



# **3<sup>rd</sup> INDIA FORUM ON CHINA @ GOA**

## **CHINA AND ASIA'S CHANGING GEOPOLITICS**

**5-8 DECEMBER 2019**

**ORGANISED BY  
INSTITUTE OF CHINESE STUDIES  
&  
KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG**

**IN COOPERATION WITH  
GOA UNIVERSITY**

**THE ZURI WHITE SANDS, SOUTH GOA**

**TATA TRUSTS**

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# CONCEPT NOTE

## OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The India Forum on China @Goa (IFC), hosted by the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in cooperation with Goa University, was developed as an annual international conference where eminent scholars, practitioners and policymakers from India and other countries would hold in-depth deliberations on a topical theme pertaining to China in an Indian setting, keeping in mind Indian perspectives.

The ICS, Delhi and the India Office of KAS had organized the First India Forum on China @Goa at the International Centre Goa on 15-16 December 2017 in cooperation with the Goa University to explore the theme, 'Deciphering China's Quest for Global and Regional Leadership'. Given that it was held shortly after the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the deliberations and outcomes of the Congress too informed the discussions at the Forum. Arguments pertaining to China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), its efforts to fashion new institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank, its growing soft power capabilities and technological prowess were examined in great detail. Additionally, China's increasingly expansive definition of its 'core interests', its expanding military capabilities, its evolving security doctrines and its assertive behavior as well as nationalistic temperament were considered. Furthermore, an examination of the limitations and constraints faced by China in the pursuit of its regional and global aspirations were analyzed. The implications of China's readiness to offer the Chinese path as worthy of emulation by other developing countries were also discussed at the 1<sup>st</sup> IFC.

The Second India Forum on China @Goa was organized from 7-9 December 2018 at Cidade de Goa, Vanguinim Beach, Goa. As 2018 marked the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up, the theme of the conference was 'Changing Drivers of China's Economy'. The 2nd IFC @Goa brought together over 40 experts to provide perspectives on several sub-themes including the ramifications of the structural rebalancing of China's economy and its implications for India and other players. Experts also dwelt on the pressing question of what a confrontation with the US in the economic domain portends for a smooth rebalancing. Other sub-themes explored included Xi Jinping's Innovation-Driven Development Strategy especially the 13th Five-Year Plan, Made in China 2025, AI 2.0 and Reimagining External Drivers of Growth in the context of the BRI.

The report of the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> IFC can be accessed on the ICS website (<https://www.icsin.org/india-forum-on-china>).

## AGENDA OF 3<sup>rd</sup> IFC @GOA

The ICS and the KAS organized the Third India Forum on China @Goa on the theme ‘China and Asia’s Changing Geopolitics’, with the support of Goa University. The Keynote Address was delivered by Mr. Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow, Lowy Institute, Sydney on *Xi Jinping and Chinese Power*. Amb. Shivshankar Menon delivered the Valedictory Address. Other participants, experts and scholars deliberated upon the following sub-themes during the conference:

- China Factor in Evolving Discourse on Asia’s Geopolitical Challenges and Indo-Pacific: Scope, Power Shifts, Contestations;
- The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Nature, Directions and Implications for Asia;
- Assessing China’s Force Projection Capabilities in Asia and Beyond: Expanding Maritime and Security Presence, Bases and More;
- US-China Economic and Strategic Rivalry: Implications, Impact and Likely Trajectory;
- Changing Economic Landscape of Asia: Rise of China as Digital and Technology Power, RCEP, Disruption of Value Chains and More;
- Crafting the China Story: Beijing’s Cultural Diplomacy and ‘Sharp Power’; and
- China’s Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India.

## TIMELINE, VENUE, PARTICIPATION

This closed-door conference at Goa saw the participation of around 40 senior experts, including scholars, practitioners and policymakers from the economic, foreign policy, security and technological domains. The conference opened with a welcome dinner on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December. The deliberations on the 6<sup>th</sup> began with the inaugural session followed by three thematic sessions. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, the conference continued with four thematic sessions and closed with the valedictory session.

## OUTCOME

This report is aimed at policymakers, media and interested public and prepared based on the deliberations at the conference.

# 3<sup>rd</sup> India Forum on China @Goa

## “China and Asia’s Changing Geopolitics”

### PROGRAMME

#### DAY ONE - THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2019

1830 – 1900 Hours: Registration

1900 – 2030 Hours: Welcome Dinner

#### DAY TWO - FRIDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2019

##### 0945 - 1100 Hours: INAUGURAL SESSION

**Chair:** Amb. Ashok K. Kantha, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi and former Ambassador of India to China.

**Opening Remarks:** Prof. Varun Sahni, Vice-Chancellor, Goa University.

**Keynote Address:** Mr. Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow, Lowy Institute, Sydney: *Xi Jinping and Chinese Power*.

**Remarks:** Mr. Peter Rimmele, Resident Representative to India, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, New Delhi.

1100 - 1130 Hours: Tea/ Coffee Break

##### 1130 – 1300 Hours: SESSION 1 China Factor in Evolving Discourse on Asia’s Geopolitics and Indo – Pacific: Scope, Power Shifts, Contestations

**Chair:** Amb. Nalin Surie, Distinguished Fellow, Delhi Policy Group, former Ambassador of India to China and Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

#### Speakers:

**Amb. Shyam Saran**, Member, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, former Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister’s Special Envoy, Government of India: *The Role of the Quad in Indo-Pacific*.

**Amb. P.S. Raghavan**, Chairman, National Security Advisory Board, former Ambassador of India to Russia and Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India: *Drawing Russia from the Asia Pacific to the Indo-Pacific*.

**Dr. Christian Wagner**, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin: *Europe and the Indo-Pacific*.

**To Lead Discussion:** **Prof. Madhu Bhalla**, former Head and Professor, Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University and Editor, India Quarterly, Indian Council of World Affairs.

#### 1300 – 1400 Hours: Lunch

### 1400 - 1530 Hours: SESSION 2 The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Nature, Directions and Implications for Asia

**Chair:** **Amb. Kishan Rana**, Emeritus Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies and former Ambassador of India to Germany and Professor Emeritus, DiploFoundation, Malta and Geneva.

#### Speakers:

**Amb. Vijay Nambiar**, former Ambassador/High Commissioner of India in China, Pakistan, Algeria, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Permanent Representative, United Nations and Chef de Cabinet to UNSG: *The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Plus ça Change*.

**Amb. Bilahari Kausikan**, Chairman, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore, former Permanent Secretary and Ambassador-at-large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore: *Is China at an Inflection Point?*

**Amb. Anil Wadhwa**, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation and former Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India: *China's Foray into the South Pacific: The Next Frontier?*

**To Lead Discussion:** **Ms. Suhasini Haidar**, National Editor and Diplomatic Affairs Editor, The Hindu.

#### 1530 - 1600 Hours: Tea/ Coffee Break

### 1600 – 1745 Hours: SESSION 3 Assessing China's Force Projection Capabilities in Asia and Beyond: Expanding Maritime and Security Presence, Bases and More

**Chair:** **Prof. Alka Acharya**, former Director, Institute of Chinese Studies and Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

#### Speakers:

**Prof. Carlo Masala**, Director, Project Metis: Institute for Strategy & Foresight and Chair for International Relations, University of the German Bundeswehr, Munich: *China's Maritime Strategy: The Quest for Global Power*.



**Prof. Arthur S. Ding**, Professor Emeritus, National Chengchi University, Taiwan: ***You Suo Zuo Wei for Possible Re-alignment?***

**Lt. Gen. (Dr.) SL Narasimhan**, Director General, Centre for Contemporary Chinese Studies and Member, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India: ***China's Capabilities in Disruptive Technologies and its Implications.***

**Dr. Dattesh D. Parulekar**, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Goa University: ***An Ascendant China across an Incandescent Asia: Beijing's Spatial Quest Redefining Strategic Disruptions.***

**To Lead Discussion:** **Vice Admiral Anil Chopra**, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation, former Commander-in-Chief, Western and Eastern Naval Commands, Indian Navy and former Member, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India.

**1930 – 2100 Hours: Conference Dinner hosted by Goa University**

### **DAY THREE - SATURDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2019**

**0900 - 1045 Hours: SESSION 4**

**US-China Economic and Strategic Rivalry: Implications, Impact and Likely Trajectory**

**Chair:** **Amb. Deepa Wadhwa**, Member, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies and former Ambassador of India to Japan, Qatar and Sweden.

#### **Speakers:**

**Prof. Shen Dingli**, Professor, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai: ***Rebalancing China-US Economic and Strategic Relations.***

**Amb. Sujan Chinoy**, Director General, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, former Ambassador of India to Japan, Mexico and Republic of Marshall Islands and former High Commissioner to Belize: ***U.S.-China Rivalry: A Strategic Moment for India.***

**Prof. David Arase**, Resident Professor, International Politics, School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, Nanjing: ***Sino-US Strategic Competition for Influence in the Indo-Pacific.***

**Prof. Heribert Dieter**, Visiting Professor & Director of Policy Studies, Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong and Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin: ***The Conflict between China and the West: A European Perspective.***

**To Lead Discussion:** **Prof. Anoop Singh**, Member, XV Finance Commission, Government of India and former Director, Asia-Pacific, International Monetary Fund.

**1045 - 1115 Hours: Tea/ Coffee Break**

**1115 - 1245 Hours: SESSION 5**  
**Changing Economic Landscape of Asia: Rise of China as Digital and Technology Power**  
**RCEP, Disruption of Value Chains and More**

**Chair:** Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam, Honorary Fellow and Treasurer, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi.

**Speakers:**

**Dr. Frank N. Pieke**, Director and CEO, Mercator Institute for China Studies, Berlin: ***Shifting Realities and Images of China in Europe.***

**Prof. Alexey Maslov**, Academic Director, Research Institute for Modern Asia and Professor, School of Asian Studies, HSE University, Moscow: ***In the Search for the New Political and Economic Rapprochement: Re-Conceptualizing of China and Russia Models.***

**Prof. Zhiwu Chen**, Director, Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong: ***What Can Derail China's Rise as a Technology Power?***

**To Lead Discussion:** Mr. Santosh Pai, Partner, Link Legal India Law Services.

**1245 - 1400 Hours: Lunch**

**1400 – 1530 Hours: SESSION 6**  
**Crafting the China Story: Beijing's Cultural Diplomacy and 'Sharp Power'**

**Chair:** Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty, Honorary Fellow and former Chairperson, Institute of Chinese Studies and former Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi.

**Speakers:**

**Prof. Sabaree Mitra**, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies and Professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University: ***The 'Soft' and the 'Sharp' of Cultural Power: Bridging the National and the Global.***

**Mr. Ananth Krishnan**, 2019 AsiaGlobal Fellow, University of Hong Kong: ***Going Global: China's Growing Media & Tech Footprints.***

**Dr. Garima Mohan**, Fellow, German Marshall Fund and Non-Resident Fellow, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin: ***China's Influence Operations in Europe.***

**To Lead Discussion:** Mr. Siddharth Varadarajan, Founding Editor, The Wire.

**1530 – 1600 Hours: Tea/ Coffee Break**



**1600-1730 Hours: SESSION 7**  
**China's Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India**

**Chair:** Dr. T C A Raghavan, Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs and former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and Singapore.

**Speakers:**

**Dr. Arvind Gupta**, Director, Vivekananda International Foundation, former Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat and former Deputy National Security Advisor, Government of India: ***China's Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India.***

**Amb. Biren Nanda**, Distinguished Fellow, Delhi Policy Group and former High Commissioner/ Ambassador of India to Australia, Indonesia and ASEAN: ***Asia's Geopolitical Challenges and Future Order: China Factor.***

**Amb. Gautam Bambawale**, Distinguished Professor, Symbiosis International University and former Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Pakistan and China: ***Moving India's Act East Policy into a Higher Gear.***

**To Lead Discussion:** Ms. Indrani Bagchi, Diplomatic Editor, Times of India.

**1730 – 1830 Hours: VALEDICTORY SESSION**

**Chair:** Prof. Varun Sahni, Vice-Chancellor, Goa University.

**Summing up of Deliberations:** Dr. Garima Mohan, Fellow, German Marshall Fund and Non-Resident Fellow, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin.

**Valedictory Address:** Amb. Shivshankar Menon, Chairman, Advisory Board, Institute of Chinese Studies, Visiting Professor, Ashoka University, Distinguished Fellow, Brookings India, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, National University of Singapore, former National Security Adviser and Foreign Secretary, Government of India.

**Closing Remarks:** Amb. Ashok K. Kantha, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi and former Ambassador of India to China.

# REPORT

The 3<sup>rd</sup> India Forum on China @Goa was hosted by the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) in collaboration with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and Goa University from 5 to 8 December 2019. Eminent scholars, practitioners and policymakers held in-depth deliberations under the rubric 'China and Asia's Changing Geopolitics'. The forum held elaborate discussions under the following sub-themes:

- China Factor in Evolving Discourse on Asia's Geopolitics and Indo-Pacific: Scope, Power Shifts and Contestations;
- The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Nature, Directions and Implications for Asia;
- Assessing China's Force Projection Capabilities in Asia and Beyond: Expanding Maritime and Security Presence, Bases and More;
- US-China Economic and Strategic Rivalry: Implications, Impact and Likely Trajectory;
- Changing Economic Landscape of Asia: Rise of China as Digital and Technology Power, RCEP, Disruption of Value Chains and More;
- Crafting the China Story: Beijing's Cultural Diplomacy and 'Sharp Power'; and
- China's Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India.

The inaugural session began with opening remarks by **Amb. Ashok K. Kantha**, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies. Dwelling on the background of the India Forum on China (IFC) he mentioned that a consensus arose among the participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> IFC over the need to have a stand-alone international gathering of experts to deliberate on China in an Indian setting. The main purpose of the event is to converge international viewpoints with Indian perspectives on the developments in China and their implications for India and the world. He remarked that China's influence in geopolitics, economy and strategic matters has multiplied manifold, and India being a key geopolitical player, with aspirations to expand its global presence, the rise of China is a subject worthy of study at a deep analytical level. The 3<sup>rd</sup> India Forum on China is even more special as it marks the completion of 50 years of the Institute of Chinese Studies and its precursor, the China Study Group. He reinforced and reiterated the importance of the platform by describing how the forum encourages a free and frank discussion in a structured format that is informal and free-wheeling. With a select group of experts and participants, it provides an opportunity to share diverse views on China.



