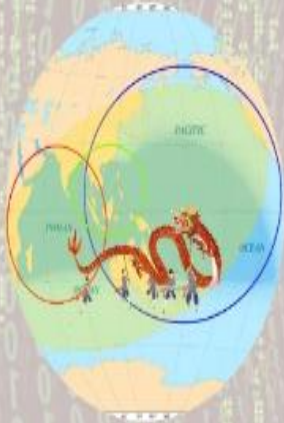


**KONRAD  
ADENAUER  
STIFTUNG**

**National  
Maritime  
Foundation**



# ***Decoding China in the Indo-Pacific Region***

**REPORT OF**

**THE NMF-KAS WORKSHOP ON  
“DECODING CHINA IN THE INDO-PACIFIC  
REGION”**

**28 APRIL 2022**

**NEW DELHI/ CISCO WEBEX (HYBRID)**

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## PROGRAMME

Time (IST)	Topic	Speaker/Presenter
<b>OPENING SESSION</b>		
0900-0905	Introduction to the Programme	<b>Emcee - Ms Divya Rai</b> Programme Executive, NMF
0905-0910	Welcome Remarks by NMF	<b>Commodore Debesh Lahiri, IN</b> Executive Director National Maritime Foundation
0910-0915	Welcome Remarks by KAS	<b>Mr Peter Rimmele</b> Former Resident Representative to India Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
0915-0930	Keynote Address	<b>Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, IN (Retd)</b> Chairman National Maritime Foundation Former Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy
<b>PROFESSIONAL SESSION I:</b>		
<b>MARITIME GEOSTRATEGIES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC</b>		
0940-0950	Opening Remarks by Moderator	<b>Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla, PVSM, AVSM, NM, VSM, IN (Retd)</b> Former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, Indian Navy
0950-1005	Impact of China's High-Technology Developments in the Maritime Domain	<b>Captain K K Agnihotri, IN (Retd)</b> Senior Fellow National Maritime Foundation
1005-1020	Growing Chinese Maritime Influence in the Indo-Pacific: Challenges from the EU Perspective	<b>Dr Gudrun Wacker</b> Senior Fellow Asia Division, German Institute for International and Security Affairs
1020-1035	China's Political Interventions in the IOR	<b>Dr Jabin T Jacob (Virtual)</b> Associate Professor Department of International Relations and Governance Studies, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Shiv Nadar University
1035-1050	Taiwanese Perspectives of the Indo-Pacific	<b>Prof Roger Liu (Virtual)</b> Associate Professor Department of Social Sciences, FLAME University
1050-1105 (15 min)	<b>Q&amp;A</b>	
<b>PROFESSIONAL SESSION II:</b>		
<b>FREEDOM FROM MARITIME COERCION AND CONSTRICTION: COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION</b>		

1130-1140	Opening Remarks by Moderator	<b>Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM &amp; Bar, VSM, IN (Retd)</b> Director-General National Maritime Foundation
1140-1155	IOR Maritime Geopolitics – Options for Indian Ocean Island States	<b>Admiral Ravi Wijegunaratne, WV, RWP &amp; Bar, RSP, VSV, USP, NI(M), SLN (Retd) (Virtual)</b> Former Chief of Defence Staff, Sri Lanka
1155-1210	Role of Finance Organisations in Ensuring a Safe and Secure Indo-Pacific	<b>Prof (Dr) Heribert Dieter</b> Senior Fellow German Institute for International and Security Affairs
1210-1225	Balancing UNCLOS and Rules-Based Order in the Indo-Pacific Region	<b>Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar, IN</b> Senior Fellow National Maritime Foundation
1225-1240 (15 min)	Positioning ASEAN Centrality as a Fulcrum for Regional Cooperation	<b>Dr Piti Srisangnam (Virtual)</b> Director, ASEAN Studies Centre, Chulalongkorn University  **COULD NOT JOIN DUE TO CONNECTIVITY ISSUES
1240-1255 (15 min)	<b>Q&amp;A</b>	
<b>CLOSING SESSION</b>		
1300-1305 (05 min)	Closing Remarks by KAS	<b>Mr Pankaj Madan</b> Deputy Head India Office - Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
1305-1310 (05 min)	Closing Remarks by NMF	<b>Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM &amp; Bar, VSM, IN (Retd)</b> Director-General National Maritime Foundation
1310-1315 (05 min)	Vote of Thanks	<b>Ms Divya Rai</b> Programme Executive National Maritime Foundation

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Workshop clearly brought home the fact that the Indo-Pacific has become a battleground for power and influence. Over the past century China has grown by leaps and bounds in various facets of national development; in the process becoming a major maritime power. China's vision for the Indo-Pacific is based on its own rules and order to achieve its 'unilateral' interests. This, in turn, has an impact on all other States in the region. This is what brings the concerned States together to discuss the *Dragon* in the room. The inter-related key policy recommendations that emerged from the Workshop, are mentioned below:

