarakhand. She has undertaken consultancies with UNIFEM, ICIMOD, UNDP, IUCN, OXFAM, DFID/Asia Foundation, University of Arizona. She writes for national dailies like Indian Express and the Pioneer, and alternative social media like The Wire and Live Encounters.



**Dr. Frederic Grare**  
*Australian National University*

Dr. Frédéric Grare is Senior Research Fellow at the National Security College, Australian National University, Canberra, Associate Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and Non-resident Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace where he has also been director of the South Asia program. He also worked as a policy officer at the Centre for Analysis, Planning and Strategy of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Head of the Asia Bureau of the Directorate for Strategic Affairs of the French Ministry of Defense, His last book, *The Indian Ocean as a New Political and Security Region*, co-written with Jean-Loup Samaan, was published in 2022.



**Dr. Sitakanta Mishra**  
*Pandit Deendayal Energy University*

Dr. Sitakanta Mishra is an Associate Professor at Pandit Deendayal Energy University (Formerly PDPU), Gujarat, India. He was formerly a Research Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi, and Associate Editor of the Indian Foreign Affairs Journal, New Delhi. Currently he is also the Managing Editor of Liberal Studies journal published by PDEU. He holds his MPhil and PhD from School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India. He is Associate Member of Pugwash India, Member of the International Studies Association (ISA), Member of Pacific Forum, Honolulu, Associate Member, Institute of Defence Studies & Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi, Non-Resident Research Fellow of Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi and Life Member of United Service Institute (USI), New Delhi.



**Mauro Bonavita**  
*King's College London*

Mauro Bonavita is a Lecturer and a PhD student in International Relations at King's College London. His research focuses on maritime strategy and naval diplomacy, maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region, European maritime strategies in the Indo-Pacific, and India's foreign policy in the Indian Ocean Region. He is a founding member of the Indo-Pacific research group at King's, and Visiting Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation (New Delhi, India). Mauro has taught in the Department of War Studies and the Department of Political Economy. He obtained his BA in Political Science from the University of Genova (Italy), and his MSc in Geopolitics and Strategic Studies from the University Carlos III of Madrid (Spain).



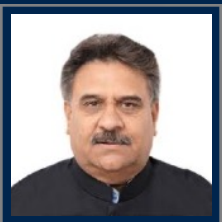
**Dr. Md Shariful Islam**  
*University of Rajshahi*

Dr. Md Shariful Islam is Associate Professor of International Relations at University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. His research interests are Foreign Policy of Bangladesh, Disciplinary histories of International Relations, Maritime Security/Affairs of Bangladesh (Blue economy, maritime order, Bay of Bengal region, Indian Ocean region). He holds PhD from South Asian University, New Delhi.



**Urbi Das**  
*Jadavpur University*

Urbi Das is Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, India. Previously, she worked as Assistant Professor at Dibrugarh University and as Visiting Faculty at University of Mumbai. Her research interests include India's foreign Policy, India-US relations, global political economy and Indo-Pacific issues. She has published extensively.



**Anil Trigunayat**  
*Vivekananda International Foundation*

Ambassador Anil Trigunayat is the President of MIICCIA Chamber of Commerce & Industry. As a member of the Indian Foreign Service, he has served in the Indian Missions in Cote d'Ivoire, Bangladesh, Mongolia, USA, Russia, Sweden and Nigeria, Libya and Jordan. He also served as Director General/Joint Secretary for the Gulf & Haj Divisions in the MEA, New Delhi. Thereafter, he worked as Deputy Chief of Mission in the rank of Ambassador in the Embassy of India, Moscow. Prior to his superannuation in May 2016, he served as Ambassador of India to Jordan and Libya and High Commissioner to Malta (June 2012 – May 2016). He is a member of the All India Management Association/Delhi Management Association as well as that of Oxford and Cambridge Society of India and the Association of Indian Diplomats. He is a Distinguished Fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation apart from being a Board Member of Peaceful Mind Foundation. He is the Honorary Member of the International Trade Council, Brussels and Honorary Adviser to BRICS Chamber of Commerce. He is also Visiting Fellow at NIICE.





**Admiral Shekhar Sinha**  
*India Foundation*

Vice Admiral Shekhar Sinha (Retd.), is a former Commander in Chief of Indian Navy & Chairman Trustee, India Foundation, New Delhi. He commissioned as a combat pilot in the Indian Navy on June 1, 1974, had a distinguished career culminating as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of India's Western Naval Command. This command, the Navy's operational backbone, oversees all operations on India's western seaboard. He also served as Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CIDS), a pivotal tri-service role responsible for joint operations, strategic planning, and key defense acquisitions. A seasoned naval aviator, Admiral Sinha was part of the team that inducted the Sea Harrier jets into the Indian Navy. He commanded frontline ships, including INS Saryu, Shakti, and Delhi, and held leadership roles in fighter squadrons and airbases like INS Hansa. His operational experience includes commanding during operations against the LTTE and overseeing Western Fleet operations during Operation Parakram.



**Dr. Rajeswari (Raji) Pillai Rajagopalan**  
*Australian Strategic Policy Institute*

Dr. Rajeswari (Raji) Pillai Rajagopalan is Resident Senior Fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra. Previously, she was the Director of the Centre for Security, Strategy & Technology at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi. In 2020, she was Co-chair for a thematic group on "Strategic Technologies" for Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy (STIP 2020) Report, Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Government of India and Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. In 2018-19, Dr. Rajagopalan was the Technical Advisor to the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS). She was also a Non-Resident Indo-Pacific Fellow at the Perth USAsia Centre and a Visiting Professor at the Graduate Institute of International Politics, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan. She had a five-year stint at the National Security Council Secretariat (2003-2007), Government of India, where she was an Assistant Director. Prior to joining the NSCS, she was Research Officer at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. She has published extensively.



**Captain Sarabjeet Singh Parmar (Retd.)**  
*Council for Strategic and Defence Research*

Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar is a retired Indian Naval Officer whose main areas of research include national and maritime strategy and security related aspects in the Indo-Pacific, piracy, HADR, and international maritime law with a focus on lawfare. He has written and spoken extensively at various national and international conferences in these areas. He has been a Research Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and worked in the Indian Navy's strategic apex level offices where, as Director Strategy was part of the core team that published the Indian Navy's 2015 unclassified maritime security strategy document titled *Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy*, carried out regional maritime assessments and completed the doctrine development plan. He was the Executive Director and Senior Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation prior retirement and presently is a Distinguished Fellow with the Council for Strategic and Defence Research, New Delhi.



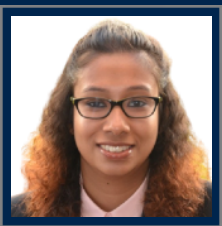
**Dr. Pooja Bhatt**  
*Jindal Global University*

Dr Pooja Bhatt is an Associate Professor at Jindal School of International Affairs, Jindal Global University, Sonapat. She is also the author of the book titled *Nine-Dash Line: Deciphering the South China Sea Conundrum* (Republished by Routledge June 2024; Knowledge World 2020). Previously, she worked as a Consultant with the Policy Planning & Research division, at the Ministry of External Affairs, India. Pooja received her doctoral degree from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in 2021. She also holds a diploma in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) from Yeosu Academy, Korea Maritime Institute.



**Dr. Astha Chadha**  
*Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University*

Dr. Astha Chadha is an Associate Professor of International Relations at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, and an invited lecturer at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Beppu, Japan. She is currently a Communications Officer at Religion and IR Section (REL) of International Studies Association (ISA), Researcher at Democracy Promotion Center, Beppu and Women Peace and Security (WPS) fellow at Pacific Forum, Hawaii. She publishes on India-Japan relations, South Asian security, Indo-Pacific affairs, and religion in world politics.



**Dr. Premesha Saha**  
*Observer Research Foundation*

Dr. Premesha Saha is an Associate Fellow with ORF's Strategic Studies Programme. Her research focuses on Southeast Asia, East Asia and the South Pacific. Dr. Saha's other research interests include Indonesia's maritime strategy, the emerging dynamics of the Indo-Pacific region, India and Southeast Asia, India's Act East Policy, Asia-Pacific multilateralism. Her PhD thesis is titled, 'Indonesia's Maritime Strategy in the Indian Ocean.' She has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals as well as newspapers like *Maritime Affairs*, *The Indonesia Quarterly* and *The Jakarta Post*.