**Prof. Varun Sahni**, Vice-Chancellor, Goa University, described the rise of China as the one inescapable structural reality of our times, and stressed that China must be engaged with in a broad and multi-dimensional way. He emphasized the importance of the IFC platform as one that meets the need of engagement with China and of Chinese Studies. With the rise of China converting the Asian landmass into an important region, understanding China in the context of Asia's changing geopolitics is crucial.

The keynote address for the 3<sup>rd</sup> IFC was delivered by **Mr. Richard McGregor**, Senior Fellow, Lowy Institute. In his address, he highlighted that the commonalities between India and Australia, specifically the '3Cs', i.e., Cricket, Curry and Commonwealth, can be **redefined as Cricket, Curry and China**.

The focus of the presentation was on China's domestic politics and his address was titled, '*Xi Jinping and Chinese Power*'. The speech aimed at answering the questions: 'why is Xi Jinping the kind of leader he is' and 'whether Xi Jinping represents continuity or disruption'. While trying to understand Xi and his leadership, Mr. McGregor argued that many in the West have misunderstood China and President Xi. He remarked that there is a prominent Western bias towards China and that experts on China have habitually confused Western beliefs with how China should govern or reform. He argued that reform holds different connotations for the West and for China and it has taken a long time for them to realize that China would not be like a traditional Western power. The general belief was that as China's economy strengthened, it would become more open and eventually liberalize. Another factor why many in the West have found China difficult to comprehend is because of its complex political system. To draw a contrast, it can be easily determined that the USA is vastly over-reported by the media, commentators, analysts and scholars all across the world while China is astonishingly under-reported. Another contradiction that was mentioned is the shift in the US towards radical transparency under Donald Trump, while in China, it is the complete opposite scenario of radical opacity by its state-run media. Mentioning the example of Hong Kong, he stated that until the first three months of Hong Kong protests, President Xi Jinping did not comment at all over the violent situation – leaving

the spectators in a state of conjecture and confusion. This alludes to the fact that the inherent system of Chinese politics is secretive and has been more so under the leadership of President Xi. All things considered, Mr. Richard McGregor emphasized that misjudgments about China did not matter much when it was less powerful, but they matter very much in the present context.

Mr. McGregor noted that it has not just been the world, but many Chinese were also inaccurate in their estimation of President Xi's power. In 2007, when Xi Jinping was nominated to be the successor of Hu Jintao, taking over in 2012, his nomination was taken with an element of surprise. He argued that Xi was seen as an open-minded, like-minded partner with whom the Western world could build greater partnership. Nobody could foresee that Xi's leadership could turn the Chinese political system upside down and that he would become the new strongman who would completely recalibrate the Chinese system. Neither had anyone imagined that, in the form of Xi Jinping, China had a leader who would no longer be the first among his equals in the Politburo Standing Committee and would make himself a president in perpetuity. Mr. McGregor informed the gathering that Xi Jinping was viewed as a compromise candidate at the time of his nomination. Owing to the disagreements between the 'Shanghai Gang' and the 'China Youth League', his candidature was such that it could be acceptable for both the cliques as well as the party elders. His princeling background as well as his experience supported his escalation, however, nobody foresaw the extent of control Xi would come to exercise.

Pointing out various reasons that turned him into a strongman of China, Mr. McGregor observed that the possibility of an internal coup against him, which could have possibly been triggered by Bo Xilai and Zhou Yongkang, as well as the crumbling of the pillars of the party power, the various departments and the SOEs may have contributed to Xi Jinping's assertion of control. Another factor proposed by Mr. McGregor was the simmering dissatisfaction by the New Left and New Maoists who felt that China under the Hu-Wen administration was not responding strongly to the outside aggression and that it held a 'weak nation' psychology, which needed to be altered. Xi too, with the same resolutions, did not give in to the glory of China's rising but firmly took action to reinstate the study of the fall of the Soviet Union. From the early to mid-90s, the Chinese economy had grown twenty-four fold, but despite that, Mr. McGregor reminded the audience that in this period, Chinese officials had to undergo training to study the fall of Soviet Union. The speaker quoted from Xi Jinping's speech in 2012 in Shenzhen soon after he came to power, "To dismiss the history of the Soviet Union and the Soviet communist party, to dismiss Lenin and Stalin, to dismiss everything else is to engage in historic nihilism". Alluding to an old saying, the speaker said, "China might have rid itself in the reform period of many of its scriptures but it made sure to hang on to its saints." He surmised that Xi believed in the centrality and the supremacy of the CPC. Xi viewed the Party's leadership as being under threat when he came to power. As a result, he was tremendously action-driven as he assumed power.

The speaker further argued that Xi Jinping represents continuity through disruption. He observed, "We all see Xi Jinping as the great disruptor, overturning party norms, trying to keep himself in power, abandoning China's long-standing position abroad to maintain a low profile and not

challenge the United States. But in many areas of policies, both within China and outside, Xi Jinping represents continuity as much as he does disruption and the two go together.” In many ways, Xi exemplifies the famous adage that goes, ‘Everything needs to change so that everything can stay the same’, from the Sicilian novel, ‘The Leopard’. The idea behind Xi’s overturning of norms and the dramatic change that he has brought in the policy of China by being more assertive is for its own continued survival and stability in the world. The issues of the South China Sea or Taiwan are handled with more assertion now during the rule of Xi Jinping, and it is because he has the capability and the boldness to pursue and implement those policies, not because he is pursuing a policy different in nature. For example, the act of unilaterally declaring the Air Defence Zone near Japan and South Korea was proposed by the PLA to Xi’s predecessor, Hu Jintao but he desisted and Xi later went ahead with it. He has also built massive new islands in the South China Sea and he flexes China’s military muscle by having his navy challenge any foreign ships which sail nearby. Further, the changing all-round capabilities have given us a much clearer view about Chinese intent and have continuously proven any Western apprehensions about the collapse of Chinese markets and companies and other such prophecies woefully wrong.

We all see Xi Jinping as the great disruptor, overturning party norms, trying to keep himself in power, abandoning China’s long-standing position abroad to maintain a low profile and not challenge the United States. But in many areas of policies, both within China and outside, Xi Jinping represents continuity as much as he does disruption and the two go together.

He remarked, “Xi has pulled this off because he not only believes in the party, but also in the power of the party and most importantly, the executive power which resides in the hands of the party secretary, should they choose to use it and should they be able to use it.” The anti-corruption campaign is an appropriate example of what happens if one wields power effectively, moulding it to use as one wishes. Such a step either calcifies the bureaucracy or makes it fearful of offering anything up above the line while at the same time, it actually is a fantastic economic policy weapon as you can finally get things done and are less likely to be stymied down the line.

Mr. McGregor observed that Xi has been disruptive, the fearless leader within the system, which means that he has ended up making lots of enemies, both ‘good and bad’. While the former are the technocratic elites who are angry at the way the space for civil society, human rights lawyers, and the media has been rolled back, the latter wield a vast network of people and resources that can eventually come back and hurt the leadership. So, by simply ‘wiping away the people’ who invest money directly or indirectly through various means, a huge number of once powerful and probably still powerful people would be left behind and these enemies will bide their time to get their revenge. “And as we have seen in all big political campaigns since 1949, they have a long tail and they can come back many years later to hurt you,” he added. Among the good enemies, there is resentment due to the economic policy’s overemphasis on the state instead of the private sector and quelling of legal reforms. Many of them have also been critical of the BRI, something that, along with foreign criticism, has led to a winding back of the project. But



the policy decision that has angered many is Xi's refusal to appoint a successor. According to him, the reason behind such a move is that after being such a huge disruptor, it is impossible for Xi Jinping to go off-rank as he will only be inviting further perils in future for himself and for the people around him. It was pointed out that China is currently under massive pressure with a lot of internal tensions, as the country is undergoing an economic slowdown while also going through a demographic crunch. The US-China trade dispute, financial instabilities, protests in Hong Kong and the Taiwan elections are all also adding to the pressure. However, while dealing with the trade dispute in detail he mentioned that after the first round of negotiations the Chinese were caught off-guard and did not know how to deal with Trump, later realising that making any big deals with him was pointless. During the second round, the talks fell apart when China sent a terse draft to the Americans which were significantly redacted at the behest of the Politburo. Xi's representative had come with a lengthier draft which was seen as too accommodative of the West by the Politburo and, as a testament of how the Chinese system works, nationalism triumphed in the end and Xi, as the first among equals in the Politburo, had to acquiesce.

The closing remarks of the inaugural session were delivered by **Mr. Peter Rimmele** who argued that China's and Asia's changing geopolitics is felt worldwide and close relationships between like-minded partners such as the one between India and Germany is strongly needed, particularly within the context of multilateral institutions. He suggested that the countries in the region can no longer depend on the US security umbrella which is true for Europe as well. Consequently, this creates a scenario that calls for strengthening the connectivity in the region. In this context, mutual trust among the actors is important. He mentioned that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor puts India in a difficult position where it will have to contend with China more than ever before. A rapid change is taking place in Asia, especially in China and India, altering the global balance of power, not only for Germany but also for many other countries. These developments bring uncertainties as well as opportunities and risks. He argued that if India wants to regain its influence in neighbouring countries, it will have to dig deeper into its pockets in order to catch up with China.





## FIRST SESSION

The first session was titled, ‘**China Factor in Evolving Discourse on Asia’s Geopolitics and Indo-Pacific: Scope, Power Shifts, Contestations**’ and was chaired by **Amb. Nalin Surie**, Distinguished Fellow, Delhi Policy Group, former Ambassador of India to China and Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. **Amb. Shyam Saran**, Member, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, former Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister’s Special Envoy, Government of India was the first speaker and presented on, ‘The Role of the Quad in Indo-Pacific’. The second speaker, **Amb. P.S. Raghavan**, Convener, National Security Advisory Board, former Ambassador of India to Russia and Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, spoke about, ‘Drawing Russia from the Asia Pacific to the Indo-Pacific’. The last speaker for the session, **Dr. Christian Wagner**, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, analyzed ‘Europe and the Indo-Pacific’. The discussion was led by **Prof. Madhu Bhalla**, former Head and Professor, Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University and Editor, India Quarterly, Indian Council of World Affairs, who summarized the arguments.



The concept of the Indo-Pacific precedes the Quad and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China. At present, there is a need for India to define Indo-Pacific as its natural hinterland and look at its wider implications for development and policies. The development of Indo-Pacific as a concept and all that it entails can be explained by using a lens of recent developments in the region and all across the globe. The emergent narratives in this regard are that the Indo-Pacific is a response against China, that the Quad is at the core of an evolving Indo-Pacific architecture and that it is a direct response to the BRI.

The Indo-Pacific should evolve as a force for peace, development and unity and for it to upend the Transatlantic architecture that is now creaking at the seams.

China stays uncomfortably exposed to the geo-strategic realities of the Indo-Pacific despite being fairly successful in building a presence in the area. One of the perspectives that arose during the presentations was that India's policy in the Indo-Pacific is a kind of delicate and implicit constraintment of China. The larger discussion in this session focused on the salient aspects of the geopolitical narrative in Asia and China's place in it.

The session began with a discussion of the role of Quad in the Indo-Pacific. China perceives the relative decline of American power as an opportunity for itself to lead a new hierarchy of global order through the establishment of an Asian order under its preeminence. Paraphrasing a Chinese scholar, it was stated that 'multi-polarity is impossible but bipolarity within five years is very much possible'. There is no doubt about the emergence of a countervailing coalition which aims to challenge the Chinese power. The Quad, a grouping of India, US, Australia and Japan, is 'still in a phase of coy and hesitant intimacy'. The recasting of Asia-Pacific as Indo-Pacific is an acknowledgement of India's role as a key component in the Asian balance of power. Although India welcomes the acknowledgement by the rest of the world of its extending economic and security profile, it has tried to keep the concepts of Indo-Pacific and Quad separate, 'which is a useful rhetoric but does not hold much water with the Chinese'.

Further, allaying anxieties of the grouping being marginalized, India has advocated for maintaining the centrality of ASEAN in any Indo-Pacific strategy, a call endorsed by other members of the Quad as well. But there are different geographical conceptions of the Indo-Pacific in the minds of Quad members as well. India and Japan define the region more extensively than the US as extending from the Western reaches of the Indian Ocean to the Eastern shores of Africa. In this, India is attempting to 'flatten and stretch' the concept of the Indo-Pacific and in accepting the centrality of ASEAN, it is trying to take the 'anti-China sting' out of it. However, the US response to China is unambiguously aimed at 'confronting its coercive military activities and predatory economic policies'. Other members of the Quad, including India and groupings such as ASEAN might also harbour such implicit motives against China's attempts 'to reorder the region to its advantage', albeit for a 'mixture of fear and economic temptation'. China too has no doubts about the intentions, although it has been disparaging and dismissive of what it called an 'attention grabbing idea that would dissipate like the ocean foam', the Indo-Pacific. More recently, China has begun using the concept of Indo-Pacific itself, defining it much like the Indian and Japanese version of it. The message from China seems to be that if countries such as India advocate an open, free and inclusive Indo-Pacific then they must dissociate with the Quad, as it is nothing but a US strategy to contain China and build a 'NATO in Asia'.

**There can be no Indo-Pacific strategy without the Quad as the core.**

The seriousness of members of the Quad would reflect in the multilateralization of various activities, like elevating the level of talks, instituting periodic meetings, upgrading security and logistics cooperation, conducting joint exercises and so on. This remains an open question.