1. Realising India's maritime vision of **SAGAR**, i.e., **Security And Growth for All in the Region**, would require India to develop counter-strategies to China's relentless efforts to expand its maritime influence in the region through the 'two-pronged approach' discussed earlier. India would have to continuously nurture the existing partnerships, counter the Chinese narrative building through public media, and consistently provide a better alternative to its neighbours when they are in need of financial and/ or technological assistance.
2. India and like-minded partners such as Germany and the EU, as a collective, must develop a united strategy to promote and enforce a "rules-based order" in the Indo-Pacific Region which is inclusive, pluralistic, cooperative and collaborative, open and transparent, and will promote dialogue. The first step towards that would be to develop and promulgate a robust and consistent understanding of the "rules".
3. India and other key players in the Indo-Pacific region must frequently and strongly remind the EU to continue to implement its proposed strategy in the Indo-Pacific, as it would otherwise drop down in the priority list due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.
4. India must closely monitor China's high-technology developments, particularly in the context of their applications in the military maritime domain. Empirical evidence already suggests that China may be several steps ahead of most nations in terms of disruptive technology developments. This further necessitates collaboration among major players in the region to accelerate scientific and technological innovation.
5. The Island states in the Indo-Pacific will have a critical role to play since they are critical nodes for maritime trade and the regional Blue Economy in general. It is, therefore, important for India as a major player in the region to maintain good relations and continued maritime cooperation with the Island nations. In this context, the Workshop deliberated on the criticality of India-Sri Lanka, India-Maldives, India-Indonesia, and India-Taiwan relations, in particular.
6. In addition to the traditional security threats of state-on-state conflict and geopolitical constriction, India must also stress equally upon non-traditional security threats in the

maritime domain such as IUU fishing, piracy, climate change, marine litter, etc. Since these challenges stretch beyond national boundaries, their solutions would also require cross-boundary regional and, in fact, in the case of contemporary environmental threats, global, cooperation.

7. Efforts under regional strategic frameworks such as Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and the QUAD security dialogue must be accelerated towards countering contemporary security threats to holistic maritime security in the Indo-Pacific Region.

## GLIMPSES FROM THE WORKSHOP



**Figure 1:** Images from the Opening Session.



Figure 2: Images from Professional Session I.



Figure 3: Images from Professional Session II.



Figure 4: Images from Closing Session.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. The Indo-Pacific has become a battleground for power and influence. China's vision for the Indo-Pacific is based on its own rules and order to achieve its 'unilateral' interests. This, in turn, has an impact on all other States in the region. This is what brings us together to discuss the *Dragon* in the room.
2. Over the past century China has grown by leaps and bounds; emerging from the disasters of the Great Leap Forward and the Tiananmen Square to becoming a major maritime power under the present leadership of President Xi Jinping. While China's rise is widely apparent to the international community, its means of attaining the same still remain an enigma.
3. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has shown us that the status quo of the international order must not be taken for granted. Therefore, decoding the intentions and strategies of a major player like China is essential to avoid the possibility of such conflicts.
4. India's maritime policy is best encapsulated by the acronym **SAGAR**, which stands for **Security And Growth for All in the Region**. It is not, in and of itself, a strategy but an idea within which there are strategies designed to achieve India's Core National Interest, that is the, economic, material, and societal wellbeing of the people of India.
5. The EU's and Germany's Indo-Pacific Strategy is aimed at deepening partnerships, diversifying relations, lowering dependency on China, and focusing on non-traditional maritime security threats such as climate change. This includes extending CRIMARIO to Southeast Asia, undertaking information sharing, training, capacity building, creating a framework for regional cooperation, amongst others.
6. Importantly, the Indo-Pacific is not a priority of every Member State of the EU, the organisation therefore relies on voluntary contributions by members. Arguably, the Russia-Ukraine conflict could derail the EU's efforts in this respect as a large share of the EU's Peace Facility budget has been dedicated to support Ukraine, reflecting a limitation



in the EU's actions despite the will for the same. The region's major players must, therefore, frequently remind the EU of the merits of continuing to implement its strategies in the Indo-Pacific.