**Dr. Ulupi Borah**  
*Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff*

Dr. Ulupi Borah is Senior Fellow at the Centre For Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS) Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff. He holds PhD from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, where focus was on "Japan and The South China Sea Dispute 2002-2016." Her expertise centers around the Indo-Pacific region, particularly Japan's security policies, maritime security, and the EU's role in the Indo-Pacific. Before joining CENJOWS, she was an Assistant Professor at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gujarat. In 2023, she had the privilege of completing the "New Issues in Security Course" at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Switzerland and honored with a scholarship from the United States Mission to the United Nations. She is the first Indian to receive the prestigious JASSO Scholarship offered by the Government of Japan and remained a special researcher at Niigata University, Japan in 2019.



**Mahadevan Shankar**  
*National Maritime Foundation*

Mahadevan Shankar is a businessman based in Australia, qualified as a Chartered from India and Australia, providing Strategic Advisory services having over 30 years of global experiences in India, Oceania Region, Russia, Central Asia, Africa, Canada and the Middle East countries. Mahadevan's expertise includes industry sectors of Manufacturing, Defence & Security, Extractive resources of Mining and Oil & Gas, Healthcare, Education, Infrastructure projects including Roads, Ports & Energy, and Hospitality. He is an Adjunct Fellow of the National Maritime Foundation and is passionately involved in many think tanks like NIICE. He speaks extensively on geopolitical issues impacting the maritime domain in the Indian Ocean Region and wider Indo Pacific Region. These SLOCs witness global contestation as the maritime highways supporting global trade and shift of economic power to Asia for the rest of the 21st century. As the Centre of Gravity moves from the West to the rapidly growing top 3 global economies based in Asia, these maritime waters will dominate global resources allocation.



**Dr. Daisuke Kawai**  
*University of Tokyo*

Dr. Daisuke Kawai is a Project Assistant Professor and Deputy Director of the Economic Security Program at the Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology (RCAST), University of Tokyo. His expertise includes Japan's foreign and security policy, Indo-Pacific security, arms control, and economic security, with a focus on critical and emerging technologies (CETs). He has contributed to the development of Japan's Economic Security Promotion Act and leads Critical and Emerging Technology cooperation within the Quad (Japan, the U.S., Australia, and India). He also holds positions as a Senior Researcher at Keio University and a GRIPS Alliance Research Fellow at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. He serves as the leader of the International Public Policy Unit at Kaetsu University and is an Asia Fellow at the Center for International Private Enterprise. Previously, he was a Research Fellow for Indo-Pacific Affairs at the Japan Institute of International Affairs and worked at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI). He holds master's degrees from King's College London and the University of Bradford, and an LLM from Peking University. He has received multiple fellowships and awards, including the JIIA's 60th Anniversary Essay Contest and a nomination as a David Rockefeller Fellow of the Trilateral Commission in 2024.



**Nafisa Nazin Lutfa**  
*Bangladesh University of Professionals*

Nafisa Nazin Lutfa has been serving as a lecturer at Department of International Relations, Faculty of Security & Strategic Studies at the Bangladesh University of Professionals. Her academic brilliance was recognised with the Chancellor's Gold Medal in the year 2023, a testament to her significant contributions to the academic community. She was associated with the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) before taking on the post of teaching assistant. Her research interests include, but are not limited to, foreign policy, Southeast and East Asia geopolitics, and ethnic politics.

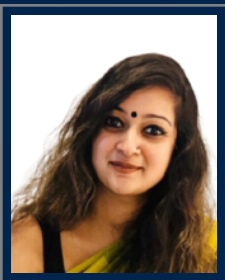




### **Dr. Md Shanawez Hossain**

*Independent University, Bangladesh*

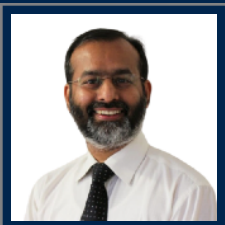
Dr. Md. Shanawez Hossain is a US State Department's IVLP Fellow. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Global Studies & Governance, Independent University, Bangladesh. Previously he held multiple positions at BRAC University including Assistant Professor; Director of the Executive Development Center; Head of Partnership and Capacity Building; Research Fellow and Head of the Urban, Climate Change and Environment Cluster. Further, he held research and teaching positions in the Asian Development Bank Institute, Waseda University, Japan, and consultancy positions for the World Bank, UNDP, SDC, Cities Alliances, IDRC, Copenhagen Consensus Center etc. Dr. Hossain's teaching and research broadly focus on the areas of governance, political economy and geopolitics; Indo-Pacific strategies; energy security; and mobility and social inclusion. He has presented research papers at several international conferences and has publications in reputable journals. Dr Hossain has a PhD in International Studies and master's in international relations both from Waseda University, Japan. He also completed diploma and certificate courses from the United Nations University (UNU); Harvard Kennedy School; UC Barkley and Peking University.



### **Mrittika Guha Sarkar**

*The American University*

Mrittika Guha Sarkar is SIS Dean's Awardee and Graduate Assistant at the School of International Studies (SIS), The American University, Washington DC, USA. She is further Research Fellow working with the Changing Aid Signature Research Initiative (SRI), at the American University. She has previously been associated with the Chinese Language Center, National Chengchi University (NCCU), Taipei, Taiwan, as a Language Scholar, and the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi as a Research Scholar in Chinese studies. In addition, she has worked at the Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation, The United Service Institution of India as a Research Associate, and the East Asia Centre at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) as a Project Assistant. Her area of focus mainly encompasses China's foreign policy and strategic affairs. She has also researched on India-China relations, as well as the geostrategic affairs of the Indo-Pacific region, and East Asia's geopolitics and security affairs, focusing on the regional developments of Japan and the Korean Peninsula.



### **Dr. Jagannath Panda**

*University of Warsaw*

Professor Jagannath Panda is a Professor at the Department of Regional and Global Studies at the University of Warsaw. Currently, he is based in Stockholm, and Heads the Stockholm Center for South Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs at the Institute for Security and Development Policy, Sweden. He is also a Senior Fellow at The Hague Center for Strategic Studies in the Netherlands. As a senior expert on China, East Asia, and Indo-Pacific affairs, Prof. Panda has testified to the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission at the US Congress. He is the Series Editor for *Routledge Studies on Think Asia* (a Taylor and Francis outfit), and also the Editorial Board Member of the *Journal of Asian Public Policy* (JAPP: Routledge), an SSCI journal.



**Prof. Dr. Anuradha M. Chenoy**

*Former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University.*

Prof. Anuradha Chenoy is the former Dean at School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has been Chairperson of Area Studies and Director of the Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies. She has evaluated the work of organisations like Focus on the Global South, Asia Europe Peoples Forum and worked with several international organizations such as UN Women, UN Peace Keepers, UNESCO and others. She has several publications on security studies, development studies and gender studies, to name few - Maoist and Other Armed Conflicts, Re-emerging Russia: Structures, Institutions and Processes, The Making of New Russia, Comparative Politics and Crisis of Governance: The Russian Conundrum, Militarism and Women in South Asia.



**Dr. Peng Nian**

*Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies*

Dr. Peng Nian is Director of The Hong Kong Research Center for Asian Studies, Hong Kong. He holds a PhD in Government and International Studies at Hong Kong Baptist University. His main research interests are in the areas of China-Southeast/South Asia relations, Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), maritime security of the Indo-Pacific. He is also the Deputy Director&Associate Fellow of Research Centre for Maritime Silk Road, National Institute for South China Sea Studies (NISCS), China. He authored three books-The Reshaping of China-Southeast Asia Relations in Light of the Covid-19 Pandemic (2021), International Pressures, Strategic Preference, and Myanmar's China Policy since 1988 (2020), Leng Zhan Hou Yin Mian Guan Xi Yan Jiu [A Study on Indo-Myanmar Relations after the Cold-War] (2017). His refereed articles have been notably published in Pacific Focus, Asian Affairs, Dong Nan Ya Yan Jiu [Southeast Asian Studies], Nan Ya Yan Jiu [South Asian Studies], Nan Ya Yan Jiu Ji Kan [South Asian Studies Quarterly].