The next presentation explored the role of Russia as an independent player in the Indo-Pacific and not as an adjunct to China. The economic, diplomatic, military and political cooperation between China and Russia has deepened greatly in the past few years and both countries see this partnership as an 'essential insurance against the vicissitudes of their relations with the West'. A US-Russia stand-off brings Russia closer, economically and politically, to China which then uses this leverage in its relation with the US. A more helpful way to think about this is to imagine the Russia-US-China relationship as resembling a scalene triangle with three unequal sides: China-Russia side the shortest, Russia-US side as the longest and the China-US side as somewhere in between. The Russia-China bilateral relations have become extremely important for both countries although there is space for competition and maneuvering above this firm foundation. Apart from this, Russia has also made strides in West Asia and its footprint has grown in Saudi Arabia. Russia has been trying to present itself as the 'oasis of calm' in the turbulent sea of US-China relations to ASEAN countries and others in East Asia. Relations with Japan and Vietnam have improved manifold. The Russian vision of a 'Greater Eurasia' could be seen as an attempt on Russia's part to get out of its junior partnership role in relations with China and is an 'effort to place China in a web of ties, institutions and balances that prevents its hegemony'. However, the prevalent view in Russia is that it looks at Indo-Pacific as an 'American ploy to bind India in an alliance against Russia and China'. But in order to have a stable Indo-Pacific security architecture, an independent Russia has to be drawn into the dialogue. This can be done by reshaping the Russia-US-China relations triangle. If multipolarity is desired, an equilateral triangle should be aimed for. But if it has to be scalene, the US-China side should be the longest and the US-Russia side shorter than at present.

'Technology, connectivity and trade are at the heart of the new contestations', opined the Indian External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, recently. If this is the case, then Europe is going to become India's most important strategic partner as it possesses a unique combination of the three. The Indo-Pacific is Europe's largest trading partner and it is cognizant of the region's increasing geopolitical and strategic profile. The security and prosperity of Europe is linked with the Indo-Pacific. Europe has adapted to the challenges that came up with the BRI as is evident through its 'connectivity approach' and has called China an 'economic competitor in pursuit of technological leadership and a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance'. EU, primarily a trading bloc, has shown willingness to 'learn the language of power' in a changing strategic environment. There is an ongoing debate in Europe on strategic autonomy, taking a leaf out of India's approach. This 'sustainable, comprehensive and rule-based connectivity' promoted by the EU is an alternative to the BRI and several countries have come out with similar strategies. There is a perceptible shift towards 'soft connectivity' from 'hard connectivity' and the EU has a clear advantage in the former. EU is reaching out to its Asian partners and has identified India as one of the main pillars of a multi-polar Asia in its strategy. EU has also fostered security cooperation with Asia focusing on maritime security, cyber-security and counter-terrorism. It is obvious that the EU has strengthened its presence in the region and has fostered newer, far-reaching relationships.

If technology, connectivity and trade are at the heart of the new contestations, the EU will be an important player for future security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

The session offered different frameworks within which countries now expect to create new policies, regionalism, globalization and new strategic partners. There is an unmistakable weakening of forces of globalization, both in terms of security and trade in an environment of changing geographical and strategic definitions and concepts. Indo-Pacific is so crucial because of the economic and strategic importance accorded to it by major and emerging powers. The twin forces behind this are the fickleness of the US and the rise of China. The Quad is at the heart of different definitions of what security in the Indo-Pacific means. The latter seems to be a vision for India, more than mere strategy. For China, it is an irksome challenge, especially the conflation of Quad with Indo-Pacific. As pointed out, Russia can be brought favorably to the Indo-Pacific and overestimating its bonhomie with China would be to miss the point about competition in the region. The implications of technological change and disruption on relations between countries are noteworthy and stand at the heart of future geopolitics. In this context, the EU's ability of creating 'soft connectivity' and its role as a trade bloc becomes very important. The key takeaway from the session was that the Indo-Pacific was going to be the most important arena for strategic, economic and geopolitical competitions in the future.

## SECOND SESSION

The second session was titled, '**The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Nature, Directions and Implications for Asia**' and was chaired by **Amb. Kishan Rana**, Emeritus Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies and former Ambassador/ High Commissioner of India to Algeria, Czechoslovakia, Kenya, Mauritius, and Germany. **Amb. Vijay Nambiar**, former Ambassador/High Commissioner of India in China, Pakistan, Algeria, Afghanistan, and Malaysia and Permanent Representative, United Nations, was the first speaker and presented on 'The Belt and Road Initiative Post Second BRF: Plus ça Change'. **Amb. Bilahari Kausikan**, Chairman, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore, former Permanent Secretary and Ambassador-at-large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore took up the topic, 'Is China at an Inflection Point?'. The last speaker of the session, **Amb. Anil Wadhwa**, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation and former Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India analyzed, 'China's Foray into the South Pacific: The Next Frontier?'. The discussion was led by **Ms. Suhasini Haidar**, National Editor and Diplomatic Affairs Editor, The Hindu.

Amb. Rana began the session by narrating a story and drew the analogy for BRI, likening it to an egg that is but right in parts. The following questions were put forward: Is China really creating global infrastructure which could be usable by all? Is it creating a China dominated biosphere? Is China creating a new Chinese conception of engineering and design?





The first presentation explored the rationale, the evolution, and the future prospects of BRI. Its economic rationale is to serve as an engine of growth and help Chinese industries to move up the value-chain. Furthermore, it will help in the deployment of foreign exchange reserves and promote the internationalization of the renminbi. With the dropping growth rate, the BRI is also now seen as a stimulus package, easing the transition to a more consumption driven growth model. Referring to Deng Xiaoping's policies of the 1980s and Jiang Zemin's policies of the 1990s, it was said that there is also a diplomatic rationale behind BRI, i.e., to carry forward the opening up legacy to Afro-Eurasia at large after President Xi's failed attempts at establishing major country relationships with the United States. However, a more political rationale behind the BRI could be China's dramatic growth in eliminating poverty and building a solid middle-class population of 430 million people, which was crucial to the survival and prestige of the Party.

The advent of an affluent society has often brought in its wake internal convulsions, pushed aside the totalitarian and authoritarian regimes and replaced them with a more representative and bottom-up kind of political system. BRI, it was argued, is a way for China to avert this kind of an outcome. In 1992 (after the 1989 turmoil), Deng Xiaoping helped individuals, particularly the lower classes, in turning inward towards growing rich and enhancing their prospects and quality of life. Today, by pursuing its global self-image, BRI is reflecting an outward projection – a vision for a new superior model that strives for the establishment of a community of shared future and common destiny. It was argued that BRI is intimately connected with the struggle for survival and legitimacy of the Chinese regime.

Speaking of the evolution of the BRI, it has been far from win-win. The recipient countries of the BRI have found the projects of unreasonable size and scale, lacking transparency, causing unsustainably large debt burdens, relying mainly on Chinese imported labour and giving insufficient attention to safeguard against corruption, waste and environmental damage. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> BRI Forum held in April 2019, President Xi Jinping acknowledged the need for the opportunities and outcomes to be shared by the world, tightening oversight of an opaque network, and a zero tolerance for corruption and expressed concerns over the debt traps – essentially suggesting that

BRI should act in a spirit of multilateralism, with a cleaner and greener growth model. Citing the study of The Global Infrastructure Fund and Wharton Management Professor, Zhao Mingyuan, it was informed that while sourcing funds for the projects is not a challenge, the problem is to get a sufficient rate of return. The Chinese have been able to leverage the BRI to coordinate the projects in a manner that even if **specific projects** do not generate returns, however, in the aggregate, it does. The major selling point of BRI is to create ample externalities so as to make every single investment a good project, thereby creating enough momentum for a coordinated effort. This business model of the BRI has remained the same since its inception. Elucidating further, it was said that the BRI is a “Chinese investment that expects a return. China’s financial institutions lend money to the BRI projects in partner countries and Chinese companies receive much of the proceeds of the investment, but the host country is left with the debt.” If the return on investment is not sufficient to pay the debt, the Chinese repossess the project, and it becomes a debt for equity swap.

BRI is a “Chinese investment that expects a return. China’s financial institutions lend money to the BRI projects in partner countries and Chinese companies receive much of the proceeds of the investment, but the host country is left with the debt.”

Speaking of the flagship project of the BRI, the CPEC, it was argued **that this** is an exception to the BRI model as it has more security related and strategic dimensions rather than purely economic motivations. The Pakistani military has played a dominant role within the CPEC and major military business entities are involved in the execution. The viability of CPEC will depend on its ability to extend itself to other countries in the region, mainly, India. However, India has placed problems of sovereignty as an impediment to cooperation in the CPEC, and BRI at large. But Pakistani military, on the other end, is also bound to find this problematic. Therefore, some scholars have suggested that as long as Pakistan does not improve relations with its neighbors, CPEC will be unable to create maximum benefit.

The future of BRI appears to be to have more international and inclusive projects. The Chinese will open up to more advanced economies and deepen BRI beyond Asia and Africa. It was said that the projects in the future are likely to be focused more on quality, with greater transparency and risk-reduction. There will be new sectors and geographies that will emerge in technology such as the Digital Silk Road. However, for every kind of adaptation to the demands of the international community, there will be a clause of ‘Chinese Characteristics’ appended alongside. Unless China were to change these very Chinese Characteristics with a broader alignment to international expectations and norms, it is unlikely that these projects will be able to experience a greater international acceptance.

It is not to say that China will collapse, as some Western scholars predict. But there are problems or ‘black swans’ in the vicinity of the inflection point where China is currently at, creating a breeding ground for other possible black swans to arise.



The question, 'Is China an Inflection Point?', was another point of discussion. The buzz around the China story and its rise have worn off. In the *lianghui* or the two sessions, the NPC and the CPCC displayed a much more somber tone and a certain sense of crisis wherein Premier Li Keqiang delivered quite a grievous assessment of the challenges facing China. Even in January this year, President Xi Jinping outlined seven major risks in the *Seminar of Prevention and Mitigation of Major Risks*. It was argued that a lot of this is due to the trade war, but not all of it. There lay a rather fundamental problem. It was acknowledged in the 18<sup>th</sup> National Congress of China that the spectacular growth of the past two decades was contingent on the establishment of heavy infrastructure led by state-owned enterprises. More economic efficiency means lesser political control, and China being a Leninist state relies heavily on control. Therefore, what is the balance between economic efficiency and political control? The reason why the CPC has successfully ruled China for so long is because it has improved the lives of people drastically. However, change of such scope is bound to cause social instability. President Xi Jinping has acknowledged that the expectations of Chinese people have risen. CPC's continuation is highly contingent on meeting these expectations. In the balance between political control and economic efficiency, the Chinese leadership has opted for more control. This will result in greater multipolarity in the world. As China's growth is slumping, the problems that were concealed earlier are now becoming more apparent. This is not to say that China will collapse, as some Western scholars predict. But there are problems or "black swans" in the vicinity of the inflection point where China is currently at, creating a breeding ground for other possible black swans to arise.

Xi Jinping and his concentration of power, Sino-US trade war, and disturbances in Hong Kong were some of the black swans listed. Other black swans on the horizon are the issues of Xinjiang and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. In conclusion, it was said that such a scenario will result in a multipolar order. This is not to be confused with a balance of power, but a greater space for maneuverability for all, where countries, be it in the context of BRI or Blue Dot Network, can be more discriminating within their capabilities.

Finally, China's BRI activities in the South Pacific region were discussed. 'What are the motivations to invest in the region?', 'how has China come to challenge the role of traditional powers?', and 'what is China doing to ensure a long term presence in the region?' were some of the questions addressed. Extensive investments in various countries across various domains have been made by Chinese enterprises under the ambit of BRI and otherwise, which has had massive economic, political and social implications. The following motives were mentioned for China's engagement in the South Pacific: First, it wants to establish a military presence. Second, it wants to seek benefits of the voting power of South Pacific countries in the United Nations. Third, it wants to gain access to natural resources such as timber, gold, nickel, LNG, and fish. Fourth, it wants to undermine regional support for Taiwan. Fifth, China's influence in the Pacific would lessen the sense of maritime containment. Finally, it wishes to support ethnic Chinese people who live in these countries. Despite significant efforts from other countries, it was stressed that China

is gradually surpassing all major powers in terms of trade, security, scholarships, funding of education and research in the South Pacific. In conclusion, it was posited that China, so far, is clearly succeeding with BRI in the South Pacific.

### THIRD SESSION

The third session titled, 'Assessing China's Force Projection Capabilities in Asia and Beyond: Expanding Maritime and Security Presence, Bases and More', was chaired by **Prof. Alka Acharya**, Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and former Director, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi. **Prof. Carlo Masala**, Director of the Project Metis, Institute for Strategy & Foresight and Chair for International Relations, University of the German Bundeswehr, Munich, was the first speaker and presented his discussion on, 'China's Maritime Strategy: The Quest for Global Power'. **Dr. Arthur S. Ding**, Professor Emeritus, National Chengchi University, Taiwan, spoke about 'PLA's Growing Global Power Projection Capabilities'. **Lt. Gen. (Dr.) SL Narasimhan**, Director General, Centre for Contemporary Chinese Studies and Member, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India outlined the theme of 'China's Capabilities in Disruptive Technologies and its Implications'. Lastly, **Dr. Dattesh D. Parulekar**, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Goa University delivered his presentation on 'An Ascendant China across an Incandescent Asia: Beijing's Spatial Quest Redefining Strategic Disruptions'. The discussion was led by **Vice-Admiral (Retd.) Anil Chopra**, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation and former Commander-in-Chief, Western and Eastern Naval Commands, Indian Navy and former Member, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India.



The session began by mentioning President Xi Jinping's statement about maritime strength. 'If Beijing hopes to achieve "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" by the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is necessary that it become a "maritime great power"'. It was emphasised that

the aim of China to establish itself as a maritime great power is apparent, as seen in its moves for checking for counter coast hegemonies and by controlling the sea so as to control global trade. The Chinese Navy, until a decade ago, was not in its best shape but China is addressing deficiencies and making huge investments in order to **achieve its goal of becoming** a maritime great power.