7. Similar to the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy, India has unequivocally declared that its engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region will be inclusive, pluralistic, cooperative and collaborative, open and transparent, and will promote dialogue, a respect for established and consensually-derived international law, and a democratic and rules-based international order in which all nations, small and large, thrive as equal and sovereign.
8. Of course, there are several outstanding challenges in establishing a rules-based international order, including varying views and interpretations among countries and alliances on as to what constitutes a "*rules-based order*" and what would be the "*rules*". Expectedly, there is also significant pushback from authoritarian regimes across the world.
9. China, evidently, does not share the idea of establishing a rules-based international order. China's maritime policies may be encapsulated by Yang Jiechi's quote which reads, "*China is a big country and you are a small country, and that is a fact.*" This philosophical approach explains China's attitude towards other countries which is based not on comity and co-respect but one which is driven by its belief that China is the middle kingdom, surrounded by barbarian States whose sole purpose of existence is to pay obeisance and tribute, in one or another form, to China.
10. China's political interventions in the region typically have two attributes, one is socialisation, and the other is 'norm changing'.
  - a. Socialisation at home is achieved through inculcating a strong sense of self perception that China is or is destined to become a great power. There is also a significant push for socialisation abroad through multiple mediums including public media, academic scholarships in educational institutes, MoUs with governmental and non-governmental organisations, and high-level political meetings.
  - b. Attempts at 'norm changing' abroad could be seen through China's persistent efforts to establish strong relations with Madagascar and Sri Lanka. While the efforts are publicly promulgated to be concentrated on economic development, poverty eradication, etc., the not-so-implicit goals are to promote Chinese ideologies and the Chinese model of political governance, and to ensure continued cooperation from the two island countries as a compensation for the economic investments.
11. One of the major driving forces behind China's rise to world power is its focus on high-technology and the linkages between science and technology, particularly in pursuit of securing its maritime rights and interests. Quantum communication (terrestrial and space-based), Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs), Anti-ship Ballistic Missiles, Unmanned Aerial/ Surface Vehicles (UAVs/USVs), Underwater Manned/ Unmanned

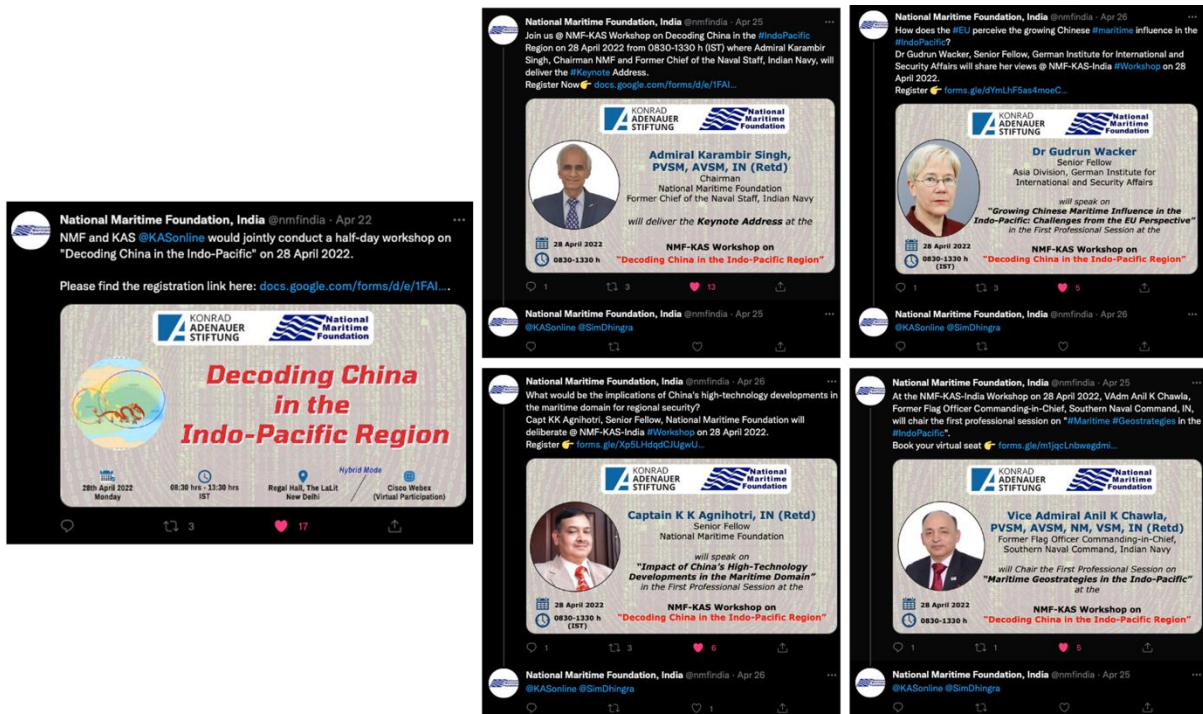
Submersibles (UUVs/AUVs), Special Purpose Ships, and Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), are a few examples of technologies and equipment that are being actively developed by China to enhance its military capacity, specifically in the maritime domain.