**Dr. Gudrun Wacker**

*German Institute for International and Security Affairs*

Dr. Gudrun Wacker is at present Non-resident Senior Fellow in the Asia Division at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, SWP) in Berlin, a think tank providing political advice to the German government and parliament. Her research focuses on Chinese foreign and security policy, especially EU-China relations, Taiwan, security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and the Indo-Pacific. She is currently an EU delegate to the Experts and Eminent Persons Group of the ASEAN Regional Forum.



**Dr. Ekaterina Koldunova**

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Dr. Ekaterina Koldunova is an Associate Professor at the Department of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, the MFA of Russia. She holds a Ph.D. (Cand. Polit. Sc.) in International Relations. Dr. Ekaterina Koldunova has published in Russian, English, Italian and Chinese on regional transformations, BRICS and global governance, new security threats in

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**Dr. Deepak Prakash Bhatt**  
*Global Centre for Climate and Security Governance*

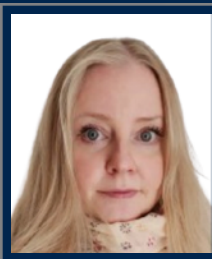
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Dr. P. Krishnan is a fisheries expert by training. He served as a scientist for over 20 years in different research organizations under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under Government of India. Dr. P. Krishnan has undertaken over 30 multi-institutional and trans-disciplinary R&D projects with funding from national and international agencies. He has published over 100 research papers in peer reviewed journals, and many books and policy papers on diverse subjects viz., fisheries resource management, coastal zone management, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, environmental law, policy and governance. He is a distinguished Fellow of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), New Delhi and is a recipient of many national awards for his outstanding contributions in fisheries science. He is currently the Director of Bay of Bengal Intergovernmental Organization (BOBP-IGO), a regional fisheries body with Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives as members.



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*Armenian Institute of International and Security Affairs*

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Dr. Ian Hall is a Professor of International Relations at Griffith University, Queensland, Australia. He has published widely on India's international relations and Indo-Pacific affairs, and regularly provides analysis for the media. He is currently one of the convenors of the Blue Security Regional Maritime Exchange program funded by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Professor Hall has also participated in track II dialogues across the region, and ran an Australia-India-Japan Trilateral for the Griffith Asia Institute from 2017 until 2023. His most recent book is *Modi and the Reinvention of Indian Foreign Policy* (2019).



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Dr. Tess Newton Cain was a Nonresident Fellow at the Lowy Institute for International Policy in 2014. She is also a research associate with the ANU's Development Policy Centre. Previously a Lecturer in Law at the University of the South Pacific, Tess has worked in the region as an independent researcher/consultant since 2001. Based in Vanuatu, Tess has extensive experience in relation to development, governance, leadership and political engagement in Melanesia and elsewhere in the Pacific island region. Tess has an extensive record of academic publications, including co-authorship of *Introduction to South Pacific Law* (1999) and co-editorship of *A Kind of Mending & Passage of Change* (released by ANU e-press in 2010). Tess has a degree in Law and a PhD in Law & Criminology, both from the University of Wales (Cardiff).



### **Abhijit Singh**

*Observer Research Foundation*

Abhijit Singh is former Navy Officer and Senior Fellow heads the Maritime Policy Initiative at Observer Research Foundation (ORF). A maritime professional with specialist and command experience in front-line Indian naval ships he has been involved the writing of India's maritime strategy (2007). He is a keen commentator on maritime matters and has written extensively on security and governance issues in the Indian Ocean and Pacific littorals. His articles and commentaries have been published in the Asian Bureau for Asian Research (NBR) the Lowy Interpreter the World Politics Review the Diplomat and CSIS Pacific Forum. Editor of two books on maritime security — Indian Ocean Challenges: A Quest for Cooperative Solutions (2013) and Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific (2014), Abhijit has published papers on India's growing maritime reach, security of sea-lines of communication in the Indo-Pacific region, Indian Ocean governance issues and maritime infrastructure in the Asian littorals. In 2010, he assisted the late Vice Admiral G. M. Hiranandani (Retd) in the authorship of the third volume of Indian Naval History, Transition to Guardianship.



### **Divya Rai**

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Divya Rai is a Research Associate at the Delhi Policy Group (DPG), specializing in Indo-Pacific Maritime Geo-strategies of regional and extra-regional powers, and regional architectures (Multilateral, Mini-laterals and Trilaterals) within the Indo-Pacific, with a focus on India's role. Divya has previously worked with the National Maritime Foundation (NMF), Maritime Research Centre (MRC), Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE) and Raisina House a youth-led think-tank (India). Her expertise includes maritime security, regional connectivity, and economic architecture. She has published widely on these topics in both digital and print media.



### **Amb. Pankaj Saran**

*NatStrat*

Pankaj Saran is a former diplomat with forty years of experience in foreign, strategic and national security affairs. He has served in key positions within the Government of India in the Prime Minister's Office, the National Security Council Secretariat, Ministry of External Affairs and in several Indian Missions abroad. He has served as India's Ambassador to Russia and India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, and as Head of the Northern Division in the Ministry of External Affairs dealing with Nepal and Bhutan. He has worked in different capacities with successive Indian Prime Ministers in the Prime Minister's Office contributing to decision making at the highest levels in a diverse range of sectors, including foreign affairs and national security. From 2018 to 2021, he served as the Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Affairs under Prime Minister Narendra Modi dealing with regional and global strategy formulation, including maritime security and Arctic affairs, neighbourhood policy and technology and economic security. He is presently Convenor of NatStrat, a Delhi-based independent Centre for Research on Strategic and Security Issues. He is a Member of the National Security Advisory Board and a Distinguished Fellow of the National Maritime Foundation. He is a regular commentator and writer on foreign affairs, security and strategic issues.



**Prof. Dr. Taniguchi Tomohiko**

*Former Special Adviser to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe*

Dr. Taniguchi Tomohiko is formerly the Special Advisor on Foreign Policy and the chief foreign policy speechwriter for the late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, worked closely with the Prime Minister. Notably, he contributed to crafting the addresses delivered by Mr. Abe to the parliamentarians of India, Australia, and the United States. Among these, the speech delivered at the Indian Parliament in 2007, titled "Confluence of the Two Seas," continues to resonate with the policy community in Delhi. Dr. Taniguchi's latest publication, *Prime Minister Abe's Speeches* (in Japanese), explores how Mr. Abe strategically employed speeches to advance national priorities, such as Abenomics, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategy. Since April 1, 2023, Dr. Taniguchi has served as a Specially Appointed Professor at the University of Tsukuba and as a Special Adviser at the Fujitsu Future Studies Centre. Prior to these roles, he was a professor at Keio University while also working at the Prime Minister's Office alongside Mr. Abe and his senior advisors. He holds an LL.B. from the University of Tokyo and a doctorate in national security from Takushoku University.



**Prof. Jeffrey S Payne**

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Prof. Jeffrey Payne is an Assistant Professor at the Near East South Asia (NESAs) Center for Strategic Studies, US. He pilots NESAs's maritime security programming, including its ongoing series devoted to the Indian Ocean Region and wider Indo Pacific. In addition, he leads NESAs's engagements relating to maritime and littoral information sharing/data analysis. He conducts analysis on Chinese foreign policy, Indian Ocean Regional affairs, and maritime security. He is particularly interested in the intersection of maritime security and strategic competition in the Indian Ocean, as well as in how technology and information can assist in furthering security cooperation. His work informs United States Combatant Commands, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and interagency efforts inside the United States government.



**Prof. John Blaxland**

*Australian National University*

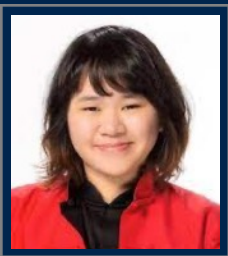
Prof. John Blaxland is Director of the Australian National University (ANU) North America Liaison Office and Professor of International Security and Intelligence Studies in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC), Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, College of Asia and the Pacific at the ANU. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. A military historian, he has authored or co-authored more than a dozen works including *Adapting to Poly-Crisis* (2024) *Revealing Secrets* (2023), and *The US-Thai Alliance and Asian International Relations* (2021). Prior to academia, John was a military intelligence officer, serving as Chief Intelligence Staff Officer (J2) at HQ Joint Operations Command, and defence attaché to Thailand and Myanmar. He was also the land forces intelligence officer for the International Force East Timor. He was also an exchange officer at the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington DC. At ANU he has served as Head of SDSC and Director of the ANU Southeast Asia Institute. He teaches "Southeast Asian Security Studies" and "Honeypots and Overcoats" and supervises several PhD students.





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Shihoko Goto is the Director of the Indo-Pacific Program at the Wilson Center, specializing in trade, economics, and geopolitics in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, as well as U.S. policy in Northeast Asia. A seasoned journalist, she has reported from Tokyo and Washington for Dow Jones and UPI, covering global economy, international trade, and Asian markets. Goto is a columnist for *The Diplomat* and contributing editor to *The Globalist*. She serves on the executive board of the Japan-America Society of Washington, D.C., and the US-Taiwan Task Force at the Global Taiwan Institute. Previously, she worked as a donor country relations officer for the World Bank and was a fellow at the East-West Center and Knight Foundation. Goto holds an MA in International Political Theory from Waseda University in Japan and a BA in Modern History from Trinity College, University of Oxford.



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Dr. Pavithra Jayawardena is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Department of International Relations, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. She teaches introductory courses in International Relations, Geopolitics and Research Methodology at the undergraduate level and critical theories in International Relations, Gender, Migration and Research Methodology at the postgraduate level both in Sinhala and English. Her research interests include dynamics in international migration, the challenges of democratic citizenship regimes, and transnationalism and the Sri Lankan diaspora. Her current work is focused on how Sri Lankan immigrants' make sense of their home and host country citizenship.



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John J Vachaparambil is an Associate Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation in New Delhi, India. He is a member of the Public International Maritime Law (PIML) Cluster, in which his research focuses upon the legal aspects of Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and the conservation of the marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). He holds an LL.M in Infrastructure and Business Law (Specialisation in Sustainable Marine and Offshore Infrastructure Governance) from TERI School of Advanced Studies (SAS), New Delhi. He has completed his LL.B (Hons) from Christ University, Bangalore. He also completed a certificate course on 'Oceans Law and Policy' from Gujarat Maritime University (GMU).





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Njoki Mboce is a lawyer, consultant, academic and policy advisor. She is also a certified civil and commercial mediator and qualified arbitrator. Born and raised next to Kilindini Harbor, West of Mombasa Island, Njoki's passion for the maritime space started at a tender age. She has grown to blend this with her other passions: law policy and security. Njoki is a practising advocate of the High court of Kenya, and a founding partner at the firm of Njoki Mboce & Company advocates. She teaches at the University of Nairobi, where she is also pursuing a PhD, with a focus on maritime delimitation disputes, an aspect of maritime security. She is an expert consultant in the same field. In other relevant roles, Njoki serves as Senior Associate Fellow at the Africa Policy Institute, Research Associate with SAFESEAS, a pilot project that studies lessons from maritime security capacity building in the Western Indian Ocean. She is also a member of the implementing committee of the FishFORCE Academy model in Kenya on combating maritime crime. Njoki is a former Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (New Delhi, India) on India-Kenya Maritime Security Co-operation. She is also a nominated Visiting Scholar at the Leiden Centre for Legal and Comparative Studies of the East African Community, Netherlands. When away from the maritime agenda, Njoki offers pro bono trial advocacy training to lawyers in Botswana, Uganda and Kenya, with Justice Advocacy Africa, a non-profit American based institution and the respective law societies.



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Dr. Avinash Anil Godbole is a Professor at O P Jindal Global University, India. Previously he was Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs and before that he was Research Assistant at Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. He was a Visiting Fox Fellow at the Macmillan Center at Yale in 2007-08. He has been part of the India-China Think tank Forum and has been involved in various other track 1.5 and track 2 events. He is also a Visiting Faculty at the Naval War College, Goa since June 2020. He holds MA, MPhil and PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.



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*Mashariki Research and Policy Centre*

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Dr. Suchana Apple Chavanich received her Ph.D. in Zoology at the University of New Hampshire, USA. Currently, she is a Professor of Oceanography at the Department of Marine Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She is also considered to be Thailand's first female scientist to go diving in Antarctica and the Arctic. Her research work on Arctic-Antarctica and coral reefs has inspired Thai and young people on the value of marine ecosystems. Because of her work, she has received several awards and recognitions both nationally and internationally. She is also a Sustainable Ocean Ambassador appointed by UN-AFMA-FAO Annex. She has a broad base of ecological research interests that involve the study of near-shore species from tropical to polar regions. In addition, her research focuses on the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems and the impact of climate change and marine debris. She is also the author of many articles and several books, including marine conservation, Antarctica, coral reefs, and scuba diving.



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Captain Kamlesh Kumar Agnihotri (Retd.) is a Senior Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation, focusing on Chinese defense forces, particularly the Chinese Navy, and broader issues related to Chinese maritime strategy, high technology, and India-China relations. Previously, he served as a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS) in New Delhi. He has collaborated with the Centre for Naval Analyses (CNA), the Naval War College, RSiS, Singapore, and ADR Stratbase, Manila and others. He has authored and co-edited seven books. Captain Agnihotri has presented research internationally and completed specialized courses at institutions like the Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies, Hawaii, and the National Defense University, Taiwan. A naval missile and gunnery specialist, he commanded a landing ship in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and holds an advanced diploma in Chinese language and satellite imagery analysis.



**Rajdeep Mukherjee**  
*Bay of Bengal Programme - Inter-Governmental Organisation*

Rajdeep Mukherjee joined the Bay of Bengal Programme - Inter-Governmental Organisation, (BOBP-IGO) in 2004 as a Research Associate and later assumed the position of Policy Analyst in 2009. His responsibilities include assisting the Director in programme development, implementation and evaluation; providing scientific inputs for policy advisory and theoretical contribution towards improving fisheries management of the region. He was also credited for assisting in designing and implementing the first national level study on socio-economic condition of salt workers in India. Earlier he has worked as a Research Associate in the Centre for Rural Economy, Appropriate Technology and Environment (CREATE) in Saint Joseph's College, Darjeeling, where he helped in developing marketing strategy for the handloom and handicraft sector of North-East India for the Consortium of Indian Industries and developing a guideline for private-public partnership for greening of degraded forest lands. Mukherjee holds an M. Phil Degree in Economics from University of North Bengal.



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**Dr. Sampa Kundu**  
*Research and Information System for Developing Countries*

Dr. Sampa Kundu joined the ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) in October 2021 as a Consultant. She has completed her PhD from the Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She is working on various nuances of ASEAN-India relations at the AIC. She has previously worked with Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, Amity University and Symbiosis International (Deemed) University. She has written peer-reviewed articles, commentaries and book chapters for nationally and internationally reputed publishers. She is also the Visiting Fellow at Asian Confluence, Shillong.



**Captain Kentaro Furuya**  
*Japan Coast Guard Academy*

Captain Kentaro Furuya (of Japan Coast Guard) is an adjunct professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), a visiting professor at Keio University, and a professor at the Japan Coast Guard Academy. His career spans the realm of Coast Guard service, where he has dedicated himself to ensuring maritime safety and security both at sea and the development of policies onshore. Presently, he has been entrusted with the responsibility of being a faculty member in the Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program at GRIPS. This collaborative initiative, jointly planned and administered by GRIPS and JCG, enables students to acquire comprehensive expertise in their respective services, encompassing professional acumen, analytical proficiencies, and effective communication skills. Captain Furuya is responsible for instructing students in matters pertaining to the law of the sea, maritime security, and the formulation of policy on Coast Guard operations.





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Dr. Kei Koga is Head of Division, Associate Professor at the Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme, School of Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Concurrently, he is a Nonresident Fellow at The National Bureau of Asia Research (NBR), the United States, and a member of RIPS Research Committee, the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), Japan. Previously, he was Japan Scholar at the Wilson Center in 2022; visiting fellow at Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in 2017; a Japan-U.S. Partnership Fellow at the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), Tokyo, in 2012-2014; Postdoctoral Fellow in the International Studies Program, The Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, in 2012-2013; a Vasey Fellow at the Pacific Forum CSIS in 2009–2010; and RSIS-MacArthur visiting associate fellow at S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), NTU in 2010. He received his Ph.D. in International Relations at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. His research focuses on International Security, International/Regional Institutions (particularly ASEAN), and East Asian/Indo-Pacific security. His recent publications include "Tactical hedging as coalition-building signal: The evolution of Quad and AUKUS in the Indo-Pacific" (*The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2024); "Institutional Dilemma: Quad and ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific" (*Asian Perspective*, 2023); and "Managing Great Power Politics: ASEAN, Institutional Strategy, and the South China Sea" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022).



**Dr. Rahul Mishra**  
*Jawaharlal Nehru University*

Dr. Rahul Mishra is Associate Professor at Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. He specializes on India's Look East/Act East Policy, ASEAN regional security, Indo-Pacific dynamics, and China's Belt and Road Initiative. He holds PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University. He has held several academic and editorial roles internationally, including as Director of the Centre for ASEAN Regionalism Universiti Malaya and Senior Lecturer at the Asia-Europe Institute, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia. Additionally, he has served as a consultant to India's Ministry of External Affairs and contributed to think tanks in India and abroad. He has published extensively.



**Dr. Bill Hayton**  
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**Dr. Stephen R Nagy**  
*International Christian University*

Dr. Stephen Nagy's main affiliation is as a professor at the International Christian University, Tokyo. Concurrently, he is a visiting fellow with the Japan Institute for International Affairs (JIIA). He serves as the director of policy studies for the Yokosuka Council of Asia Pacific Studies (YCAPS), spearheading their Indo-Pacific Policy Dialogue series. He is currently working on middle-power approaches to great-power competition in the Indo-Pacific. His latest publications include: Nagy, S.R. and Indu Saxena. 2024. Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific Construct. Nova Science Publishers; Nagy, Stephen and Thomas Murphy. 2024. "Middle Power Cyber Security Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: An Analysis Through the Lens of Neo-Middle Power Diplomacy," in *The Journal of Intelligence, Conflict, and Warfare*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2024); "Middle-Power Alignment in the Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Securing Agency through Neo-Middle-Power Diplomacy," in *Asia Policy* 17, No. 3, 2022; "US-China Strategic Competition and Converging Middle Power Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific," in *Strategic Analysis* 46, No. 3, 2022; "Sino-Japanese Reactive Diplomacy as Seen Through the Interplay of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Vision (FOIP)," in *China Report*, 2021.



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Joanne Lin is the Senior Fellow and Co-Coordinator of the ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore. She has over 15 years of work experience in the Singapore public sector, regional and international organisations, think tanks, and NGOs. She has previously served at the ASEAN Secretariat from 2015 to 2021 and was the Head of the External Relations Division under the ASEAN Political-Security Community Department. Her research includes ASEAN institutions, external relations, and political-security developments in ASEAN.



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Lucio Blanco Pitlo III is the President of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies and a Research Fellow at the Asia-Pacific Pathways to Progress Foundation. He was a Taiwan Fellow and a Visiting Scholar at the National Chengchi University, Department of Diplomacy and Center for Foreign Policy Studies in Taipei. He was a lecturer at the Chinese Studies Program of the Ateneo de Manila University and the International Studies Department of the De La Salle University. Pitlo was formerly a technical assistant with the National Coast Watch Council Secretariat, now known as the Presidential Office for Maritime Concerns. He also served as a research associate and consultant for several projects on maritime issues and Philippine foreign policy. He obtained his Master of Laws from Peking University. His commentaries and analyses on Philippine security and foreign policy and Southeast Asian affairs appear in the *South China Morning Post*, *China-US Focus*, *Asia Times*, CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, and *The Diplomat*.





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Maj Gen BK Sharma is Director at United Service Institution of India, India's oldest think tank established by the British in 1870. He was conferred three military awards by the President of India for rendering exceptional distinguished national service and for displaying courage. Besides, he was conferred national award for nation building by the Confederation of Educational Excellence of India in 2017. He has tenanted prestigious assignments in India, including command of a mountain division on China border and Senior Faculty Member at the National Defence College. He has represented his country at the UN as Military Observer in Central America and has been India's Defence Attaché in Central Asia. He specializes in Strategic Net Assessment methodology, Scenario Building and Strategic Gaming. He has published extensively and edits prestigious *USI Strategic Year Book*. He has lectured at the prestigious military establishment, policy think tanks, and universities, literature festivals in India and abroad. He regularly participates in Track-2 Level dialogue.



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Dr. Vo Xuan Vinh is Deputy Director General of Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi. He is also the Director of Centre for Australia and New Zealand Studies. His fields of expertise include Politics, security and international relations in Indo-Pacific, Maritime security in Southeast Asia, Politics of Thailand and Democratization in Myanmar, India's Look/Act East Policy and Administrative Reforms in Vietnam. His latest book: Pankaj K Jha and Vo Xuan Vinh (2020). *India, Vietnam and the Indo-Pacific: Expanding Horizons*. London: Routledge.



**Dr. Satoru Nagao**  
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Dr. Satoru Nagao is a Non-resident Fellow at Hudson Institute, Tokyo. From 2017 to 2020, he served as a Visiting Fellow at Hudson Institute in Washington, DC. He earned his PhD from Gakushuin University. He holds multiple research roles, including director at the International Security Industry Council, senior research fellow at the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies, and specially-appointed research fellow at the Japan Forum on International Relations. He is also affiliated with institutions like the Observer Research Foundation, Jindal India Institute, and Tillotoma Foundation in India, and the Institute of National Security Studies Sri Lanka. Previously, Dr. Nagao was a visiting scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC, a research fellow at the Tokyo Foundation, and a lecturer at Gakushuin University, Aoyama-Gakuin University, and Komazawa University. He served as a security analyst at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as a first lieutenant in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Forces.



**Dr. Swasti Rao**  
*Independent Researcher*

Dr. Swasti Rao was Associate Fellow at the Europe and Eurasia Center, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. She holds her Masters and MPhil from School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has completed her PhD in Advanced International Politics from Tsukuba University, Japan. She is a recipient of Japanese Education Ministry Fellowship (MEXT) in 2011 and also a recipient of the 'Okita Memorial Scholarship' in 2010 from ICCR. She holds an adjunct position at the Tokai University, Japan in the capacity of a foreign collaborator for the Japan Society for Promotion of Science (JSPS) funded research project on "Civil Society and Urban Governance in Asia, 2020-2025". She also contributed to the ORCAxWICCI Special Issue "Building the Future of EU-India Strategic Partnership: Between Trade, Technology, Security and China."



**Dr. Tomasz Łukaszuk**  
*University of Warsaw*

Dr. Tomasz Łukaszuk is a Professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw. He worked in Polish foreign service for 25 years until 2017, serving in Norway, Indonesia, Singapore, East Timor, India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Maldives. Appointed twice as the Ambassador of Poland to Indonesia and Timor Leste (2005-2010) and India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka (2014-2017). His fieldwork experience in diplomacy includes two years as a deputy director, two years as a director of Asia and the Pacific Department, two years as a director of the Infrastructure Department at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He represented Poland at various conferences on maritime issues, environment, Afghanistan, Afghanistan-Pakistan International Contact Group and ASEM, preparing several papers and reports. His research interest covers the foreign policy of Asia and the Pacific countries, maritime governance, EU relations with South and Southeast Asia, interregional cooperation of Bay of Bengal countries and maritime strategies of biggest littoral countries of Indian Ocean.



**Dr. Bhagya Senaratne**

*Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies*

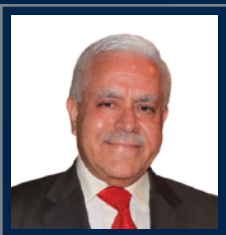
Dr. Bhagya Senaratne is a Postdoctoral Fellow of Global Asia at the Center for Global Asia, NYU Shanghai, and formerly a Senior Lecturer in Strategic Studies at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka. Her research spans Foreign Policy Analysis (Sri Lanka, China, U.S.), China Studies, Diplomacy, Strategic Communication, and Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific. She has served on editorial boards, including as Editor-in-Chief of the *Defence and Security Journal* (2021). She co-edited *Sri Lanka's Post-Independence Defence Policy* (2023) and *Pakistan-Sri Lanka Relations: A Story of Friendship* (2017). She has organized events like the KDU-CNA Track 1.5 Dialogue (2016, 2018) and was Conference Secretary for KDU's 11th International Research Conference (2018). She received prestigious awards, including the U.S. State Department's AEIF Award (2020), International Visitor Leadership Program (2019), and the Ship for World Youth Programme (2010). Her academic journey includes affiliations with the University of Colombo, the Indian Institute for Mass Communication, and the Geneva Center for Security Policy. In 2017, she was a Visiting Scholar at the China Institute of International Studies, Beijing.



**Dr. Tanvi Kulkarni**

*Asia-Pacific Leadership Network*

Dr. Tanvi Kulkarni is a security and foreign policy analyst. She is a Policy Fellow at the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network (APLN). Her research specialisation is on nuclear politics, including diplomacy, arms control and confidence building measures, and South Asia's nuclear programmes. Tanvi has a PhD from the Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament of the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. She is a visiting fellow at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies and a South Asia Advisor at the International Students/ Young Pugwash. Tanvi has previously held a teaching position at the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies at Pune University.



**Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar**

*Former Indian Diplomat*

Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar has worked for the Indian Foreign Service for over three decades. He was the ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia and has worked in diplomatic positions in Washington DC, Brussels, Moscow, Geneva, Tehran, Dhaka and Bangkok. He negotiated for India in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations for India-EU, India-ASEAN and the India-Thailand Free Trade Agreement. He has worked as the head of National Foundation for Communal Harmony. He is currently the president of Institute of Global Studies in New Delhi. Amb. Sajjanhar writes and speaks on issues relating to international relations and Indian foreign policy.



### **Admiral Jayantha Perera**

*Former Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy*

Admiral Jayantha Perera, the 19th Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, brings 37 years of distinguished military experience and expertise in maritime defense. Renowned for safeguarding maritime boundaries and promoting ethical oceanic governance, he reached the pinnacle of his career through professionalism and dedication. Admiral Perera holds a Master of Science in Defence Studies from the University of Madras and another in Defence and Strategic Studies from the National Defence University in Islamabad, Pakistan. During his tenure, he held several senior naval appointments, including serving as the first Commanding Officer of the SLN Flagship 'Sayura' in 2000. For his acts of bravery on the battlefield and at sea, he was awarded multiple gallantry medals. After retiring as Navy Chief, Admiral Perera was appointed Advisor to the President on Maritime Affairs in 2015 and currently serves on the Presidential Task Force for COVID-19 prevention within the military and prisons. Additionally, he is a consultant and board director for a leading Sri Lankan shipping company. Active in the global maritime domain, he shares his vast knowledge and experience as a resource person, contributing significantly to defense and maritime affairs locally and internationally.



### **Raj Mohabeer**

*Indian Ocean Commission*

An economist by profession, Raj Mohabeer has held, since 2000, the post of Officer in Charge at the General Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Commission – an inter-governmental Organisation of the South-West Indian Ocean Island States. Prior to this period, he was working as an Economist at the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development of the Republic of Mauritius. His current portfolio includes economic cooperation, trade, regional integration, connectivity and infrastructure development, maritime security, and circular and blue economy – areas of interventions which spans to countries beyond the IOC Member States and regions. He also deals with Small Islands Developing States issues. Raj Mohabeer has gained extensive and deep knowledge of the region. Among the various dossiers under his responsibility, he has been promoting the Blue Economy and has spearheaded the development and establishment of a Regional Maritime Security Architecture for the Western Indian Ocean, actively advocating for the participation of the international community to join in. He has also been the head of the Secretariat for the former Contact Group Against Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, now the Contact Group against Illicit Maritime Activities.



### **Dr. Vithiyapathy Purushothaman**

*Shenzhen University*

Dr. Vithiyapathy Purushothaman is a PostDoc Lecturer at Shenzhen University. He was a PhD Research Scholar (Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) of India and Chinese Government Scholarship) at the University of Science and Technology of China. He is an Associate Member of the Chennai Centre for China Studies. He was a Research Officer at the Chennai Centre for China Studies and associated with the Center for Asia Studies from 2014-2017. He has studied engineering in Computer Science. He pursued his M.A. in Defence and Strategic Studies and M. Phil in Centre for South and Southeast Asia Studies from the University of Madras. He recently published his book "India's Strategic Guardian of the Sky: IRNSS" and "Brahmaputra: The Strategic Water Resource of India".





**Dr. Asantha Senevirathna**

*General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University*

Dr. Asantha Senevirathna serves as a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Defence and Strategic Studies at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University in Sri Lanka. Dr. Senavirathna holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Colombo and has extensive experience in teaching and research. His research interests encompass a wide range of topics, including security studies, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and regional cooperation in South Asia. Dr. Senavirathna is actively involved in policy-oriented research and has contributed to discussions on national and regional security issues and published extensively.



**Ayadoure S Stalin**

*Jawaharlal Nehru University*

Ayadoure S Stalin is a Writer, badged as “Youth Partner” by UNITAR, and PostGrad Scholar – International Studies from the Department of Politics and International Studies, Pondicherry University. Formerly, he was associated as a Research Coordinator with the Global Counter Terrorism Council. He writes periodically the opinion editorial blogs for the Diplomatist Magazine and his research area includes Contemporary Issues and Trends in India’s Foreign Policy, National Security, Global Governance, and the Balance of Power in Indo-Pacific. Currently, he is a Young Leader Fellow - India Glocal.



**Dr. Harinda Vidanage**

*General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University*

Dr. Harinda Vidanage is the Director, International Relations Office and the Founding Director, the Centre for Strategic Assessment (CSA), General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University Sri Lanka. Previously he was Director at Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies and Assistant Professor of International Relations, St. Lawrence University, New York. Dr. Vidanage gained his PhD from the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom as an ORSAS and Principles Scholar. He is a Senior Fulbright Scholar and one of the few Sri Lankan scholar recipients of the prestigious Fulbright Scholar in Residence fellowship awarded by the US Fulbright Commission. Dr. Vidanage is Member of the Board of Management of Lakshman Kadiragamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies (LKI), Think Tank of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Sri Lanka, Honorary Fellow at Stratenewsglobal.com, and research fellow at Nepal Institute of International Cooperation (NIICE). Expert Member of the South Asia Cyber Security Governance review group of Geneva Centre for Security Governance (DECAF). Senior Advisor to Centre for Legal & Security Studies (CLASS). He was a lead academic in developing the curriculum for the newly established National Defence College in Sri Lanka (NDC). ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), HDUCIM coordinator for KDU and Sri Lanka.



**Md. Saifullah Akon**  
*Osaka University*

Md. Saifullah Akon is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Japanese Studies, University of Dhaka. Currently, he is doing his PhD at Osaka University, Japan. He is also the Executive Director of Indo-Pacific Network (INPANET), a network of leading researchers that aims to exchange and enhance knowledge related to the Indo-Pacific. He obtained his Bachelor and Master's degrees in International Relations at the University of Dhaka. Mr. Akon has presented a good number of papers in international conferences held in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand. His areas of specialization are Indo-Pacific, FOIP, Security, and Japan-South Asia Relations.



**Dr. Zeno Leoni**  
*King's College London*

Dr. Zeno Leoni's is an Assistant Professor in Defence Studies at Defence Studies Department, King's College London, UK. His research focuses on US and Chinese grand strategies, and changing world order. He published extensively in this area, and his latest book is *A New Cold War: US-China Relations in the 21st Century* (Bristol University Press, 2024). Dr Leoni engages on a regular basis international media, and his analyses have appeared in The Guardian, The Financial Times, BBC News, France 24, South China Morning Post, Corriere della Sera, Voice of America, ABC, among many other outlets. Dr Leoni also teaches militaries from all over the world, and in 2024 he was an Adjunct Professor at The Republic of Indonesia Defence University.



**Dr. Niloy Ranjan Biswas**  
*University of Dhaka*

Dr. Niloy Ranjan Biswas is an Associate Professor of the Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka. He has undertaken his studies at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, The George Washington University, Washington DC, USA, and City, University of London, London, UK. In 2016, he completed his Ph.D. in International Politics from City, University of London. He was a recipient of the Fulbright Fellowship at The George Washington University, Washington DC. He is the recipient of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP)-Resolve Fellowship, Visiting Research Fellowship at Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group and others. He has published extensively on regional cooperation in Indo-pacific, South and Southeast Asia, deradicalization and preventing violent extremism, refugees and forced migration, and South Asian regional contributions to United Nations peace support endeavours. Dr. Biswas is an adjunct Associate Professor at the Bangladesh University of Professionals. He frequently visits Bangladesh Foreign Service Academy, Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations and Training (BIPSOT), National Defense College, Defense Services Command and Staff College, and Bangladesh Ansar & VDP Academy as a guest speaker and subject matter expert.





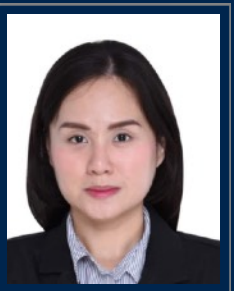
**Dr. Barbara Kratiuk**  
*Vistula University*

Dr. Barbara Kratiuk is an Assistant professor at Vistula University in Poland. She was educated at the University of Warsaw, Albert Ludwig University in Freiburg and London School of Economics. She has done work on post-colonial discourse in East Asia and the colonial race in the 19th century and now writes mostly on Vietnam and Thailand and edited the Handbook of Indo-Pacific Studies. Barbara has worked for Polish embassies in Berlin and Singapore as well as various media outlets before embarking on her academic career. She has been a visiting scholar at various universities in India, Japan and Korea. Barbara often comments for Polish media about the political developments in East Asia and promotes better understanding of East and Southeast Asia.



**Jumel G. Estrañero**  
*De La Salle University*

Jumel G. Estrañero is a university lecturer at De La Salle University, Philippines. He has completed the Executive Course in National Security at the National Defense College of the Philippines and has participated in NADI Track II discussions in Singapore (an ASEAN-led security forum on terrorism). He worked in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Office of Civil Defense, National Security Council-Office of the President, and currently in the Department of the National Defense. Previously, he worked at Lyceum of the Philippines as part-time lecturer. He is the co-author of the books titled: *Disruptive Innovations, Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism: A Philippine Terrorism Handbook*, and *Global Security Studies Journal (Springer Link, United States)*. He is an alumnus of ASEAN Law Academy Advanced Program in Center for International Law, National University Singapore and Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Switzerland. He is also a Juris Doctor student.



**Atty. Fatima J. Saquilayan**  
*De La Salle University*

Atty. Fatima J. Saquilayan, JD, CHRP is a Certified Data Privacy Officer (DPO) and a Certified Professional in Human Resources (CHRP) and currently pursuing to be an arbitrator with the Office for Alternative Dispute Resolution, Department of Justice. She is currently a Human Resource Director, Emilio Aguinaldo College; Legal Counsel, Cavite Historical Society; and a Lecturer: Claro M. Recto Academy of Advanced Studies (Lyceum of the Philippines); De La Salle University Philippines; and Emilio Aguinaldo College Institute of the Law and Justice. Her research interests focus on international relations, humanitarian security, sustainable development, and labor law and migration, and cybersecurity.



**ASM Tarek Hassan Semul**

*Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies*

ASM Tarek Hassan Semul is a Research Fellow at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and has more than 14 years of research and policy analysis experience in foreign policy, international security and geopolitics. Mr Hassan obtained his MSS and BSS in International Relations from the University of Dhaka. In 2020, he participated in the Kautilya Fellowship Programme (KFP) on India's foreign policy from New Delhi, India. In 2023, he participated in the US State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) on "Addressing 21st Century Global Challenges in the Indo-Pacific Region". He is a member of the Indo-Pacific Circle, a scholars' network on the Indo-Pacific.



**Dr. Namrata Goswami**

*Johns Hopkins University*

Dr. Namrata Goswami is a Professor at Johns Hopkins University, USA. She also taught at the Thunderbird School of Global Management, Arizona State University, the Joint Special Forces University and is a consultant for Space Fund Intelligence. She is a guest lecturer at Emory University for seminars on Technology, Society & Governance and India today. She was subject matter expert in international affairs with Futures Laboratory, Alabama. She worked as Research Fellow at MP-Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi; a visiting Fellow at Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Norway; La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia; University of Heidelberg, Germany; Jennings-Randolph Senior Fellow, United States Institute of Peace; and was a Fulbright Senior Fellowship Awardee. She was awarded the Minerva grant by Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense to study great power competition in outer space. In April 2019, Dr. Goswami testified before the U.S-China Economic and Security Review Commission on China's space program. She has published extensively and she was invited in November 2019 to share about her life and her work at a Tedx event held at the Rosa Parks Museum, Montgomery, Alabama.



**Nilanthi Samaranayake**

*United States Institute of Peace*

Nilanthi Samaranayake is a Visiting Expert at United States Institute of Peace, USA. She is also an adjunct fellow at the East-West Center's Washington office. Samaranayake served as director of the strategy and policy analysis program at CNA. Before joining CNA, she analyzed public opinion at the Pew Research Center and completed a fellowship at the National Bureau of Asian Research. Her work focuses on regional security in the Indian Ocean, smaller South Asian countries, non-traditional security issues, U.S. alliances and partnerships, and small states in international affairs and she has published extensively. She is also co-author of "Raging Waters: China, India, Bangladesh and Brahmaputra River Politics." She received a master's degree in international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a bachelor's in international studies from American University.



**Dr. Miao Ji**

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Dr. Miao Ji is Associate professor from the Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University. He also serves as research fellow of the China National Collaborative Innovation Center for Territorial Sovereignty and Maritime Rights. He holds a doctor's degree in law from School of International Studies, Renmin University of China and political science from Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University, Japan. His research focuses on Japan politics and foreign policy, Asian regionalism and international relations of the Indo-Pacific. He was academic associate with the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University 2022-2023.



**Antoine Levesques**

*International Institute for Strategic Studies*

Antoine Levesques is a Research Fellow for South and Central Asian Defence, Strategy and Diplomacy at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London. He specialises in the facts and assessments of South Asian policies towards China, regional nuclear issues, as well as Pakistan's political and security perspectives. He also contributes to the South and Central Asian Defence, Strategy and Diplomacy programme's activities of research, assessment, as well as convening and outreach to officials and other audiences, through publications and discussions in and outside of the region.



**Dr. Eva Pejsova**

*Brussels School of Governance*

Dr. Eva Pejsova is the Japan Chair at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) of the Brussels School of Governance (BSoG-VUB) and an Associate Fellow at the French "Fondation pour la Recherche Strategique" (FRS). Previously, Dr. Pejsova was in charge of the Asia portfolio at the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), the EU's agency for foreign and security policy research and analysis. She holds a PhD in Strategic Studies from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore and has previously worked with the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the French Prime Minister's Office, the OECD and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). She also leads the Japan Chair and runs a course on Japan's Foreign and Security Policy. She also lectures at SciencesPo (Paris School of International Affairs) in Paris, the Geneva Centre for Security Studies (GCSP), as well as briefs the Members of the European Parliament. Her research focuses on security issues within the broader Indo-Pacific region, notably related to maritime security, sovereignty disputes, regional cooperative mechanism and good ocean governance.



**Lisa Curtis**

*Center for New American Security*

Lisa Curtis is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Indo-Pacific Security Program at Center for New American Security (CNAS). She is a foreign policy and national security expert with over 20 years of service in the U.S. government, including at the National Security Council (NSC), CIA, State Department, and Capitol Hill. Her work has centered on U.S. policy toward the Indo-Pacific and South Asia, with a particular focus on U.S.-India strategic relations; Quad (United States, Australia, India, and Japan) cooperation; counterterrorism strategy in South and Central Asia; and China's role in the region. Curtis served as deputy assistant to the president and NSC senior director for South and Central Asia from 2017 to 2021. Curtis received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service in December 2020 in recognition of her work at the NSC. From 2006 to 2017, Curtis was senior fellow on South Asia at the Heritage Foundation. She also served as a professional staff member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, handling the South Asia portfolio for former chairman of the committee, Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN), from 2003 to 2006. Before that, she worked as a senior advisor in the South Asia Bureau at the State Department, where she developed and coordinated U.S. policy on India-Pakistan relations. In the late 1990s, she worked as a senior analyst on South Asia at the CIA, and from 1994 to 1998 served at the U.S. embassies in Pakistan and India. Curtis currently is Board Chair of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, on the Leadership Council of Women in National Security (LCWINS), and a Member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She received a bachelor of arts degree in economics from Indiana University in December 1990.



**Dr. George I. H. Cooke**

*Regional Centre for Strategic Studies*

Dr. George I. H. Cooke is the Executive Director of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka. A Diplomatic Historian, with a Doctorate in International Relations, Master of Arts degree, and Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences, he is an alumnus of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, *Clingendael*, and is a Non-Resident Fellow of the India Studies Centre of the Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand. A former diplomat, he was recruited to the Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) and served for a decade at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Colombo, and overseas at the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Paris, France, and the Permanent Delegation of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). He founded the Awarelogue Initiative, and teaches International Relations at several seats of higher education in Sri Lanka. He has also taught internationally at universities in India, Thailand and Bangladesh. He has presented academic papers in Sri Lanka, India, China, Indonesia and United Kingdom, and is Chief Editor of the Journal of Defence Services Command & Staff College in Sri Lanka.





### **Brendan Donnelly**

*Consortium of Indo-Pacific Researchers*

Captain Brendan Donnelly is an U.S. Air Force officer stationed at Joint Base Langley Eustis, VA and is a Fellow with the Consortium of Indo-Pacific Researchers (CIPR). He is a graduate of Bowling Green State University where he achieved a B.A.S in History with a dual minor of Political Science and Aerospace Leadership. He has multiple publications with the Consortium and the Journal for Indo-Pacific Affairs (JIPA). Capt. Donnelly has also been featured as a moderator and speaker on the Vanguard: Indo-Pacific podcast and presented at academic panels on behalf of the consortium as well.



### **Dr. Scott Edwards**

*Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies*

Dr. Scott Edwards is a Lecturer at the University of Reading (UK) and Research Fellow at the Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies (YCAPS, Japan). His research interests centre on the regional politics of Southeast Asia, with a particular focus on collective efforts combating maritime insecurities. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Birmingham, UK.



### **Rahul Kumar Sharma**

*Central University of South Bihar*

Rahul Kumar Sharma is currently the Research Fellow in the Department of Political Studies at Central University of South Bihar. He served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at North Bengal St. Xavier's College (University of North Bengal) and Uttar Banga Maheshwari College, Siliguri Darjeeling. He is also the empanel member of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), regional center based in Siliguri, Darjeeling. He has graduated from Darjeeling Government College with Political Science Hons. He did his M.A. in political Science with specialization in International Relations from the University of North Bengal. He has contributed through his research publications in many reputed journal like - Artha Journal of Social Science; IPSA; World Focus are the name of few. He is associated with Institute of Global Professionals; Indian Political Science Associations; West Bengal Political Science Associations and Early Child Development Forum. He has awarded for best speaker and best faculty award in the year 2022 and 2023 respectively.



**Jyantika Rao Tiruvaloor Viavoori**  
*Delhi Policy Group*

Jyantika Rao Tiruvaloor Viavoori is working as a Research Associate at Delhi Policy Group. Her research interests pertain to various dimensions of International Relations and the socio-cultural and political relations of South Asia and Western Asia. Jyantika Rao Tiruvaloor Viavoori completed her master's in International Relations with a specialisation in Culture & Politics from Leiden University, the Netherlands. Her master's thesis dealt with the identity formation of Kashmiri Pandits after their exodus from the valley and its impact on conflict management. Jyantika completed her Bachelor of Arts in International Studies, focusing on Middle Eastern studies from Leiden University. She has published papers on international security and gender-related issues under the aegis of various organisations and presented her work at conferences.



**Vijay Prasad Jayshwal**  
*Tribhuvan University*

Vijay Prasad Jayshwal was a former Assistant Campus Chief of Nepal Law Campus and is Assistant Professor of Tribhuvan University faculty of law. He has conducted several researches on various thematic issues like international law, human rights, international relations, international trade law, refugee law and others. Jayshwal has participated in more than three dozen international conferences as a paper presenter. Jayshwal has also worked in various national and international agencies as researcher and assistant.



**Irfan Yar**  
*Afghanistan Security Institute*

Irfan Yar is the founder of the Afghanistan Security Institute (ASI) and a PhD candidate at Paris Graduate School. He has worked with organizations such as the World Food Programme (Italy), the Global Counterterrorism Institute (USA), and the Macdonald-Laurier Institute (Canada). Holding two master's degrees in Area Studies and International Affairs, Irfan's expertise spans Afghanistan, terrorism, radicalism, human rights, and refugee issues. His recent paper, "How the Taliban Mobilized Popular Support to Survive the US War in Afghanistan," provides critical insights into the failures in Afghanistan.



**Dr. Abhishek Pratap Singh.**  
*University of Delhi*

Dr. Abhishek Pratap Singh holds his PhD in China Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, India. He teaches International Studies at Deshbandhu College, University of Delhi. He was awarded Fellow at South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF), Brussels, Belgium and was nominated as an India Delegate for the BRICS Program 2017 by Fudan University, Shanghai. He also attended the Visiting Sinologists Program 2018 at Jinan University, Guangzhou at the invitation of the Ministry of Culture, China and headed India Youth Delegation 2018 to Tibet. He is an honorary member, Hindi Advisory Committee, NITI Aayog and member, Editorial Advisory Board, Dr. Ambedkar International Convention Centre, Government of India, New Delhi.





**Dr. Ornela Cuci**

*Former Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment of Albania*

Dr. Ornela Cuci is a Professor at Western Balkan University, Albania. She holds PhD in Environmental Sciences. She is an accomplished environmental professional with extensive experience in governance, academia, and international advocacy. As Albania's Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment, she led the development and implementation of environmental policies, including waste management strategies and climate resilience initiatives. Representing Eastern Europe and Central Asia on platforms like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), she contributed to global climate finance policies. Currently a lecturer and adviser at Western Balkan University, she brings together academic insight and governmental expertise to promote sustainable development, green finance, and impactful local actions across the Balkans and beyond.



**Mahesh Ganguly**

*Jamia Millia Islamia*

Mahesh Ganguly is a Junior Research Fellow and Master's students of International Relations and Area Studies at MMAJ Academy of International Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. His area of research interests are international relations, global politics, security issues and strategic affairs. He has published his research articles at several platforms such as Voice Magazine, Journal of Asiatic Society for Social Science and Research, etc.



**Mohd. Hadi Raza**

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Mohd. Hadi Raza is a student of Masters in International Relations and Area Studies from MMAJ Academy of international studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. He holds Bachelors in Political Science from Nagpur university, India. His areas of research interests are international political economy, strategic affairs, climate policies and migration issues. He has been associated with several reputed organizations such as Impact and Policy Research Institute (IMPRI) India, Young Leaders for Active Citizenship and others.



**Dr. Karmveer Singh**

*University of Rajasthan*

Dr. Karmveer Singh is Assistant Professor at Department of History and Indian Culture at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India. He holds MPhil and PhD from Center for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Masters in History from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. He has 11 years of teaching experience and areas of research are history and culture of Southeast Asia, India-Southeast Asia cultural linkages, Indian Diaspora, Indo-Pacific Affairs and medieval India. He was a visiting scholar at Thammasat University, Bangkok and presented papers at several conferences. He has published extensively.

## CONFERENCE TEAM



**Sumitra Karki**  
*Director*  
*NIICE*



**Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**  
*Research Director*  
*NIICE*



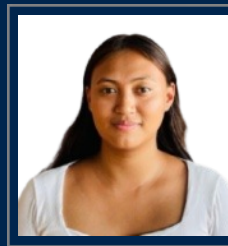
**Mira Rai**  
*Research Associate*  
*NIICE*



**Manila Prajapati**  
*Research Intern*  
*NIICE*



**Abhinav Dhakal**  
*Research Intern*  
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**Binee Tamang**  
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*NIICE*

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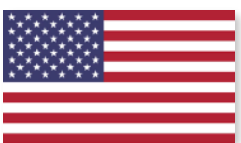
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