Hegemony of **those who control the** seas has historically lasted longer than land hegemonies. Within European history, on average, land hegemonies faced with counterbalancing coalitions lasted more or less a decade. The argument drawn up was predicated on China becoming a maritime power, in the wake of the economic belt and road. At the same time, another discourse says that China is unlikely to achieve the kind of maritime supremacy it is aiming for, and its land routes are set up to prepare alternatives to maritime routes, essentially projecting that these land routes would give China the heft to be able to emerge as a big major commercial nation. However, China's ambitions for maritime supremacy are deterministic primarily due to the immense importance maritime has come to gather in the eyes of the CPC. Firstly, with the reorganization of maritime bureaucracy, the charge is directly under the Party leadership and no longer under the ministerial level. Secondly, military command and control along the coast has increased significantly and the coastguard has become a military instrument. In the light of these points, it was concluded that China is following a preemptive and proactive maritime strategy as opposed to a reactive one.

The next topic began with a discussion about the decreasing supremacy of the United States providing the space required for China to assess supremacy and referred to the recent events in South China Sea and its triggering factors. It was posited that the time of rising is long gone and that China has risen already, suggesting that China, quite incontrovertibly, is an ascendant power. A rising power and an ascendant power in the course of its rise seek accommodation. "It needs a combination: it needs to forge consensus and contribute to consensus, it needs stability and puts a premium on it because stability allows it to optimize its own responses and its own benefits from the system." In contrast, an ascending power is ambitious. These ambitions are highlighted in China's goals of basic completion of modernization of national defense by 2035, and transformation of the armed forces into world-class forces by 2050. However, two questions arise within the purview of this discussion: Firstly, is a "world-class" PLA a military force at par with that of the USA with global power projection capabilities? Secondly, does "basic completion" imply a reduced size of the forces by 2050 with limited global power projection? To answer these questions, China's ongoing naval construction, air force construction and PLA strategies were highlighted. However, it was concluded that there are many logistical, managerial and bureaucratic challenges that lie ahead of China's way to fulfilling these goals. As opposed to the American power projection through normative value based order, China is escalating through project-based power projection which has economic but military undertones as well.

Finally, China's disruptive technologies were discussed, beginning with Xi Jinping's statement, "facing disruptive technology, we must face seize the opportunity to change paradigms. Whoever

doesn't disrupt will be disrupted." China uses disruptive technology for multiple purposes. Use of artificial intelligence for civil purposes is carried out for China's social credit system. The technologies used are SenseTime (facial recognition) and iFlytek (voice recognition). China also operates what is known as "Police Cloud" which is a combination of AI with cloud computing and big data analytics. As for AI in the military, China predicts that by 2025, use of lethal autonomous weapons in the battlefield would be common. Currently, China is at its research stage, working on autonomous armed vehicles, command and decision making technology, and war gaming and simulation. It has also been enhancing its Drone Swarm abilities. Quantum technology is being developed for communication, encryption, computing, meteorology and radar-detection of aircraft, missiles and tracking satellites. Furthermore, deployment of quantum technology in the development of quantum resistant algorithms, underwater communication, machine learning and block chain protocols is also being carried out. China has also invested heavily in weather modification, earth's atmosphere modification and space technology, each of which was discussed in detail. In conclusion, the implications of these disruptive technologies were discussed. It was suggested that disruptive technologies will increase competition between developed countries and China. They are bound to create a technological divide in the world and the competition will extend beyond earth, into space. There will be increased intrusion into the space of privacy, however, they will also facilitate differently abled persons. As for military implications, these technologies will change the nature of war with the use of AI. The weather modification technology could adversely affect the conduct of operations and we may also witness the militarization of space.

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## FOURTH SESSION

The fourth session was titled, '**US-China Economic and Strategic Rivalry: Implications, Impact and Likely Trajectory**' and was chaired by **Amb. Deepa Wadhwa**, Member, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies and former Ambassador to Japan, Qatar and Sweden, Government of India, followed by the first speaker of the session, **Prof. Shen Dingli**, Professor, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai who discussed 'Rebalancing China-US Economic and Strategic Relations'. The second speaker was **Amb. Sujan Chinoy**, Director General, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, former Ambassador of India to Japan, Mexico, and the Republic of Marshall Islands and former High Commissioner to Belize, Government of India and he spoke about, 'US-China Rivalry: A Strategic Moment for India'. The session continued with the third speaker of the afternoon, **Prof. David Arase**, Resident Professor, International Politics, School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, Nanjing who shed light on 'Sino-US Strategic Competition for Influence in the Indo-



Pacific'. The last speaker for the session was **Prof. Heribert Dieter**, Visiting Professor & Director of Policy Studies, Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong and Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, gave an interesting perspective to the topic, 'The Conflict between China and the West: A European Perspective'. The lead discussant for the session was **Prof. Anoop Singh**, Member, XV Finance Commission, Government of India and former Director, Asia-Pacific, International Monetary Fund who approached the previous speakers' discussion to derive a network of conclusions and finally concluded the session with his own perspective and thoughts regarding the larger theme of the session.



The Chair set the stage by saying that it is apparent to everyone on the panel that the US perceives China as its principal global competitor and actively calls for containment of China. She mentioned that the influence of the Vice President of USA, Mike Pence and President Donald Trump himself, illustrates the fears about China being a superpower and their stance on why it is important for the US that competition is put before cooperation. The global environment has been affected dramatically by such fierce competition and the past months have seen a tit-for-tat trade war between the two nations. After it was predicted that China would surpass the United States as the world's largest growing economy, it became apparent to China that "pressures of unilateralism, protectionism and what they called trade bullying" is what lies ahead. Such animosity was not new but the space for cooperation has reduced on both sides due to changing perceptions and the personalities involved. The US feels threatened by the technological edge that the Chinese have come to find and this animosity, as mentioned, is going to stay. Both the countries would need greater space for cooperation if animosity was hoped to be reduced in the future.

The first presentation began with the statement, "America which is both beautiful and sharp is what China, a humble student, strives to become". The launch of the latest technology in China through help from countries such as Germany and Japan, in industries of fast rail and the new space station shows how a student has not only learned but also blossomed into its own person.

US feels threatened by the technological edge that the Chinese have come to find and this animosity is going to stay.

Over time, China has benefitted from the teachings of America and has adopted a more pragmatic approach to this learning. While China had managed to be a humble student for a long time, it is no longer the same and that is exactly what is threatening the US. China may not be beautiful anymore, but it is sharp, evolving and adapting to its new learnings. Also explored was the role of the Communist Party in the trade war and how communism has failed in countries where China had hoped it would not, like Vietnam and South Korea. China will have to improve its ability to adapt and over time, not fail the legitimate expectations of its neighbours and competitors.

The session continued with the focus on US-China rivalry and its implications for India. “The US and China rivalry is here to stay and it is not in India’s favor to take vicarious pleasure at either the rivalry or the slowdown on the Chinese economy”. The US-China rivalry could be explained through four ‘Ts’ and one ‘M’: the four ‘Ts’ being trade, technology, territorial issues and tenets, and the one ‘M’ standing for the military. In terms of trade, India has experienced very little benefit from the emerging trade war between China and the US. It was assessed that India and US trade ties are suffering collateral damage and the trade diversion is benefiting India’s competitors but not India. The rivalry for technological superiority is even more intense. The US has disrupted its own plans on clean energy which will, in all likelihood, have an impact on plans to reduce emissions altogether. In the sphere of 5G technology, China is dominant while in the semiconductor and chips industry, China is dwarfed by US company giants. For India, the interplay of security concerns with China, in terms of using their technology is an important factor to be considered, and for this reason, India continues to prefer the US technology. Hopefully, the US would not simply engage in a buyer-seller relationship with India but would extend it to a stronger alliance. Regarding tenets, the struggle is quite clear. Further, when it comes to military, anxiety is growing in the Asia-Pacific theatre. It is expected that military presence is likely to increase and not reduce, and India may also have to contend with the long term prospect of US wanting to use missile strategy in the region. As conclusion, it was stated that India has the opportunity to come closer to the ever-cautious Japan because the rivalry is here to stay and is expected to divide South Asia further. There is in fact a *weiji* - it is both danger and opportunity for India, as the Chinese character suggests.

The US and China rivalry is here to stay and it is not in India’s favor to take vicarious pleasure at either the rivalry or the slowdown on the Chinese economy.

The discussion moved onto US strategy, specifically the Indo-Pacific strategy in the Trump era. Previously, until 2017, the US engaged with China to become a partner, and not a competitor. While China had no desire of being a partner, three pillars - security, economic and governance - were key to continue the discussion. The aim of the US was to create a rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific region while emphasizing free trade and free regulation. The US wants to provide an alternative to developing countries in BRI. Furthermore, the country wants to build and maintain relations through its network assets such as Australia, India and Japan. Emphasis was laid upon the freedom of navigation and rule-based order where collaborative partnerships



based on treaties and emphasis will remain on developing relations and cooperation. It was noted that partnerships can navigate into large-scale agreements where the US can help developing countries through triangular cooperation. The Blue Dot initiative is an example of such cooperation. There was a discussion over the military bases of the US where all the relevant regions were marked out in the power point presentation. It was noted that the trade and strategic presence in Asia is not just a Trump whim but a long-standing strong commitment to the same. The US cannot afford to not have a strategic focus in this region. While China has some serious issues that it is dealing with, including the ageing population being one of many, it is difficult to say whether it can sustain its economy at the same standard as before in the future. It was emphasized that there was a need for peaceful co-existence in all forms, whether trade or otherwise.

The next presentation was on the European perspective on the US-China trade war. While the United States has redefined collective leadership in the past, Germany and China have had a long-standing relationship with much history. “There was a point where every German company was eager to be in China but today China is not viewed in the same light.” The European perspective on the conflict has been constantly reshaping over the years. At the onset, the idea of President Trump appeared inane, but slowly and surely, Europe has become distant by an increasingly aggressive China. It is not the common people who have displayed concerns about China but the businesses of the continent that have expressed their worries over the developments in China. Chancellor Merkel had said, “the time for naivety with China has ended”. Discussions over skepticism regarding the Chinese developments continued. To conclude, a moment may come when the EU will rise to the occasion and do right by democracy with respect to the recent aggressive approach of China.

The discussant brought together all the arguments and opinions put forth by the previous speakers in the session to bring about the issue of trade diversions being a lesson to policy makers over why regulations matter in trade. When asked the question, “Who will win the trade war?”, it was concluded that apparently, it will not be a win-win. However, seemingly, American producers will be the winners and consumers will be the losers.

## FIFTH SESSION

The fifth session titled, ‘**Changing Economic Landscape of Asia: Rise of China as Digital and Technology Power, RCEP, Disruption of Value Chains and More**’ was chaired by **Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam**, Honorary Fellow and Treasurer, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi and was followed by the first speaker of the session, **Dr. Frank N. Pieke**, Director and CEO, Mercator Institute for China Studies, Berlin who talked about the ‘Shifting Realities and Images of China in Europe’. The second speaker was **Prof. Aleksei Maslov**, Academic Director, Research Institute for Modern Asia and Professor of the School of Asian Studies at HSE University, Moscow who discussed on the topic, ‘In the Search for the New Political and Economic Rapprochement: Re-Conceptualizing of China and Russia Models.’ The third

speaker was **Prof. Chen Zhiwu**, Director, Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong who analyzed about, 'What Can Derail China's Rise as a Technology Power?' The lead discussant for the session was **Mr. Santosh Pai**, Partner, Link Legal India Law Services who summarized discussions to derive an array of conclusions.



The discussion revolved around the economic landscape of Asia which included perspectives from Russia and Europe and also shed light on the issue of technology. The session began with an optimistic perspective on Europe, likening it to a 'playing field' instead of a player since 2005. Europe needs to catch up with China and choose between the two views: to view it either as a hegemon or as a globalizing power. The EU itself needs to decide over its position between two views: of one being merely a collection of countries that are bound by a trade and custom union, and second, of being a global player with greater collective interests. China was called "an emerging superpower" and the presentation hinted at how EU will have to strengthen its institutions. A further dilemma in the EU is different views about either US as a trusted ally or a country perceiving the organization to be a secondary consideration. The debate about China in Europe has evolved in many directions and it usually tends to be very reactive in nature. China has become a greater political issue in Europe, even in the realm of domestic politics which may have significant implications in domestic affairs. It was remarked that Europe must have a tougher stand in terms of negotiations with China. Closing their market as a negotiation tactic against China was perhaps the closest thing EU has to a "main weapon". Unless Europe does not decide over the four 2s, on Europe's own stance over the world order, China, US and its own view, it will not be able to act assertively.

The next area of discussion was about Russia-China relationship, where the focus was divided into two strategically important points of economic cooperation and political cooperation between the two nations. China, it was noted, has not been supportive in playing a role in Russia's internal conflicts and has only managed to hold political cooperation to the extent of keeping Russia as a huge market for Chinese goods. This is important for the economic cooperation perspective as well, considering that 'even economic cooperation has not been completely fulfilling either'.

Russian companies in the Chinese market are only confined to the oil and gas sector. Although Russia can offer a big market for China, China is not entirely interested in investing in Russia. The general rhetoric of Chinese troops increasing in the Russian state was contradicted by supplemental data to prove that the Chinese population in the nation has effectively decreased. The main idea of Russian understanding has been the recreation of Russian industries which has not been fully supported by China. Russia has in place its own projects and the invitation for the “One Belt One Road” initiative will never be supported by Russia. Russia is neither trying to break its alliance with EU nor with China, but with patience and a global perspective, it is trying to construct its very own unique perspective of soft integration. Highlighting the differences between the two countries, it was said that they are likely to stick together due to common threats and similar ideologies.

The next topic of discussion was over the question, “What can derail China’s rise as a tech power?” In this regard, China’s technology unicorns were analyzed. Many small companies who have been nurtured in China have grown to further become the future’s most promising unicorn companies in the tech space. To name a few, DJI, SenseTime, iFlytek, and Hikvision are some of the unicorns specializing in drones, AI, data analytics, instrumental monitoring, etc. The financial market, has played a big role in China, illustrated through the statistics of a number of patent applications when compared across countries. From 2006-2016, there has been a massive growth in patent applications in China, surpassing the US. While considering that all nations have different laws in place for patents, nonetheless, the data supports China and its financial market. The role played by capital markets and venture capital investments was also illustrated in detail, stating that venture capital investments have been key to the technology boom in China. It was determined that a financial war of the Chinese with the Americans would not only be catastrophic for the unicorn companies but would hinder the overall momentum for the technology industry. It was concluded that it is unlikely for China to be the final winner of the trade war so far as the technology industry is concerned, even though it would take years to see its outcome.

The discussant brought all the points mentioned by the previous speakers together and concluded by noting the quick take-away points from the discussion. There are lessons for India in the way that the EU has reacted to China, even though Indian policy makers “have not got an extent of the participation of the Chinese and how to deal with it.” India must build a regulatory resilience where Chinese participation is to a large scale evident in trade. While Russia has managed to balance political and economic engagement with China, it cannot be the same for India, considering that India relies more heavily on economic engagement rather than political. There are lessons for India in the Russian perspective of dealing with the crisis at hand as well. India needs a well thought-out plan for China in the future, where there must be initiatives from the state level, national level and across industries to map out the extent of necessity of Chinese imports in India. The relationship between the two countries is, as of now, unidirectional where it needs to be a relationship of equality and cooperation. “India though may not go selectively against the Chinese, but what we can do is improve the quality of compliance. We can make it a little more difficult for the Chinese imports to come in.”



## SIXTH SESSION

The sixth session titled, '**Crafting the China Story: Beijing's Cultural Diplomacy and 'Sharp' Power**' was chaired by **Prof. David Arase, Resident** Professor, International Politics, School of Advanced Studies, John Hopkins University, Nanjing. **Prof. Sabaree Mitra**, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, was the first speaker and presented on, 'The 'Soft' and the 'Sharp' of Cultural Power: Bridging the National and the Global'. Speaking next, **Mr. Ananth Krishnan**, 2019 AsiaGlobal Fellow, University of Hong Kong elucidated through videos on 'Chinese Influence and Investments in Indian Media/ Tech Sectors.' Lastly, **Dr. Garima Mohan**, Fellow, German Marshall Fund and Non-Resident Fellow, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin spoke on 'China's Influence Operations in Europe'. The discussion was led by **Mr. Siddharth Varadarajan**, Founding Editor, The Wire.



There was a consensus over the kind of control over discourse China has established through its sphere of influence to penetrate the liberal western society. It was mentioned that, "China is trying to extend this control overseas and is using its influence to create incentives and disincentives, rewards and punishments for anyone who would say things about China in order to ensure that China is spoken of in the way China wants to be spoken of." Cultural Diplomacy and 'Sharp Power' has been used by the state to construct a new brand of culture. Four types of power - hard power, soft power, smart power and sharp power - were highlighted. The soft power is filled and accepted by the intellectual discourse and announced by the official pronouncements, but the sharp power has been rejected by the Communist Party of China. Also detailed was the timeline wherein CPC considers the culture discourse as a soul derived from China's civilization and that it must be rooted in Socialism with Chinese characteristics. It was concluded that the CPC has attempted to project culture as the core component of Chinese people's identity and stressed the importance of culture as a cohesive force to be used to invoke nationalism.

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While discussing the expansion of Chinese influence and investments footprints in Indian media, it was argued that China is pushing its worldview in developing countries to use its soft power to portray China's story well. This was highlighted by using examples of soft power through multilingual CRI (China Radio International) programmes and Star Times China which are gradually expanding their investments in other countries. Furthermore, the ways China has been working in Indian media and tech companies in subtly pushing the message through fellowships and funding may have implications on Indian media and industrial space.

The session also took into account how China has been crafting its image abroad and how China has been influencing its operations in Europe. It was pointed out that the largest recipients of Chinese money have been UK, Sweden, Germany, Luxembourg and France. Since a number of countries have been using sharp power and the US has been using it for decades, China has only been following the steps of classic big powers in a much more direct and visible way. In order to deal with this kind of China's expansion and creating a sphere of influence, countries need to have a perspective towards its sharp power. This would mean that if intelligence agencies are going to be involved, the response in the target countries will also be intelligence driven. It was added that if the state itself adopts such means by restricting the freedom of speech or by increasing the surveillance of its own people then there is an urgent need to counterbalance this.

A question was raised by one of the speakers on how effective Chinese influence operations are in the long run. It is essential that the civil society is made aware of the Chinese view being censured or pushed by the state. The challenge here is that 'sharp power' is a kind of effort by China to enhance its international standing that uses methods which are bound to have massive socio-political bearings on the entire global stage.

## SESSION 7

The seventh session titled, '**China's Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India**' was chaired by **Dr. T C A Raghavan**, Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs and former High Commissioner to Pakistan and Singapore. **Dr. Arvind Gupta**, Director, Vivekananda International Foundation, former Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat and former Deputy National Security Advisor, Government of India was the first speaker and his presentation was titled, 'China's Influence in Asian Geopolitics: Implications for India'. **Amb. Biren Nanda**, former High Commissioner/ Ambassador to Australia, Indonesia and ASEAN, Government of India gave a presentation on, 'Asia's Geopolitical Challenges and Future Order: China Factor'. The last presentation on, 'Moving India's Act East Policy into a Higher Gear' was made by **Amb. Gautam Bambawale**, Distinguished Professor, Symbiosis International University and former

Ambassador to Bhutan, Pakistan and China, Government of India. The lead discussant for the session was **Ms. Indrani Bagchi**, Diplomatic Editor, Times of India.



The discussion began by stressing that India must recognize its national interests. It was said that China has massive influence in the Indo-Pacific. India's Indo-Pacific strategy was the first topic of discussion in the session. It was highlighted that India is facing a critical challenge of indigenization of defense production which is crucial for strong armed forces for deterrence. Greater investment in core strategic technologies similar to China's investment in MIC25 is required. It was noted that India needs to define its policies more clearly. If BRI succeeds, the South Asian neighbors will be under China's influence, and if it does not, they will be under massive pressure. Therefore, in order to save South Asia and for its own existence, India should have a clearer perspective. There are several uncertainties arising in the world today, and India must formulate robust policies and a strong plan to tackle those. While talking about diplomatic alliances, it was said, "Alliances and partnerships are all part of diplomacy, it will go on, but this diplomacy has to be backed by capacities and capabilities, and the will to act." The discussion concluded with remarks on India's soft power being an advantage over China because of India's diversity, Buddhism and spiritual way of leading daily life, and these elements must be pushed in diplomacy.

Alliances and partnerships are all part of diplomacy, it will go on, but this diplomacy has to be backed by capacities and capabilities, and the will to act.

The next part of the discussion was on Asia's geopolitical challenges with a focus on the broad strategic picture in Asia and China's role in it. It was argued that post-2008, China benefited the most. As there was a relative decline in US power after the global financial crisis of 2007-08,



China made out of it a strategic opportunity by utilizing the strategic space in Asia left vacant by the US which at that point of time was preoccupied with the domestic economic crisis and the two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. China also started acting aggressively in its neighbourhood by asserting historical claims to territories in a unilateral manner. The PLA used the strategy of cartographic aggression followed by occupation of land as seen in the Doklam area of Bhutan in 2017. Chinese fishing fleets were also used to provoke and make territorial claims in the South China Sea against the Philippines and Vietnam. China has been influencing a number of countries through its activities. Speaking of the future, China's focus on building a blue-water navy could pose a serious challenge to India in the Indian Ocean. China is also working on a strategic domination in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) through its port-building activities in Gwadar and Djibouti.

While talking about security and strategic underpinnings of US-China trade relations, it was noted that US response to China to reduce its trade deficit and protection of intellectual property should be seen in the context of the rise of China against US-dominated capitalist liberal democratic order. It was also highlighted that ASEAN-centric security organizations have failed to contain or respond to China's strategic rise in the region. It was predicted that China will act as a regional hegemon in Asia, and challenge the US-led global order in the near future, and at the same time, a bipolar world which would be more balanced and stable as opposed to a multipolar one was advocated.

The last part of the discussion focused on India's Act East Policy. The improvement in trade relations with ASEAN countries was highlighted as the volume of trade has increased quite significantly over the last few years to almost \$97 billion along with the fact that more Indian tourists now prefer ASEAN destinations for holidays. Discussing on moving India's Act East Policy into a higher gear, it was suggested that India must use its population as an advantage to build better ties with South East Asian countries. It was suggested that a tourist visa could be introduced along with more direct flights to these countries. It was also suggested more academic exchanges between Indian and ASEAN universities and concluded by arguing for more people-to-people relations by using India's relative demographic advantage.

China will act as a regional hegemon in Asia, and challenge the US-led global order in the near future, and at the same time, a bipolar world which would be more balanced and stable as opposed to a multipolar one was advocated.

## VALEDICTORY SESSION

The valedictory session was chaired by **Amb. Shyam Saran**, Member, Governing Council, Institute of Chinese Studies, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, former Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister's Special Envoy, Government of India. **Dr. Garima Mohan**, Fellow, German Marshall Fund and Non-Resident Fellow, Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin, made a crisp

summary of the proceedings. **Amb. Shivshankar Menon**, Chairman, Advisory Board, Institute of Chinese Studies, Visiting Professor, Ashoka University, Distinguished Fellow, Brookings India, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, National University of Singapore, former National Security Adviser and Foreign Secretary, Government of India, delivered the valedictory address. Closing remarks were made by **Amb. Ashok K Kantha**, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies.

**Dr. Garima Mohan** summarized the event proceedings and relooked at the theme of the conference, 'China and Asia's Changing Geopolitics' through three different angles:

- Shifting Geographies – focusing on Indo-Pacific in the context of greater Eurasia, China's Belt and Road Initiative, and hyper-regionalism;
- Competing visions of what Asia would look like – from a multipolar versus a unipolar China led order, and whether the order would be multilateral or hierarchical; and
- Contesting arenas – where the geopolitical competition has shifted towards geo-technological competition, and strategic competition over infrastructure. She summarized three major factors leading to the changing geopolitics in the region:
  - Ascendant China versus relative US decline power/influence/engagement;
  - Implications of China's rise; and
  - How countries in the region are responding to China's ascendance, particularly through the Indo-Pacific idea.

While deliberating upon an ascendant China, she highlighted the various questions that came up during the proceedings, that is, whether the Chinese system is stable and will be able to survive or not. She then pointed out that reform and resilience mean different things to the observers outside China and observers within China. She also remarked that in order to understand the current trajectory of China it is important to look at the role played by Xi Jinping and how he is using continuity through disruption by cementing the party centrality and his role within it.

Dr. Mohan pointed out to the contradictory observations that were made on Chinese economy. One side argued that the growth model of China based on state investments and state-owned enterprises is not sustainable, and on the other hand, the innovation taking place within China was also highlighted. She also pointed to the argument made during the proceedings that it is the drying up of the capital markets which might negatively impact the growth trajectory of China rather than the US-China trade war. Dr. Mohan also deliberated upon the discussions made on Chinese interactions with the world and the basis of its foreign policy. It was argued that China practices multilateralism with Chinese characteristics, that is, serial bilateralism, working with different partners in BRI at the same time.

The presenters also dwelt upon the approach China takes while dealing with the world, which is a more pragmatic project-based approach rather than looking to create a normative values-

based order. China cannot hope to craft or control the narrative simply by using the methods of sharp power, weaponizing market taxes and influencing political operations. The participants also raised questions that if China continues on its current trajectory or if Xi is replaced by a more nationalist, assertive China, what would it mean for the world. This is where the Indo-Pacific as an idea came up, as the **centre stage** of the unfolding geopolitical drama. Whether it is a strategy or a vision, it is a move towards conceptualizing a multipolar Asia, rather than a China-led order. Even though the Quad is often seen as synonymous with the Indo-Pacific, it is interesting to see the proliferation of bilateral/trilateral/multilateral dialogues making the concept attractive even to the other actors. It was remarked that the EU's global strategy in 2016 mentioned Asia four times, and did not mention India at all, which shows that even in 2016, the way Europe looked at the world was very narrow. But all of that has changed. Now, the EU has a new China strategy where it identifies China as a systemic rival, economic competitor and a negotiating partner.

It also has a new India strategy, where it mentions that dynamics in Asia or Indo-Pacific will have an impact on European security and prosperity. Several European member-states are in the process of crafting their own responses to the Indo-Pacific idea or at least, are trying to grapple with it. So, what makes the idea of Indo-Pacific attractive is not just because the centre of strategic and economic gravity is shifted towards the region, but also because it leaves room for manoeuvre. It is a place where major and middle powers can play an active role in shaping the Asian geopolitics while engaging with each other. The idea of balancing and making sure that the rising China rises within the system of rules is quite attractive to several actors. It also opens scope for conversations between Europe, India, Japan, Australia and a number of other countries, so as not to get stuck between US-China competition but also decide how one's own country will respond to China's rise and work with other major and middle powers.

**Amb. Shivshankar Menon**, in his valedictory address, highlighted that China is not going to be like a Western power with military, technological and ideological dominance over the world system. He remarked that everyone expects and believes that China is going to be a different power. China's present position and needs are unique in history. For the first time, China is powerful, but it is also dependent on the outside world for its own growth, its internal stability and commodities, energy, etc. If China wants to maintain single-party rule, it needs the world. He observed that China is trying to do a double transition which it has never done before. It is trying to become a global maritime power which historically, it has never been. At the same time, it is also trying to be an externally engaged power which shapes the world order. It is trying to engage with the world on its own terms, where it can define those terms of engagement and control them. He noted that there are several factors against the double-transition which China seeks. Demography, geography and demands of one-party rule, according to him, imposed a whole set of limitations on China.

Discussing what kind of China we are likely to see in the future, Amb. Menon observed that in the foreseeable future we are likely to see China becoming technologically dominant in some fields. He argued that China has innovated even when it is divided politically and economically

unstable. So the argument that China must be politically stable and economically sound for continuing innovation was irrelevant, according to him. He noted that China has also been a great exporter of knowledge and innovator traditionally, and we can expect continuation in that role. We are also likely to see China as more domestically occupied, in his opinion, as it is a difficult transition that it seeks to make. It will continue to have an expeditionary capability but not one that can be used without great circumspection.

Making observations about China's Belt and Road Initiative, Amb. Menon pointed out that the BRI is an evolving animal, a work in progress and it is very hard to say how it will change the world around us, if it succeeds at all. While mentioning the 2<sup>nd</sup> BRI Forum, he pointed out the one ability that will help China, is its ability to learn, which could be the key to its success. He also argued that China may have also learned the dangers of overextension through the BRI, but noted at the same time that whether BRI succeeds or fails, it is going to change the operating environment around us. He remarked that if the BRI is going to succeed, it is best for the countries to use it for their own interests.

Deliberating upon what kind of Asia we are looking at, Amb. Menon observed that the world is multipolar economically but militarily, it is still a unipolar world led by the US. There is a disjuncture between orders where we have multiple orders operating at a single time. While looking at Asian geopolitics, he pointed out that,

Asia is crowded with established powers and rising powers, therefore hegemony is not an available option in Asia. China will thus have to cope with other established/ rising powers in this crowded environment, and either contend or engage with them whilst coping with the US.

He argued that the world is being divided into multiple fragmented orders, specifically in the domain of technology, as well as minilateral cooperative models like the BRI, and ascertained that a world of such multiple orders is most likely to stay in the coming future.

Amb. Menon also focused on the emerging Indo-Pacific security architecture and the role it might play in the Asian geopolitics. He compared the security architecture with the European past, and surmised where it might lead. He argued that Asian geopolitics can be looked at from the lens of IR theories that were created in the wake of Europe's emergence as a global hegemon in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He remarked that the past thirty years in the Asian region have been the most disruptive, and even then, the region had remained largely peaceful. He argued that it had been able to do so by dealing and adjusting with multiple realities and multiple orders all at the same time, and not by shifting the balance of power or making alliances. He emphasized that as the times are changing, the region should continue to adjust itself to the changing realities if it wants to remain peaceful in the future. Therefore, he argued that any idea of cooperative security architecture such as the Quad or the Indo-Pacific cannot work within a change occurring

on multiple fronts. He remarked that the problem with Asian geopolitics is its stance to manage change rather than fix it.

While talking in the context of India, Amb. Menon argued that in a multiple fragmented order, India should position itself where it has better relations with both China and the US than they have with each other. India also needs a much more granular view of the security dilemma and the security architecture emerging in the Asian region. But most of all, he argued that India needs a more granular view on what is happening in its immediate neighbourhood than relying on Chinese inefficiency, which would be a strategic mistake.

India needs a more granular view on what is happening in its immediate neighbourhood than relying on Chinese inefficiency, which would be a strategic mistake.

Amb. Menon concluded his address by emphasizing that India needs to continue to transform and increase its capabilities while also adjusting to the changing realities.

The closing remarks were delivered by **Amb. Ashok K. Kantha**, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies. He observed that the intense discussions that took place over a period of two days gave a lot to deliberate upon over the role of China in changing Asian geopolitics. He concluded the proceedings by thanking all the participants for their contributions, enriching the understanding of China spread across many themes and leaving much food for thought. The conference was successful owing to the close partnership with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and constant support from Goa University and colleagues from Institute of Chinese Studies. Announcing that the India Forum on China will continue to be taken forward as an annual feature, Amb. Kantha encouraged all participants to provide feedback and suggestions for the fourth edition of the IFC to be held in December, 2020.



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Against the backdrop of China's growing influence in the geopolitical arena of the Indo-Pacific, there is a need for India to define the region as its natural hinterland and review its wider implications for development and policies.
- India needs a well thought-out plan on the economic front for dealing with the trade deficit with China. There should be both state-level and national initiatives, cutting across industries, to map out the necessity of Chinese imports in India. In order to prevent flooding of markets by Chinese goods, India may review the quality of compliance standards of imports without seeming to go selectively against China.
- India must recognize its national interests in the context of an ascending China. Moreover, it needs to develop a greater sense of how to deal with China as well as with China's regional hegemony in Asia.
- India needs a much more granular view of the security dilemma and the strategic architecture emerging in the Asian region. India must undertake a more nuanced approach to understand the interplay of Chinese influence in its immediate neighbourhood and not rely on Chinese inefficiencies.
- India must have a clearer stand on BRI. It must recognize that if BRI succeeds with its South Asian neighbors, they will be under China's influence, and if it does not succeed, they will be under massive strain. Therefore, in order to salvage South Asia as a stand-alone region, India should have a clearer approach. Alternatively, New Delhi could also consider taking a project-by-project view of the BRI and selectively participate in them.
- In a multipolar and fragmented order, it is important that India positions itself in such a way that it has better relations with both China and the US, more than they have with each other.
- There are several uncertainties that are on the rise in the world today and India must formulate robust policies and strong plans to tackle those. It must also review its regional policies and identify how sustainable they will be in the future.
- India's soft power is a clear advantage over China because of India's diversity, the legacy of Buddhism and the spiritual way of life advocated in its traditions. As a matter of well-thought out policy, these elements must be pushed in diplomacy.
- India must use its population as an advantage to build better ties with Southeast Asian countries. In line with India's Act East Policy, tourism visas could be introduced along with more direct flights to these countries. There should be more academic exchanges between Indian and ASEAN universities as well as more people to people relations by using India's relative demographic advantage.
- Diplomatic and strategic ties with Japan should be given utmost priority. India has the opportunity to come closer to the ever-cautious Japan, through mechanisms such as the Quad and this would be strategically far-reaching, in a much-divided South Asia.

- China has been working on Indian media and tech companies to subtly push propaganda messages through fellowship programmes, such as the one for Indian journalists, and this may have implications on the Indian media as a whole. China's 'sharp power' has enormous potential to influence public opinion in its favour. There is a need to conduct in-depth studies on the impact of such activities on the society as a whole.
- China's focus on building a blue water navy could pose a serious challenge to India in the Indian Ocean. China is also working on strategic domination in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) through its port building activities in Gwadar and Djibouti. An action plan needs to be developed in this regard.
- The idea of balancing and making sure that an ascendant China rises in a rule-based manner is quite attractive to various actors. It also opens scope for conversations between Europe, India, Japan, Australia and a number of other countries, so as not to get stuck between US-China competition but also to decide how one's own country will respond to China's rise and work with other major and middle powers. This kind of multilateralism should be promoted for inclusive development of all.
- There is a need to reassess the role of technology, its impact and its limitations. In times of technological uncertainties and disruptions, there is a need for building institutions for technological global governance. Data, network and information centrality has a component of disinformation playing to the advantage of China and whoever has an upper hand in technology, would be the disruptor in the global order. The EU could take the baton forward to create foundations for such a regulatory framework and India could work hand in hand with it as an important player in the Indo-Pacific.
- Ideology is likely to be a backbencher with technology deciding the civilian and military approach in the future. Therefore, it is imperative for India to have a well-defined framework with respect to its technological adaptations. This could be a subset of a larger national vision of technological development and deployment.
- IR theories no longer do a good job of dealing with the realities of our times. As far as terrorism is concerned, there is a need to trace lessons from recent events, ask what has kept peace in the last thirty years and apply those lessons rather than applying expired theories.
- India needs to reposition itself between the US and China. It is essential to keep a realist view of the events unfolding in the neighbourhood, however, India must persist to its strengths and at the same time transform itself so as to build its own capabilities.
- There is constant readjustment and awareness required for balance of power and perpetuation of global order. There is no magic formula to operate in such an environment and India should act under a new framework of dynamic nonalignment.
- Although India has only gained as little as 1.96 % in import growth during the ongoing US-China trade war, the energy sector could offer better negotiating opportunities for India.

- It is important for countries to be cautious of China's sharp power. They must educate civil society of its implications. China's interference can soon translate into interference as has been witnessed in many countries in recent years. India should deliberate on how to deal with such a scenario and develop a comprehensive strategy in this regard.
- China's tech boom has been fostering many IPO candidates. It is due to overseas listing channels that there has been a massive growth in its patents and innovations. The tech boom has resulted in large number of VCs. India can utilize this opportunity to draw investments in the tech space. An overarching framework should be developed to spur international participation in this area which should form the core of a revamped industry policy in India.
- As security concerns in the Asia-Pacific theatre loom large and military presence in the region witnesses a likely increase, with both US and China expanding its troops, India should be prepared to contend with the long term prospect of US wanting to use missile strategy in the region.
- Since India faces security concerns in terms of using Chinese technology and continues to rely on US technology, it is pertinent that the India-US technology engagement goes beyond mere buyer-seller relationship to **include to a deeper** and meaningful alliance.
- With China's rising influence and investments in Indian media, as part of China's larger efforts to push its world view beyond its borders, it becomes necessary to develop regulatory mechanisms while exploring new ways to counter it.
- It is also important that the civil society be made aware of the efforts by the Chinese government to push its propaganda to influence Indian public-opinion.
- As India's trade volume with ASEAN countries sees an increase, it becomes important to move the Act East Policy into a higher gear. Strengthening people to people relations is the way forward. India's population should be seen as an advantage, in this context, to build better ties with South East Asian countries. As more Indians travel to South East Asia, tourism visa should be introduced along with more direct flights to these countries. Academic exchanges between Indian and ASEAN universities also need to be expanded for a deeper and more productive engagement.

## PHOTO GALLERY









## PARTICIPANTS



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**Prof. Alexey Maslov** is Academic Director, Research Institute for Modern Asia and Professor of the School of Asian Studies at HSE University, Moscow, Head of the International Institute of Asian, African, Latin American Studies at PFUR University (Moscow, Russia) and Professor of Charles University (Czech). He is a state-level expert for Chinese and International Affairs, member of Russian-Chinese state committee for cooperation in education, representative of Russia in the commission of APEC. His research interests include Asian political history and sociopolitical development, international relations and economic cooperation in the Asia Pacific, the cultural heritage of Silk Road as well as Buddhist and Taoist traditions. He is an advisor for several governmental bodies and ministries in economic and political issues and cooperation with Asian countries. Prof. Alexey Maslov, as a renowned sinologist published more than 60 academic papers, three textbooks, and 16 books on China and East Asian history and politics.

**Prof. Alka Acharya** is Professor at the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She was Director (2012-2017) and a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), Delhi and Editor of ICS' quarterly journal, *China Report* (New Delhi) from 2005-2013. She was nominated by the Indian Government as a member of India-China Eminent Persons Group (2006-2008) and of the National Security Advisory Board of the Government of India for two terms, 2006-2008 and 2011-2012. Prof. Alka Acharya is author of *China & India: Politics of Incremental Engagement* (2008) and her current research focuses on India-China-Russia trilateral cooperation and the Chinese strategic response to the post-Cold War regional architecture, with special reference to China's neighbourhood.



**ALKA ACHARYA**



**ANANTH KRISHNAN**

**Mr. Ananth Krishnan** is an Indian journalist and is a 2019 AsiaGlobal Fellow at the University of Hong Kong. In 2018, he was Visiting Fellow at Brookings India, where he researched India-China economic relations. He was previously Associate Editor and China Correspondent for the India Today Group, leading the China coverage of group publications, including India Today magazine, India Today Television channel and Mail Today newspaper, from Beijing. He reported from Beijing for nine years, earlier working for The Hindu newspaper's Beijing bureau from 2009 until 2014. His reporting has taken him to all but three of China's 33 provinces and regions. He holds a master's degree in history from the University of Chicago, where he studied the relationship between the film industry and politics in Tamil Nadu. Mr. Ananth Krishnan also holds bachelor's degrees in history and economics from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

**Vice Admiral Anil Chopra**, PVSM, AVSM (Retd.) was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1975 and retired in 2015. He has the unique distinction of being the only admiral in the Navy's history to have been the Commander-in-Chief of both its combatant commands, i.e. the Western Naval Command, and the Eastern Naval Command; as well as having been the Director General of the Indian Coast Guard. In 2016, he was appointed by the Ministry of Defence to an Expert Committee to examine measures to enhance the combat capability of the Indian Armed Forces, and rebalance the defence budget. For two years, 2017-2019, Admiral Chopra was a Member of the National Security Advisory Board, Government of India. Vice Admiral Anil Chopra is a Distinguished Fellow with a number of think-tanks, and has been active in India's track 1.5 and track 2.0 dialogues with a large number of countries.



**ANIL CHOPRA**



**ANIL WADHWA**

**Amb. Anil Wadhwa** was a member of the Indian Foreign Service from 1979 to 2017. He has served as the Indian Ambassador to Poland, Lithuania, Sultanate of Oman, Kingdom of Thailand and to the Republic of Italy and San Marino. Amb. Anil Wadhwa was Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi from 2014 - 2016 looking after South-East Asia, Australasia and Pacific, Gulf and West Asian regions, among other responsibilities. He was also the leader of the senior officials to all meetings of ASEAN, ASEM, ACD, Arab League, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, ARF and East Asia Summit. He has also been India's chief delegate to the meetings of the small Island States and has organised two major conferences related to South Pacific States (FIPIC) in India and in Fiji. Amb. Anil Wadhwa is a distinguished fellow with the Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi, and serves on the boards of a few corporate companies with diverse interests.

**Prof. Anoop Singh** is Member, XV Finance Commission of India, a constitutional body to recommend tax sharing between the centre and the states for the period 2020-2025. He has recently been Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University. Before that, at the International Monetary Fund, he was Director of the Asia and Pacific Department, Director of the Western Hemisphere Department, and Director of Special Operations. Prof. Anoop Singh holds degrees from the universities of Bombay, Cambridge, and the London School of Economics. His additional work experience includes being Special Advisor to the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.



**ANOOP SINGH**



**APARAJITA GANGOPADHYAY**

**Prof. Aparajita Gangopadhyay** is currently the Director of the UGC Centre for Latin American Studies, at Goa University Goa, India. Her areas of specialization are India-Latin America Relations, Argentina-Brazil Relations, India's Foreign Policy, Regional Integration in South America among others. She has been a Visiting Faculty at Chengchi National University, Taiwan, Department of International Relations, Marie Curie Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland and at Institute of International Relations at Vilnius University, Lithuania. She was also a member of the Indian Delegation to Brazil as part of India-Brazil 1.5 Dialogue in 2013. Prof. Aparajita Gangopadhyay is also a member of the Academic Council of the Indian Studies Programme, State University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and the Founding Member of Centre for International Development and Cooperation Research at the University of Bucharest, Romania.

**Prof. Arthur S. Ding** is a Professor Emeritus and an Adjunct Professor at National Chengchi University in Taipei. He also is an Adjunct Professor at National Defense University in Taiwan. His research focuses on China's security and defense related issues, including defense industry, civil/party-military relations, defense strategy, and arms control. He was a visiting scholar at Asian Studies Program of Georgetown University, Fairbank Center of Harvard University, Free University in Berlin, Germany, and Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Prof. Arthur S. Ding received his B.A. in Anthropology from the National Taiwan University and his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame.



**ARTHUR S. DING**





**ARVIND GUPTA**

**Dr. Arvind Gupta** is the Director of Vivekananda International Foundation, a Delhi based independent, non-partisan think-tank focusing on research on foreign policy, defence, and security related issues from an Indian perspective. From 2014-17, he was the Deputy National Security Advisor and headed the National Security Council Secretariat in the Government of India. During 2012-14, he was Director General of the Institute for Defence Studies Analyses, New Delhi. He was Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair on National Security at the IDSA during 2008-2014. Dr. Arvind Gupta is a former diplomat and is also an Honorary Professor in the Department of Defence and National Security Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh. His interests are in India's foreign policy, security, history, culture and civilization. His book *How India Manages its National Security* was published by Penguin India Ltd. in 2018.

**Amb. Ashok K. Kantha** is Director of the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi and a Distinguished Fellow at Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi. A career diplomat, he was Ambassador of India to China until January 2016. Prior to this, he was Secretary (East) at Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi. His previous assignments include High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka and Malaysia, Consul General in Hong Kong, Deputy Chief of Mission in Kathmandu, and Joint Secretary (East Asia), Director (China) and Director (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) in Ministry of External Affairs. Earlier, Amb. Ashok Kantha served in different capacities at Indian Missions in Singapore, China and the US, and at headquarters in New Delhi. In his diplomatic career spanning over 38 years, he specialized in Asian affairs, with particular focus on China and India's neighbourhood. He has an advanced certificate in Chinese language from National University of Singapore.



**ASHOK K. KANTHA**





**BILAHARI KAUSIKAN**

**Amb. Bilahari Kausikan** is currently Chairman of the Middle East Institute, an autonomous institute of the National University of Singapore. He has spent his entire career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before retiring as Ambassador-at-Large in 2018. During his 37 years in the Ministry, he served in a variety of appointments at home and abroad, including as the Second Permanent Secretary and Permanent Secretary. Raffles Institution, the University of Singapore and Columbia University in New York all attempted to educate him.

**Amb. Biren Nanda** has previously served as a diplomat in Indian Missions in Singapore, Beijing, Shanghai, Washington, D.C., Tokyo, Jakarta and Canberra. He was the Consul General of India in Shanghai from 1996-2000, Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India in Tokyo from 2000-2004, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Indonesia, Timor Leste and ASEAN from 2008 to 2012 and High Commissioner of India to Australia from 2012 to 2015. Amb. Biren Nanda was a Senior Fellow in the Delhi Policy Group from 2016 to 2019.



**BIREN NANDA**



**CARLO MASALA**

**Dr. Carlo Masala** is Chair for International Relations at the University of the German Bundeswehr. He is also Director of the Project Metis: Institute for Strategy and Foresight which works for the Political Department of the German MoD. Before joining the University, Prof. Carlo Masala worked as Deputy Director of the Academic Research Branch at the NATO Defence College in Rome. He is specialised in International Security and transatlantic as well as maritime affairs. He is consultant to various governments and international organizations and has written 6 books and published more than 100 articles in various journals.

**Dr. Christian Wagner** is Senior Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin. He was a Visiting Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute for Advanced Studies (JNIAS) and at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi in 2015/16. Since 2018 he is a member of the International Research Committee (IRC) of the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS) in Colombo. He was Visiting Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) in 2019. His main areas of interest are India and South Asia with a special focus on foreign policy and security issues.



**CHRISTIAN WAGNER**



**DATTESH D. PARULEKAR**

**Dr. Dattesh D. Parulekar** is Assistant Professor of International Relations and Strategic Studies, at the Department of International Relations, Goa University. His areas of specialisation encompasses India's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, Chinese Political Economy, Sino-Indian Engagement w.r.t. Strategic Maritime Affairs in the Indo-Pacific, African Security and Governance Affairs, and Political Economy of Latin America and the Caribbean. He is a Visiting Faculty at most National Defence institutions, viz., the NWC at INS Mandovi, the CDM and CAW at Secunderabad, the DSSC, Wellington and the AWC in Mhow. Dr. Dattesh D. Parulekar is academically associated with myriad Universities, Institutes and Think-Tanks across South Asia, China, Europe and Latin America, respectively.

**Prof. David Arase** has been teaching at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center housed at Nanjing University in China since 2011. Prior to this he taught for 22 years in the Politics Department of Pomona College in Claremont, CA. His three most recent books are edited volumes: *Routledge Handbook on Africa-Asia Relations* (Routledge, 2017); *China's Rise and East Asian Order* (Palgrave, 2016); and *The US-Japan alliance: balancing soft and hard power in East Asia* (Nissan Institute/Routledge, 2010), awarded the Ohira Memorial Foundation Special Prize in 2011. Prof. David Arase has lectured widely and published numerous articles, monographs, and commentaries on East Asian and Indo-Pacific relations.



**DAVID ARASE**



**DEEPA GOPALAN WADHWA**

**Amb. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa** has been a distinguished career diplomat who joined the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) in 1979 and retired in December 2015. She has served as Ambassador of India to Japan (2012-2015), Qatar (2009-2012) and Sweden (2005-2009). She was concurrently accredited as Ambassador to Latvia (from Stockholm), and Republic of the Marshall Islands (from Tokyo). During her career, she has also held other significant assignments in China, Geneva, The Netherlands, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of External Affairs. In the course of her career spanning over 36 years, she has handled a wide swathe of issues and subjects related to India's relations with key countries such as Pakistan, China, and Japan. Amb. Deepa Wadhwa is currently Chairperson of the India- Japan Friendship Forum, Member Governing Council of the Institute of Chinese Studies and is on the Governing Council of the Asian Confluence, based in Shillong. She also serves as independent Director and advisor on the Boards of a few companies.

**Dr. Frank N. Pieke** (1957) studied cultural anthropology and Chinese studies at the University of Amsterdam and the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. in 1992. After lectureships in Leiden and Oxford, and a professorship in modern China studies at Leiden University, he joined the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS) in Berlin as director and CEO in August 2018. His current research revolves around the impact of China on the Netherlands and the EU, foreign immigrant groups in China and the transformation of Chinese Communist Party. His most recent books are *The Good Communist* (2009) and *Knowing China* (2016), both published by Cambridge University Press. He just finished a new edited volume on Global East Asia that will be published by the University of California Press in 2020. In Oxford, Dr. Frank N. Pieke set up and directed the Oxford China Centre.



**FRANK N. PIEKE**



**GARIMA MOHAN**

**Dr. Garima Mohan** is a Fellow with the German Marshall Fund's Asia program, where she leads the work on India and contributes to the research on the Indo-Pacific. Prior to joining GMF, she was the acting team leader and coordinator for the EU's Asia-Pacific Research and Advice Network (APRAN), which supports EU policymakers on issues concerning the Asia-Pacific. She also led the Global Orders program at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin. She holds a PhD from the Freie Universität Berlin and received her master's degree from the London School of Economics. She was also a non-resident fellow at Carnegie India, an Asian Forum for Global Governance Fellow, and a 2017 Raisina Young Fellow. Dr. Garima Mohan has published widely on Indian foreign and security policy, EU-Asia relations, Germany-India ties, and maritime security in the Indo-Pacific, and is a frequent commentator for European and Indian media including NZZ, The Hindu, The Wire and Deutsche Welle.

**Amb. Gautam Bambawale** was a member of the Indian Foreign Service from 1984 to 2018. He was India's Ambassador to Bhutan, Pakistan and China. He was stationed in Washington DC in 2004-07 during the Indo-US nuclear deal which transformed ties between the two countries. He has been India's first Consul General in Guangzhou (China) 2007-09. He was Director of the Indian Cultural Centre, Berlin 1994-98. He worked in the Prime Minister's Office 2002-04. At the Ministry of External Affairs he was Joint Secretary for East Asia from 2009-2014. He has dealt with China for 15 years of his 34 year diplomatic career. He is fluent in Mandarin Chinese and German. Amb. Gautam Bambawale is currently Distinguished Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Symbiosis International University, Pune and teaches a course on Diplomacy and International Governance at the Symbiosis School of International Studies. He has an M.Phil. in Economics from the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.



**GAUTAM BAMBAWALE**





**HERIBERT DIETER**

**Prof. Heribert Dieter** is Visiting Professor and Director of Policy Studies, Asia Global Institute, University of Hong Kong. Since 2001, he has been Senior Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin. Since 2017, he also is Associate Professor at Potsdam University. He has published eight monographs, seven edited volumes and over 150 articles, including 28 peer-reviewed, in academic journals. His research focuses on international trade and finance. His latest book, published in 2017, analyses the prospects for a “Globalization à la carte”, which would enable societies to express their preferences in the design of their countries’ economic policies. In his current research, Prof. Heribert Dieter analyses the rise of China and consequences for other countries and international co-operation.

**Ms. Indrani Bagchi** is diplomatic editor with The Times of India, where she has been reporting and analyzing foreign policy issues for the newspaper since 2004. She covers daily news on foreign affairs in the foreign office, as well as interpreting and analyzing global trends with an Indian perspective. She writes news stories; opinion articles; news features and a blog, “Globespottting”. Prior to this, she worked as associate editor for India Today, a premier news magazine. Indrani started her journalism career at The Statesman, before moving to The Economic Times in Calcutta. She was a Reuters Fellow at Oxford University. She was also awarded the Chang Lin-Tien fellowship by the Asia Foundation to study US-China relations at Brookings Institution, Washington DC. Ms. Indrani Bagchi is a Fellow of the India Leadership Initiative of Aspen Institute India and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.



**INDRANI BAGCHI**



**KISHAN RANA**

**Amb. Kishan Rana** has an MA in Economics, Delhi. Indian Foreign Service (1960-95); worked in Indian Embassy, China (1963-65, 1970-72). Ambassador/High Commissioner: Algeria, Czechoslovakia, Kenya, Mauritius, Germany; served on PM Indira Gandhi's staff (1981-82). Foreign languages: Chinese, French. Professor Emeritus, DiploFoundation, Malta and Geneva; Emeritus Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi; Archives By-Fellow, Churchill College, Cambridge; Public Policy Scholar, Woodrow Wilson Centre, Washington DC; guest faculty, Diplomatic Academy, Vienna (2011-18); Commonwealth Adviser, Namibia Foreign Ministry, 2000-01. Authored and edited 11 books, including: *Inside Diplomacy* (2000); *Asian Diplomacy* (2007); *Diplomacy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2011); *The Contemporary Embassy* (2013); *Diplomacy at the Cutting Edge* (2015); two translated into Chinese.

**Prof. Madhu Bhalla** is a former professor in Chinese Studies at the Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University. She has an M.A. and Ph.D. from Queen's University, Canada, held a visiting fellowship at Fudan University and was a visiting scholar at the University of Sichuan. She was a member of the China Core Group at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi from 2013 to 2016 and is now a member of the Task Force on China at the Vivekananda Foundation, New Delhi. She is a member of the India- China Think Tank Track-Two process at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi. Prof. Madhu Bhalla is currently on the advisory councils of three China centres at the IIT Madras, Chennai, the MG University, Kottayam, Kerala and the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and a member of the Board of Studies at the Jamia Millia Islamia and is the editor of *India Quarterly*, ICWA.



**MADHU BHALLA**



**MANORANJAN MOHANTY**

**Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty** is a founding member of the Institute of Chinese Studies, its former Chairperson, and currently its Honorary Fellow. A former Professor of Political Science, University of Delhi, he is a social scientist, China scholar and a peace and human rights activist with theoretical as well as empirical research interest in the study of China, India and global transformation. He has done extensive research on modern China including the Chinese Revolution and the political economy of the People's Republic and has done a number of national and international research projects leading to several edited volumes. Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty's publication, *China's Transformation: The Success Story and the Success Trap* (Sage: 2018) is based on a thirty-year study of China's reforms with focus on Wuxi. He has also edited *China at a Turning Point: Perspectives after the Nineteenth Party Congress* (Pentagon Press: 2019).

**Amb. Nalin Surie** has served over a long and distinguished career in the Indian Foreign Service from 1973-2011, holding a number of strategic, policy and advisory roles, including as the High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Ambassador to China and Poland. More recently, he has also led the Indian Council of World Affairs, as the Director General from 2015-2018. Having trained as an economist and completed his Masters from the Delhi School of Economics in 1972, he joined the Indian Foreign Service in July 1973. At the Ministry of External Affairs, his assignments have included Head of Eastern Europe division and Head of East Asia division. Amb. Nalin Surie has extensive cross-sectoral experience on issues ranging across the substance of India's foreign and security policies. During his career, he also focused on India's external economic relations and the international economy.



**NALIN SURIE**



**P. S. RAGHAVAN**

**Amb. P. S. Raghavan** is Chairman of the National Security Advisory Board of India. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1979 and has held various diplomatic assignments in USSR, Poland, UK, Vietnam and South Africa. He was Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (2000-4) dealing with Foreign Affairs, Nuclear Energy, Space, Defence and National Security; headed the Development Partnership Administration (2012-3) and was Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (2013-14). Amb. P. S. Raghavan has been India's Ambassador to Russia (2014-16), Ireland (2007-11) and Czech Republic (2004-7).

**Mr. Peter Rimmele** is currently the Resident Representative of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Office, India. He has a First Law Degree from Freiburg University, as well as a Second Law Degree from the Ministry of Justice Baden-Württemberg, Germany and a M.A. in Geography. After working as, a jurist, judge and lecturer, he took public office as Ministerialrat, Head of Division at the State Ministry of the Interior in Saxony, Germany, from November 1991 on until 2000. There he first served in the Police and Security and later in the Local Government Department. On behalf of the German Foreign Ministry he served in East Timor as Registrar General, Head of Civil Registry and Notary Services (UNTAET), and became later the principal Advisor for Governance Reform for GIZ (German International Cooperation) to the Ministry of Administrative Reform and the Anti-Corruption-Commission of the Republic of Indonesia, where he served for 7 years. He then moved to Rwanda, also as Principal Advisor Good Governance/ Justice Program. Earlier he was Resident Representative Lebanon, Director of Rule of Law Program Middle East North Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.



**PETER RIMMELE**





**RAVI BHOOTHALINGAM**

**Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam** is Treasurer and Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi, and an active commentator on India-China business and cultural relations. He took his M.A. in Experimental Psychology at Cambridge University, U.K under the guidance of renowned scientist and Sinologist Joseph Needham. After a corporate career of over 32 years in India and overseas, he set up his own consulting practice focusing on top management leadership coaching. He also serves as an Independent Director on several company boards. He also sits on the Editorial Boards of China Report and World Affairs. Mr. Ravi Bhoothalingam is a Member, Court of Governors of the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, London.

**Mr. Richard McGregor** is a senior fellow for East Asia at the Lowy Institute, Sydney. He is a former journalist and author who has won numerous awards for his reporting in China and East Asia. McGregor is an expert on the Chinese political system – his book, *The Party*, on the inner-workings of the Chinese Communist Party, published in 2010, was called a “masterpiece” by The Economist. Translated into seven languages, *The Party* was chosen by the Asia Society and Mainichi Shimbun in Japan as their book of the year in 2011. As the former Bureau Chief of Financial Times in Beijing and Washington D.C., he led a team of senior reporters in both capitals for one of the world’s biggest business newspaper. His book on Sino-Japanese relations, *Asia’s Reckoning: China, Japan and the Fate of US in the Pacific Century*, published in 2017, was called “best book of the year” by the Literary Review in the UK. His most recent book, *Xi Jinping: The Backlash*, was published by Penguin Australia in August, 2019.



**RICHARD MCGREGOR**





**SABAREE MITRA**

**Prof. Sabaree Mitra** is an Honorary Fellow in the Institute of Chinese Studies and a member of the Editorial Board of *China Report*. She teaches Chinese Language, Literature and Culture in Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research interests include Contemporary Chinese Literature and Criticism, Chinese Cultural History, India-China Cultural Relations and Regional Interaction. She was the Chairperson of the Indian Expert Group that compiled the *Encyclopedia of India-China Cultural Contacts* on behalf of the MEA, Government of India, in collaboration with Chinese scholars. Prof. Sabaree Mitra has authored several books and in 2017, was honored with the prestigious Special Book Award of China by SARFT, China for her contributions in introducing, translating and publishing books on Chinese culture as well as in promoting cultural exchanges.

**Mr. Santosh Pai** is a partner at Link Legal, an Indian law firm. He has been offering legal services to clients in the India-China corridor since 2010. His areas of interest include Chinese investments in India, India-China comparative law and policy, cross-cultural negotiations and board governance. He holds a B.A., LL.B. (Hons.) degree from NLSIU, Bangalore, LL.M. (Chinese law) from Tsinghua University, Beijing and an MBA from Vlerick University, Belgium (Peking University campus). His manuscript, *Practical Guide on Investing in India for Chinese Investors* has been translated into Chinese and published by China Law Press. Mr. Santosh Pai is also a member of CII's Core Group on China, teaches two courses on India-China business at IIM Shillong and volunteers at NGOs in his free time.



**SANTOSH PAI**



**SHEN DINGLI**

**Prof. Shen Dingli** is a professor and former executive dean at Fudan University's Institute of International Studies, and former director of Fudan's Center for American Studies. He is also an Honorary Visiting Professor of Washington University in St. Louis. His research and publication covers China-US security relations, regional security and international strategy, arms control and non-proliferation, foreign and defense policy of China and the US etc. He is Vice-President of Chinese Association of South Asian Studies, Shanghai Association of International Strategic Studies, Shanghai Association of American Studies, Shanghai UN Research Association, and Shanghai Public Policy Research Association. He received his Ph.D. in Physics from Fudan in 1989 and did post-doc in arms control at Princeton University from 1989-1991. Prof. Shen Dingli is on the Global Council of Asia Society, and is appointed by Shanghai Municipality and Hangzhou Municipality as both Shanghai Convention Ambassador and Hangzhou Convention Ambassador. He has co-edited 17 books and published over 2,500 papers and articles worldwide.

**Amb. Shivshankar Menon** is currently a Visiting Professor at Ashoka University, India; Chairman, Advisory Board, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi; Distinguished Fellow of Brookings India; Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore; Member, Board of Trustees, International Crisis Group; and, a Distinguished Fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, New York. He was previously National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India, Jan 2010-May 2014; Foreign Secretary of India, October 2006-July 2009; and has served as the Indian Ambassador or High Commissioner to China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Israel. In 2016, he published *Choices: Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy* (Brookings & Penguin Random House, 2016). Amb. Shivshankar Menon has been a Fisher Family Fellow at the Kennedy School, Harvard University, 2015 and Richard Wilhelm Fellow at MIT in 2015. He was chosen one of the "Top 100 Global Thinkers" by Foreign Policy magazine in 2010.



**SHIVSHANKAR MENON**



**SHYAM SARAN**

**Amb. Shyam Saran** is a former Foreign Secretary of India and has served as Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Nuclear Affairs and Climate Change. He is currently Member of the Governing Board of the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) and of the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), a Trustee at the World Wildlife Fund (India), Life Trustee of India International Centre (IIC) and Member of the Executive Council of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). He has headed the Research and Information System (RIS) for Developing Countries, a prestigious think tank focusing on economic issues (2011-2017) and was Chairman of the National Security Advisory Board under the National Security Council (2013-15). He has recently published a book, *How India Sees the World*. Amb. Shyam Saran was awarded the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award, in 2011 for his contributions to civil service. In May 2019, he was conferred the Spring Order Gold and Silver Star by the Emperor of Japan for promoting India-Japan relations.

**Mr. Siddharth Varadarajan** is the Founding Editor of The Wire. He was earlier Editor of The Hindu. He is also a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Public Affairs and Critical Theory, Shiv Nadar University, New Delhi and was a Lecturer at New York University.



**SIDDHARTH VARADARAJAN**



**SL NARASIMHAN**

**Lt. Gen. SL Narasimhan**, PVSM, AVSM\*, VSM is an Infantry Officer commissioned in 1977. He has done graduation in Mathematics, Post-Graduation in Defence Studies and PhD in India China Relations. He has been awarded four times for his outstanding contribution to the Indian Army by the President of India. He served as the Defence Attaché in the Embassy of India in China for three years. He is qualified in Chinese language and has been a keen observer of China for the past 18 years. His expertise spans international relations and internal issues, economy and defence related subjects of China. He has taken part in many Track-Two dialogues both in India and abroad. Lt. Gen. SL Narasimhan has authored many articles in various journals and magazines. He is, presently, Member of the National Security Advisory Board, India and Director General, Centre for Contemporary China Studies. He is also a Distinguished Fellow with Centre for Air Power Studies, India.

**Ms. Suhasini Haidar** is the National and Diplomatic Affairs Editor at The Hindu, one of India's oldest and most widely read English dailies. Through her journalistic career spanning 24 years, she has covered the subcontinental region and several conflict areas around the world, and writes regularly on foreign policy issues. In particular, she focuses on India's relations with neighbours, including SAARC region and China. Prior to The Hindu, Ms. Suhasini Haidar worked as a correspondent for CNN International, and anchor and Foreign Editor at CNN-IBN TV.



**SUHASINI HAIDAR**





**SUJAN R. CHINYOY**

**Amb. Sujan R. Chinoy** is the Director General of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. A career diplomat of the Indian Foreign Service from 1981-2018, he was India's Ambassador to Japan and Mexico. A specialist with over 25 years of experience on China, East Asia and the Asia-Pacific, he served in Indian Missions in Hong Kong, Beijing, Riyadh, Shanghai and Sydney. He also served as India's representative to the First Committee at the United Nations in New York. At Headquarters, he served as Director (China) as well as Head of the Expert Group of Diplomatic & Military Officials tasked with CBMs and boundary-related issues with China. On deputation for four years with the National Security Council Secretariat under the Prime Minister's Office, Amb. Sujan Chinoy worked on internal and external national security policy and anchored strategic dialogues with key interlocutors around the world. He is fluent in English and Chinese (Mandarin), and conversant in French, Spanish, German, Japanese, Arabic, Urdu and French-Creole.

**Dr. T C A Raghavan** retired from the Indian Foreign Service in December 2015 while Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan (2013-15). He had earlier served as Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan (2003-2007) and High Commissioner to Singapore from 2009 to 2013. During his last posting in New Delhi (2007-09) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Dr. T C A Raghavan was Joint Secretary dealing with Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. His current interests are historical research, strategic analysis and the diplomatic and intellectual history of modern India. He writes, lectures and participates in discussions on issues relating to Indian and South Asian diplomatic history, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and South East Asia. He assumed charge as Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.



**T C A RAGHAVAN**



**VARUN SAHNI**

**Prof. Varun Sahni** is Vice-Chancellor, Goa University. He is also Professor in International Politics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (currently on deputation leave). He speaks annually (since 2006) at the National Defence College (NDC) and several times a year (since 1997) at the Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi. He has been a Jury Member of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding. An Inlaks Scholar, he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the political role of the Argentine Navy at the University of Oxford (1991). He has written 105 research articles on nuclear deterrence issues, regional security, emerging balances in the Asia-Pacific, evolving security concepts, emerging powers, international relations theory and Latin American issues. He has recently co-authored *Technology Vision 2035* for TIFAC, the technology think tank of Government of India. For his “outstanding contribution to research and teaching”, Prof. Varun Sahni was conferred the V.K.R.V. Rao Prize in Social Sciences for 2006 by the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

**Amb. Vijay Nambiar**, born in Pune (1943), studied at St Xavier’s College Mumbai. He was awarded the Chancellor’s gold medal for his Masters in 1965. Joining India’s Foreign Service in 1967 he was Ambassador/High Commissioner in Algiers (1985-88), Afghanistan (1990-92), Malaysia (1993-96), China (1996-2000) and Pakistan (2000-01). He was also Permanent Representative at India’s UN Mission in New York. After retirement in 2004, Amb. Vijay Nambiar served as Deputy National Security Adviser until 2006 when he was seconded to the UN as Special Adviser to UNSG Kofi Annan. He was later Chef de Cabinet to UNSG Ban Ki Moon and his Adviser on Myanmar.



**VIJAY NAMBIAR**



**ZHIWU CHEN**

**Prof. Zhiwu Chen** is Director of the Asia Global Institute (AGI) and Victor and William Fung Professor in Economics at the University of Hong Kong. He is a former Professor of Finance at Yale University (1999-2017). His research covers finance theory, the sociology of finance, economic history, emerging markets, as well as China's economy and capital markets. He was also a Special-Term Visiting Professor at Peking University (School of Economics) and Tsinghua University (School of Social Sciences). He has received research awards including the Graham and Dodd Award (2013), the Pacesetter Research Award (1999), the Merton Miller Prize (1994), and the Chicago Board Options Exchange Competitive Research Award (1994). He has also received a number of book awards in China and Hong Kong, among which are 23 awards for *The Logic of Finance* in China and Hong Kong, and the best book award from hexun.com for *Why are the Chinese Industrious and Yet Not Rich*. In Burson-Marsteller's 2012 "G20 Influencers" report, Prof. Zhiwu Chen was listed as one of the top ten political influencers in China.

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



The **Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS)**, Delhi is one of the oldest research institutions on China and East Asia in India. It is the mandate of the ICS to develop a strategic vision for India's dealings with China and to help adapt India's priorities quickly and appropriately to address the research and educational demands arising from China's

emergence. The ICS seeks to promote interdisciplinary study and research on China and the rest of East Asia with a focus on expertise in China's domestic politics, international relations, economy, history, health, education, border studies, language and culture, and on India-China comparative studies.



The **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)** is a political foundation, headquartered in Sankt Augustin near Bonn, and also in Berlin. India was one of the first Asian countries to introduce country-related programmes initiated by KAS. In more than 40 years of cooperation, a wide range of

activities were undertaken at different levels: poverty alleviation in rural areas, capacity building of local government institutions, training for small and medium scale enterprises in North and South India, programmes for judicial reforms, civil society initiatives and seminars related to the concept of rule of law. Various economic and value-oriented dialogues were held and high ranking exchanges on the subject of international relations and security policy have been established. The history of the activities of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in India reflects not only the changing priorities of the country's development strategies but also India's gradual rising political and economic status in the region as well as its emergence as a global power.



**Goa University** was established under the Goa University Act of 1984 (Act No. 7 of 1984) and commenced operations on 1 June 1985. The University provides higher education in the Indian state of Goa. Over the past 30 years, the University has steadily expanded its reach, both in terms of the number of affiliated colleges - professional and general education numbering to 56, as well as the diversity of courses offered. These colleges offer various courses leading to a degree at graduate, post-graduate level. 12 of them are also recognized as research centres to offer Ph.D. programmes. The University

has 26 Departments and 2 Centres offering 33 programmes leading to Masters degree, 21 programmes leading to M.Phil. Degree and 25 programmes leading to Ph.D. degree in various disciplines. In addition, 9 research institutions in various disciplines situated in the state of Goa are also recognised for research programmes leading to Ph.D. degree by the University.

## NOTES



# NOTES

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