12. While for the EU and the West, Russia poses an immediate threat and China a long-term risk, for India, China is both an immediate and long-term risk.
13. Arguably, China has many internal ‘fears’ or ‘vulnerabilities’, such as societal unrest due to growing food scarcity caused by its geographical limitations and the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events; political unrest partly borne out of lack of mechanisms and mediums for the people to vent, especially in the event of China’s loss of economic prosperity; and its emphasis on ‘face’ where China, as a State, is equated with its people, who are equated with the CCP, which is equated with President Xi Jinping.
14. The criticality of regional cooperation cannot be overstated in the efforts to address the security challenges, particularly those emerging out of growing Chinese maritime presence. In this context, the Island states in the Indo-Pacific will have a critical role to play since they are critical nodes for maritime trade and the regional Blue Economy in general. It is, therefore, important for India as a major player in the region to maintain good relations and continued maritime cooperation with the Island nations.
15. A highly relevant example with regard to collaboration with Island States in the region is the trilateral maritime cooperation agreement between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka which was initiated in 2011. The most recent trilateral meeting was held in 2020 where the three countries renewed their commitments to enhance cooperation to tackle the common maritime security challenges. In an important follow up step, a trilateral secretariat for National Security Advisors was set up at the Sri Lanka Navy Headquarters in Colombo and inaugurated on 01 March, 2021.
16. In the context of establishing a regional approach to counter China’s expansionist policies, Taiwan will play a critical role due to its geographical, historical, and political position. Since the 1990’s, Taiwan’s approach to foreign policy in the “Indo-Pacific” has been centred around India which has led to strong diplomatic relations between the two countries. Strengthening Taiwan-India relations continues to be a main agenda point of the Taiwanese strategy for the Indo-Pacific.
17. In an attempt to decouple itself from China, Taiwan’s approach to the Asia-/Indo-Pacific has gradually shifted from one that was initially focussed on diversification of its economic linkages to one that is now focussed on diverting its economic linkages from China to other countries.
18. The European Indo-Pacific strategy lays great emphasis on capacity building in the region particularly to counter non-traditional maritime issues, where several cooperative

projects are being actively pursued. While the EU, and its member States individually, may not be able to alter the military balance in the region, their support would certainly deliver a strong strategic signal to China.

19. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has left many western countries shell-shocked. The response of the West to the conflict in the form of embargoes and boycott of Russian oil and gas has led to significant price surge which has worsened global inflation. This will of course have major implications for countries in the Indo-Pacific, since, 83 per cent of the global debt is accounted for by the emerging economies of the Indo-Pacific.
20. Further to the previous point, China, over the years, has become a major lender to developing countries in the region. However, China is not a member of the “Paris Club” and this would discourage members of the Paris Club to provide capital infusion to reduce and restructure global debt.
21. Economists warn of a looming global debt crisis due to worsening inflation, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, rising interest rates of US federal reserves, and the growing popularity of ‘autarchy’ or economic self-sufficiency among countries.

## SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE



**Figure 5:** Screenshot #1 of pre-event social media marketing on Twitter. The tweets were made from the official twitter handle of the National Maritime Foundation @nmfindia.



Figure 6: Screenshot #2 of pre-event social media marketing on Twitter. The tweets were made from the official twitter handle of the National Maritime Foundation @nmfindia.

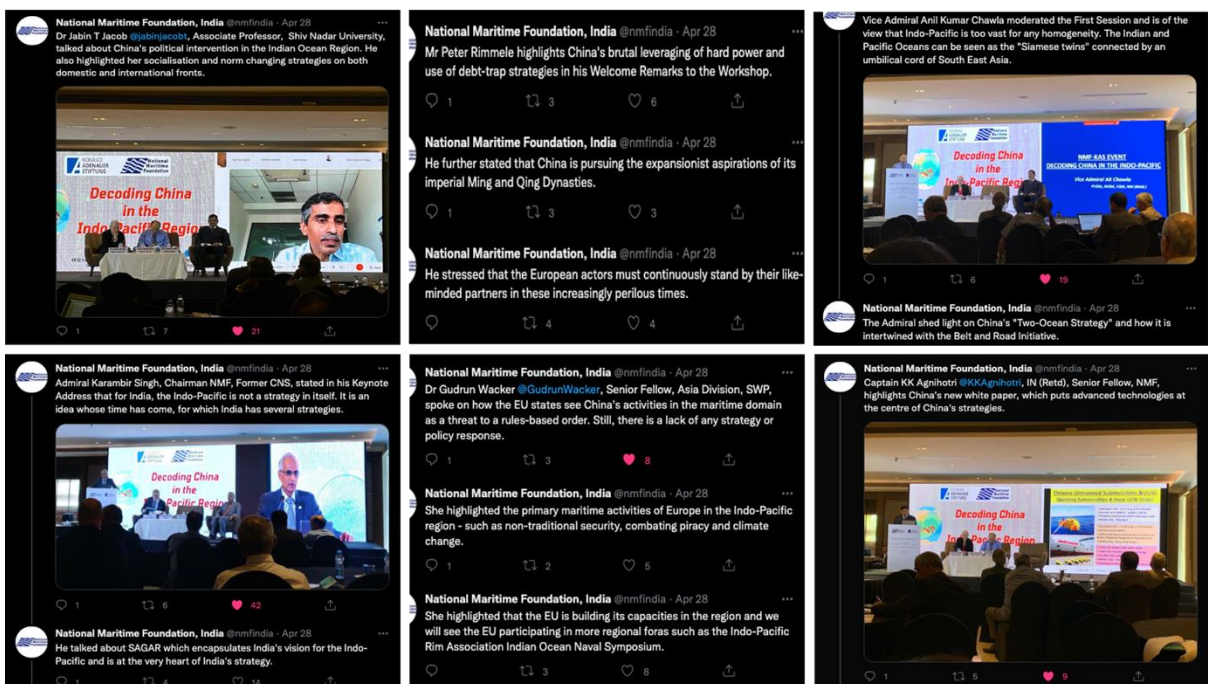
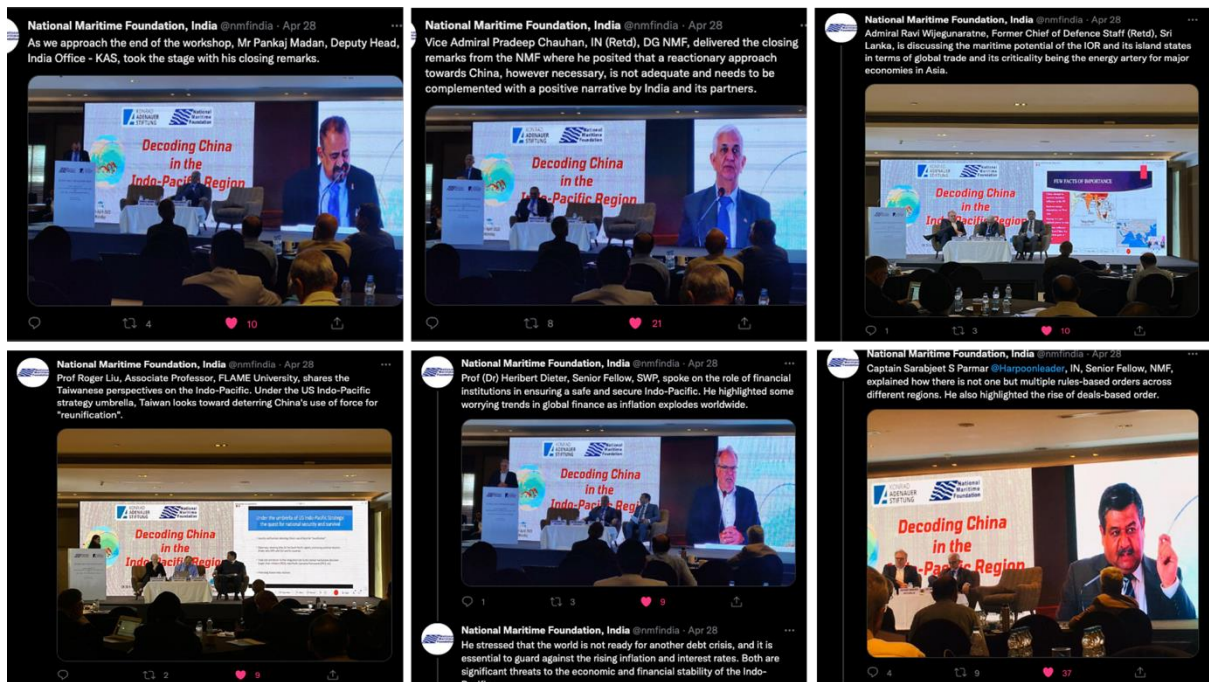


Figure 7: Screenshot #1 of live social media marketing on Twitter during the event. The tweets were made from the official twitter handle of the National Maritime Foundation @nmfindia.



**Figure 8:** Screenshot #2 of live social media marketing on Twitter during the event. The tweets were made from the official twitter handle of the National Maritime Foundation [@nmfindia](https://twitter.com/nmfindia).

**Video Recording:** The two-part recording of the event can be found here [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FCoW8X6fjCV9tVQ1RgEL\\_HU9NxjUgzL/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FCoW8X6fjCV9tVQ1RgEL_HU9NxjUgzL/view?usp=sharing) and here [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CskWK7q9XBBFaZC\\_HvJahr7lJnJWHILU/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CskWK7q9XBBFaZC_HvJahr7lJnJWHILU/view?usp=sharing).

## EVENT REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Indo-Pacific has been experiencing substantial changes, in terms of the ongoing power transition, the struggle to maintain the balance of power founded upon mutually-derived rules-based order, and all related aspects intertwined within the web of economics, commerce and trade. In the midst of such an environment, China is striving hard to evolve into a maritime ‘great power’ through an increasingly forceful approach that appears to be unmindful of national and regional sensitivities.

2. China’s continued expansionist maritime policy, its indulgence in law fare, duly supported by national maritime legislation, and its growing military power, all combine to generate major threats and adversely impact the existing rules-based order. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has also impacted certain maritime security aspects that are important for the region, and thus need deliberation. Consequently, the security concerns of Indo-Pacific are high on their respective national and regional agendas.

3. Against this background, this Workshop was **conducted jointly by the National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and the India Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) on 28 April 2022.** The workshop brought together experts from across the Indo-Pacific to examine, review, and discuss these critical and impactful issues and suggest solutions/ alternatives that could, thereafter, inform national and regional policy. The Workshop comprised two professional sessions, examined the Chinese political and technological influence-building in the maritime domain of the Indo-Pacific Region; and looked at collaborative opportunities to ensure that adequate freedom from maritime coercion and constriction can be exercised by the States within the region.

## **WELCOME REMARKS**

4. **Commodore Debesh Lahiri, Executive Director, NMF**, welcomed all the panellists and participants to the workshop. He set the context for the Workshop by pointing out that any contemporary discussion about geopolitics or geostrategies the World over cannot but substantively involve China. While that country did suffer from the travails imposed upon its people from ill-fated social experiments like the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward; it has corrected its developmental course quite admirably, to essay an incredible growth story. While the Chinese national power continues to grow, the means driving it, as also its intentions in future towards the World at-large continue to be hidden.

5. **Mr Peter Rimmel, Resident Representative (India), KAS**, stated quite candidly in his opening remarks that China was largely seen as a belligerent neighbour in the Indo-Pacific Region. He asserted that the Russia-Ukraine conflict had demonstrated that a stable status-quo in the international order was never to be taken for granted. Therefore, decoding the intentions and strategies of a major player like China was essential to avoid the probability of such conflicts taking place in the Indo-Pacific Region too. He lamented that China's Indo-Pacific vision meant to shape the environment according to its own rules and order. This, in turn, would definitely have an impact on the other regional States, with a similar kind of impact on India as well as Europe. In fact, the very values on which the Indo-Pacific relations of the European Union (EU) are based, are threatened by Chinese expansionism and belligerence.

6. **Admiral Karambir Singh IN (Retd), Chairman, NMF and Former Chief of the Naval Staff**, delivered the keynote address. He highlighted the fact that the rise of China, and its actions and strategies, can be seen as an opportunity to catalyse India and the EU towards formulating joint response strategies; therefore, it was important to decode the intentions of China. India wishes to engage with the other States in an Indo-Pacific that is inclusive, cooperative, open, transparent, and based on a Rules Based Order. This is quite similar to the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy, which rests on the principle that all nations are sovereign and equal. He went on to elaborate that maritime connectivity is the linchpin of States' geo-strategy. However, the same is threatened by China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) wherein agendas of debt traps, debt for equity, debt for sovereignty, and so on, lie hidden. These reflect that China's economic goals are, in fact, not benign, especially towards the smaller countries of the region. He

averred that China was a master of geo-economic coercion; and contemporary examples of the same were Sri Lanka, Tonga, and Laos. He concluded his address by observing that China was quite adept at playing sophisticated mind games vis-à-vis other States that may sometimes be considered as admirable, especially when it comes to the manipulation of information and strategic communication. He asserted that it was all the more important to propagate a common India-EU strategy which is centred on the common belief of inclusivity, freedom, openness, transparency, and which shuns the Cold War ways and provides a vision of the future that is free from political, economic, and military coercion.

## **SESSION I: MARITIME GEOSTRATEGIES IN THE INDO-PACIFIC**

7. **Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla IN (Retd), Former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command**, moderated the opening session. He introduced the contemporary maritime environment in the Indo-Pacific region within which various major players were striving to shape their maritime geostrategies. He highlighted the difference in understanding of the Indo-Pacific concept by various States by way of maps. He averred that while France was the first to release its strategy in 2018, followed by Germany in 2020 and the EU in that order; China's 'Two Ocean Strategy' predated these, as expressed in its 2004 Defence White Paper. He posited that the difference between the West's and China's strategy was that China wished to establish its 'unilateral' interests with scant regard to the rightful interests of other nations. Opining that alliances were the only way to address the China problem and counter the BRI through other bi- and multi-lateral initiatives; he commenced the session by calling upon the eminent speakers to present their viewpoints.

8. **Captain Kamlesh K Agnihotri, IN (Retd), Senior Fellow, National Maritime Foundation**, presented his perspective on the impact of China's high-technology developments in the maritime domain. He posited that the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army's (PLA) operational effectiveness would increase manifold if China was able to leverage certain high technologies in its national, military, and maritime domains. He pointed out the disruptive potential of such high-technologies — like quantum communication (terrestrial and space-based), hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs), anti-ship ballistic missiles, unmanned aerial/ surface vehicles (UAVs/USVs), underwater manned/ unmanned submersibles (UUVs/AUVs), special purpose ships, and electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS)— in future warfare. His 20-minute presentation sought to bring home the point that the PLA Navy with a mandate of 'high seas protection', duly armed with disruptive weapons and all domain unmanned systems, in constant two way hack-proof quantum-based communication with its command posts, ably supported by special purpose ships at sea, and complemented by anti-ship ballistic missiles and hypersonic weapons from land; will tend to pose an overwhelming threat to almost every nation in the Indo-Pacific — barring the US, may be. He cautioned the audience that the consequent corollary to this axiomatic certainty will have the obvious security implications for India as a resident power, and other nations in the Indo-Pacific too.

9. **Dr. Gudrun Wacker, Senior Fellow of Asia Division from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs**, engaged the audience with an exposition on the growing

Chinese maritime influence in the Indo-Pacific, and presented the EU's perspective on the consequent challenges emerging there from. She mentioned that the EU has expressed concern about China's building of artificial islands, as well as its nine dash lines claim in the South China Sea. She lamented that the EU's statements on the Hague's ruling on the Philippines-China case had been rather lame and clearly showed the lack of unity amongst members. However, the EU member States did refute China's claims recently; and the G7 members of EU issued a co-signed statement condemning China's unlawful actions in the South China Sea and its destabilising effect in the Taiwan Strait. She considered the response of the EU more as rhetoric, rather than genuine concerns over the Chinese actions. She did acknowledge that in terms of military activities in the Indo-Pacific, the EU's presence had been weak. However, the situation is being corrected by France, the UK, and Germany sending more naval ships to the western Pacific Ocean to signal the freedom of navigation in the contested region. She summed up that the EU sees the Chinese presence in the Indo-Pacific as a challenge to the rules-based order, as articulated in its recently released Indo-Pacific Strategy. She also exhorted the EU partner countries in the region — like India and Indonesia — to contribute towards making the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy sustainable.

10. **Dr. Jabin T Jacob, Associate Professor, Shiv Nadar University**, shared his view on China's political interventions in the IOR. He argued that China apparently reposes full faith in its perception that the Country has a 'maritime great power' destiny. In order to achieve its perceived destined outcome, China appears to have adopted the two-pronged strategy of creating social influences in its favour through social media blitzkrieg; and also make proactive effort at altering the customary norms in the target country through three warfare strategy — involving media, legal and psychological realms. The deliberate outreach of Chinese Communist Party towards the political parties of other countries is also an important initiative of their overall plan. He presented brief case studies of Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe to support his argument. He stressed that the ultimate aim of China was to create politically infused groups or friendship groups within the general public, intelligentsia, academics, policy makers and the like, to push forward the positive narrative about China.

11. **Prof Roger Liu, Associate Professor, FLAME University**, presented the Taiwanese Perspectives of the Indo-Pacific. He provided historical insights into how Taiwan recognised the Indo-Pacific region traditionally as the Asia-Pacific; and elaborated upon the cultural affinity Taiwan has with the ROK. As a result, there is great congruence between foreign policy initiatives like New Southern Policy (NSP) of Taiwan and New Southbound Policy (NSBP) of Roche pointed out that the word 'Indo' for Taiwan means India; thus enabling Taiwan to impart primacy to India in its Indo-Pacific approach. While acknowledging that Taiwan had overlapping interests with the USA in the South Pacific region, the Country's national strategy could not be practiced with USA's approval. He recommended that Taiwan must have a deeper Indo-Pacific structure, wherein comprehensive trade and commercial framework and economic engagements between regional allies would-be able to thwart inimical designs of certain competitors. He concluded by stating that India was the most important fulcrum that Taiwan wished to leverage against the Chinese designs towards itself and the larger Indo-Pacific.



## SESSION II: FREEDOM FROM MARITIME COERCION AND CONSTRICTION: COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION

12. **Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan (Retd), Director General, NMF**, chaired the second session, wherein the various options and opportunities available to the nations — including collaborative approaches — to exercise freedom from maritime coercion and constriction in the Indo-Pacific were discussed. He stressed the fact that India was a single geopolitical entity, all the way from its land boundaries in the Trans-Himalayas to the Sea. Therefore, violation of India's sovereignty in one part of its territory effectively meant the violation of its entire territory. Somehow, this basic understanding of India's position had eluded the Chinese leaders when the PLA decided to engage in violence at the 'line of actual control' (LAC) in the eastern Ladakh region of India. This Chinese attitude has possibly emerged from its self-concept based on the Middle Kingdom Theory, and directly shapes its contemporary sense of national identity and dealings with other States. He also pointed out that the strategic convergence amongst the countries in the Indo-Pacific, which seek to oppose China's maritime hegemonistic intentions, can be capitalised upon by the EU. In fact, India already has many partnerships of varying hierarchical levels with different EU member States such as Germany and France, with scope for pursuing more. In this context, he also explained that the IPOI Strategic Framework, which has seven interlinked pillars for comprehensive collaboration on development of all maritime aspects related to the Indo-Pacific, has unfortunately not gained the desired traction. The EU could therefore offer to take the lead in certain pillars of the IPOI as a starting point, so as to disallow China from entering these areas. Thereafter it could further be deliberated as to how QUAD may be stitched into the region, to make the regional response strategies even better. With these introductory comments, he invited the distinguished panellists to put forth their views.

13. The first speaker, **Admiral Ravi Wijegunaratne SLN (Retd), Former Chief of Defence Staff, Sri Lanka**, explained the role of Indian Ocean Island States and options available to them for contributing to the Maritime Geopolitics of IOR. He expounded on the historical importance of Sri Lanka in global geopolitics by asserting that Ceylon (sic) was an indispensable part of the maritime history of the Indian Ocean. Admiral Eric Raeder's plan of 'mastering the World' thereby earning the 'World Power' status for Germany, entailed the annexation of major parts of the world including Ceylon. Similarly, Japan had also planned to control the Indian Ocean by controlling Ceylon. He averred that the emerging Chinese interests in the Indo-Pacific were visible for all to see — though they were starkly disclosed to the world by a US defence contractor in terms of 'String of Pearls' construct. He concluded by saying that the Island states in the Indian Ocean must play a major role if the security challenges in the Indian Ocean are to be comprehensively addressed. He also emphasised that it was important for India to have good relations and ongoing maritime cooperation with these island nations for best results. Towards this endeavour, he suggested that the opening of *Karaikal-Jaffna* ferry service, which will enhance the connectivity between the two countries, is a doable initiative in immediate terms.

14. The next speaker, **Prof (Dr) Heribert Dieter, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs**, dwelt into the role of finance organisations in ensuring a safe and secure Indo-Pacific. He acknowledged that Germany's Russia policy has been unstable,

based more on morality as opposed to being based on national interest. He cited Lenin's quote to the effect that, "*there are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen*" to describe the contemporary scenario wherein the world was witnessing exploding inflation, owed primarily to the integration of formerly unequal parts of the global economy into the mainstream economy. He explained that the West had also fuelled the rise of inflation through its embargo and boycott of Russian oil and gas. The unwillingness of Saudi Arabia to entertain President Biden's calls for increasing oil production to stabilise the price of oil was an additional factor in fuelling the price rise of energy. He lamented the fact that the EU was witnessing such a financially precarious moment after nearly ten years — the last being the Greece Crisis in 2010 — with weak economies, high interest rates, and general tendency of countries wanting to become more economically self-reliant.

15. In the third presentation of the session, **Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar, Senior Fellow, NMF**, explored the possible ways and means of balancing varied interpretations of UNCLOS provisions vis-à-vis rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific Region. He explained the world order in conventional terms of a universal construct which forms global governance, shapes influence, regulates relations between nations based on various norms and rules, and is a derivative of the Western approach following second World War. He argued whether the contemporary World was looking at a deals-based order instead, as indicated by AUKUS, as also by India being asked to stop oil importations from Iran, and so on. He posited that the contemporary world was based on three elements: legitimacy — wherein rules are observed by their principle and powerful advocates — equity, and complacency. He pointed out that the UNCLOS' position on rules based order —in and of itself or one under the rules-based international system — is one where it has taken a beating; and has been treated in the opposite way of what its founding fathers intended. He stressed that this was so despite the fact that it was the most successful international convention ever signed —based on the sheer number of signatories and ratifications to the Convention. In conclusion, he questioned whether the UNCLOS provided a base for a rules-based order or was there an East Wind blowing — because of unilateral interpretation of UNCLOS by China to its advantage.

## SPEAKER PROFILES

(In order of their appearance in the Programme)



**Commodore Debesh Lahiri, IN**, Executive Director, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. An alumnus of the Naval Engineering Course (NEC), Naval Engineering College, INS Shivaji, Lonavala and College of Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad, Commodore Debesh Lahiri was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 25 Nov 1988. He is a Marine Engineer by profession and has completed his Master's (MTech) from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai. He has completed a World Bank programme on Alternate Dispute Resolution-Arbitration, Conciliation and Mediation. He was the Deputy Naval Attaché at the Embassy of India, Moscow, and has been at the helm of two Naval ship Repair Yards, at Port Blair and Karwar respectively.

He has a wide experience at sea, having been Engineer Officer on three different types of propulsion, viz. Internal Combustion Engines (Ghorpad), Gas Turbines (Veer) and Steam (Udaygiri, Ganga, Gomati and Beas) and has also been the Fleet Engineer Officer, Western Fleet. He has been Additional General Manager (Quality Assurance and Production) at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, and is well-versed in Human Resource Management, having been Director of Personnel at Naval Headquarters. As Commodore Dockyards, he was responsible for the creation of marine infrastructure in the Navy. He is a fellow of the Institute of Marine Engineers (FIMarE) and his papers have been published by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), International Naval Engineers Conference (INEC), