



NIICE

NEPAL INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ENGAGEMENT



NEPAL-INDIA THINK TANK FORUM

REGIONAL RESILIENCE:
Strengthening Nepal-India
Security Cooperation

KATHMANDU MARRIOTT HOTEL

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

10 February 2026

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DATE : 10 February 2026, TUE
TIME : 09:30-16:00 hrs
VENUE : Kathmandu Marriott Hotel

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**SESSION I Nepal-India Security Cooperation:
Convergence, Cooperation and Continuity**

- 10:00-10:10 Welcome Remarks, **Sumitra Karki**,
Director, NIICE.
- 10:10-10:20 Opening Remarks, **Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**,
Research Director, NIICE.
- 10:20-10:30 Remarks, **VADM Sanjay Jasjit Singh**
(retd.), *Director General, United Service*
Institution of India
- 10:30-11:00 Questions and Answers
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SESSION II Transnational Threats, Connectivity and Economic Security in Nepal-India Relations

Moderator : **Anil Giri**, *Chief Sub-Editor,
The Kathmandu Post*

11:00-11:10 Chair Remarks

11:10-11:20 Remarks, **Capt. Dr. Alok Bansal**,
Executive Vice President, India Foundation.

11:20-11:30 Remarks, **Maj. Gen. Binoj Basnyat
(Retd.)**, *Political and Security Analyst.*

11:30-11:40 Remarks, **Dr. Gaurav Saini**, *Co-Founder,
Council for Strategic and Defence Research.*

11:40-11:50 Remarks, **Anurag Acharya**, *Director, Policy
Entrepreneurs Inc.*

11:50-12:00 Remarks, **Dr. Angana Guha Roy**,
*Associate Director, Asian Institute of
Diplomacy and International Affairs.*

12:00-13:00 Questions and Answers

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break

SESSION III Building Resilient Nepal-India Relations: The Role of Think Tanks, Youth and Media

Moderator : **Dr. Pramod Jaiswal**, *Research Director, NIICE*

14:00-14:10 Chair Remarks

14:10-14:20 Remarks, **Amb. Pankaj Saran**, *Convenor, NatStrat.*

14:20-14:30 Remarks, **Bibek Dhoj Thapa**, *Program Coordinator and Research Associate, NIICE.*

14:30-14:40 Remarks, **Prof. Sangeeta Thapliyal**, *Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University.*

14:40-14:50 Remarks, **Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki**, *Executive Director, Center for Nepal and Asian Studies.*

14:50-15:00 Remarks, **Sanjeev Satgainya**, *Journalist.*

15:00-15:50 Questions and Answers

15:50-16:00 Vote of Thanks, *NIICE.*

**PROFILE OF
PARTICIPANTS**

(In Order of Appearance or Confirmation Received)



VADM Sanjay Jasjit Singh (Retd.)

Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh, SYSM, PVSM, AVSM, NM, PhD (Retd.) is Director General of the United Service Institution (USI), Delhi, which is India's oldest think tank on defence and security, founded in 1870. He has held a range of command, training and staff appointments, and served on most class of ships over his four decades of service in the Indian Navy. He superannuated on 31st July 2025. He has served in a wide range of Naval & Joint Staff appointments, including Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations) and Vice Chief of Naval Staff at New Delhi. His training command appointments include the Navigation & Direction School, Flag Officer Sea Training and Commandant Naval War College. His operational command appointments include two multi role Frigates, the Western Fleet, and recently as the FOCinC Western Naval Command, in 2024-25, wherein he was responsible for ensuring India's maritime security across the Western IOR, through a period of highly intense and resurgent maritime security challenges, including piracy, drone/missile attacks on ships, and Op Sindoor. He is the recipient of several awards for his distinguished service. A perennial student and scholar, he has contributed research papers in professional Journals, Seminars & Conferences. He was the lead drafter for the Indian Navy's Maritime Doctrine 2009, Strategic Guidance to Transformation 2014, and Indian Maritime Security Strategy 2015. He has undergone several post-Graduation programmes, and holds MA (History), MA (Defence Studies), MSc (Defence Studies), MPhil (Defence Studies), MPhil (Defence & Strategic Studies), and PhD (Arts).



Amb. Pankaj Saran

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. Pankaj Saran 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. Sangeeta Thapliyal

Dr. Sangeeta Thapliyal is a Professor in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. Her primary area of research is on India's foreign policy, South Asian studies, Himalayas and Trans-Himalayas and Water Security. She

recently completed a two-year tenure as the first ICCR Professor Chair of India Studies at Kathmandu University, Nepal. She was also the first ICCR Rabindranath Tagore Chair of Contemporary Indian Studies, University of Valladolid, Spain. Before joining JNU, Prof. Thapliyal was the Director in the Department of Strategic and Regional Studies, Jammu University. She has also worked in the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), Delhi Policy Group and the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).



Sanjeev Satgainya

Sanjeev Satgainya is a journalist with over two decades of experience in South Asian media. He is a former editor of The Kathmandu Post, Nepal's leading English-language daily, where he played a key role in shaping editorial coverage and public discourse. He

currently works with The Hindu, one of India's most respected newspapers, and continues to write and edit on politics, governance, and regional affairs.



Capt. Dr. Alok Bansal

Capt. Dr. Alok Bansal is the Executive Vice President of India Foundation & the Secretary General of Asian Eurasian Human Rights Forum. Capt. Bansal has previously served as the Executive Director of the National Maritime Foundation and has held research positions at leading Indian think tanks including the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and the Centre for Land Warfare Studies. He has authored/ edited 10 books. His work focuses on maritime security, South Asian geopolitics, and internal dynamics of Pakistan. A former naval officer, he served in the Indian Navy for 32 years and commanded two warships. A PhD in international Affairs, he has been a visiting Professor at Jamia Millia Islamia.



Bibek Dhoj Thapa

Bibek Dhoj Thapa is Program Coordinator and Research Associate at NIICE. His research focuses on New technologies in IR, Nepal's Neighbourhood Studies and Security. He was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies at Sichuan University, China. He is currently pursuing his Master's at the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University.



Maj. Gen. Binoj Basnyat (Retd)

Maj. Gen. Binoj Basnyat (Retd.) is decorated with Order of Suprabal Jana Seva Shree; Order of the Lion from the Republic of Finland and Order of Cross of Merit from the Federal Republic of Germany. He holds MPhil in Defense and Strategic Studies from University of

Madras and is an alumni of National Defence College, New Delhi; Command and General Staff Officer's Course from US Army Command and General Staff College; Advanced Security Co-operation Course from APCSS, Hawaii; Executive Course in Defense Decision Making from the Centre of Civil Military Relations, Naval Post Graduate School, USA and graduate of the Royal Military Academy, UK and the War College, India.



Anurag Acharya

Anurag Acharya is a Director at Policy Entrepreneurs Inc., Kathmandu. He is a former journalist and a Kathmandu-based researcher. He has over a decade-long experience working as a development professional for various national and international organizations. His expertise and research interests include politics and governance in Nepal and the South Asia region. Acharya has written extensively for national publications and has collaborated with international scholars on various research projects. He has a Masters' degree in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.



Dr. Angana Guha Roy

Dr. Angana Guha Roy is Associate Director at the Asian Institute Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDIA), Kathmandu. She has worked as a Fellow for the John Lukacs Institute for Strategy and Politics Ludovika University of Public Services and Hungarian Institute of International Affairs in Budapest in the past. Dr. Roy completed her Ph.D. in Foreign Policy from the Department of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, New Delhi. Her thesis focused on the semantics and scope of Middle Power in International Relations with a focus on South Korea's New Asia Initiative adopted in 2013. Previously, she has worked with several prominent think tanks in New Delhi like Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and Delhi Policy Group.



Sumitra Karki

Sumitra Karki is the Director at NIICE. Previously, she served as the Program Coordinator and Research Associate. Her research focus is on issues related to Gender, Non-Traditional Security Issues and Geopolitics of China and South Asia. She is pursuing MPhil/PhD in International Relations from Central Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University. She has co-edited 'Human Rights and Human Security in South Asia' published by Adroit Publishers, New Delhi.



Dr. Gaurav Saini

Dr. Gaurav Saini is the Co-founder of the Council for Strategic and Defense Research (CSDR), a leading New Delhi think tank focused on foreign policy, defense, and strategic affairs. His expertise extends to designing annual geopolitical assessments, scoping defense industry collaborations, facilitating Track 1.5/2 dialogues, and leading multi-stakeholder research programs. Dr. Saini has been an Emerging Quad Think Tank Leader and a European Union exchange fellow. Dr. Saini has written extensively on global policy debates, addressing themes such as India-Australia defense and security partnerships, Indian foreign policy transitions, the Quad's strategic resilience, US-India relations amid global shifts, India-Europe defense cooperation, the Global South's geopolitical rise, India's counter-terrorism doctrines, India-China dynamics within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, India's military manufacturing advancements, Brazil-India defense synergies, and China's engagements in the Indo-Pacific.



Anil Giri

Anil Giri is the Chief Sub Editor at The Kathmandu Post, where he reports on diplomacy, geopolitics, international relations, and national politics. With over two decades of journalistic experience, his analyses and reporting have appeared in *The Himalayan Times* and the *BBC*

Nepali Service, among other national and international outlets such as *Hindustan Times*, *INAS*, and others. Giri previously served as the Delhi Correspondent for The Annapurna Post. He has authored and co-authored chapters in several books and conducts research on geopolitics. He is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi.



Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki

Dr. Mrigendra Bahadur Karki is the Executive Director of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University. He earned his PhD from Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan. He is the chief editor of *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, and the *Nepal Adhyayan Journal*,

and a member of the Editorial Board for the *Unity Journal* and *Sipahi*. Furthermore, he is the founding head of the Central Department of Social Work, Tribhuvan University. Dr. Karki's scholarly contributions are widely recognized. He co-authored "Democracy and Ethnic Organization in Nepal" and "Surveying Activists in Nepal" (with David N. Gellner, University of Oxford, Sage Publications).



Dr. Pramod Jaiswal

Dr. Pramod Jaiswal is the Research Director at NIICE. He has been a regular and visiting faculty at different universities of Nepal, Bangladesh, China and Thailand. 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 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.

CONFERENCE TEAM



Manila Prajapati

*Research Associate
NIICE*



Ruvika Pradhan

*Media and Outreach
NIICE*



Rashmi Pantha

*Research Intern
NIICE*



Riyaz Karki

*Research Intern
NIICE*

ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIAN THINK TANKS

NIICE regularly engage with prominent think tanks of India and organize discussions on issues of mutual interest. Some of them are listed below:

- **Emerging Regional Dynamics of Nepal-India Relations** with *Center for Air Power Studies* on 21 January 2025
- **Indo-Pacific Future Forum** with *National Maritime Foundation* on 15-16 December 2024.
- **Perspectives on India's Neighbourhood First Policy** with *NatStrat* on 6 December 2023.
- **BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity** with *Vivekananda International Foundation* on 3 August 2022.
- **Bonds that Bind: Physical, Cultural and Economic Connectivity between Nepal and India** with *Centre for Land Warfare Studies* on 5 Oct 2021.
- **NIICE-USI Strategic Dialogue** with *United Service Institution of India* on 23 February 2021
- **Soft Power Dimensions: India-Nepal Relations** with *Centre for Land Warfare Studies* on 17 December 2020.
- **COVID-19 Response by BIMSTEC Countries** with *Observer Research Foundation* on 11 June 2020.
- **Traditional and non-traditional Security Issues in South Asia** with *Centre for Land Warfare Studies* on 14 September 2019.

NIICE has MoU with some of prominent Think Tanks of India such as:

- Center for Air Power Studies (CAPS)
 - Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS)
 - National Maritime Foundation (NMF)
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ABOUT NIICE

The Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement (NIICE) is an independent, apolitical, and non-partisan think tank based in Nepal. It was established in February 2016 under the Companies Act 2006 of Nepal.

NIICE is committed to promoting policy-oriented research, fostering strategic dialogue, and enhancing Nepal's engagement with the regional and global powers. Its major focus is international affairs, security and issues of development.

RESEARCH

NIICE has four Research Centers:

- 1.Center for China Studies
- 2.Center for Neighbourhood Studies
- 3.Center for Indo-Pacific Affairs
- 4.Center for Non-Traditional Security Studies

NIICE has Eight major Research Topics

- 1.Border and Transboundary Water Politics
- 2.China's Belt and Road Initiative
- 3.Climate Change and Energy
- 4.Defence and Security
- 5.Disaster Management
- 6.Global Governance, Sustainable Development, and Smart Cities
- 7.International Economy and Development
- 8.Refugee and Migration

NIICE regularly publishes Research Commentaries, Research Papers, Books and Book Reviews on foreign policy, security issues and issues of development.

FLAGSHIP EVENTS

NIICE has hosted some of the major events which has attracted global attention.

- Water and Peace Summit - 60 Speakers
- Indo-Pacific Future Forum - 150 Speakers
- NIICE Global Conclave – 220 Speakers
- Dialogue on Border Security - 35 Speakers
- International Studies Convention – 330 Speakers
- Understanding Nepal's Foreign Policy – 150 Speakers
- International Women's Summit – 80 Speakers
- Understanding International Migration – 70 Speakers

ENGAGEMENT

NIICE has partnership with hundreds of reputed think tanks and universities that focuses on NIICE's Research topics.

It also offers different ways for scholars and policy makers to engage with NIICE through:

- Internship Programme and
- Visiting Fellowship.

MEDIA AND QUERIES

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Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement is an independent, apolitical and non-partisan think tank which believes in freedom, democracy and a world free from conflict. We envision a world, where sources of insecurity are identified and understood, conflicts are prevented or resolved, and peace is advocated.

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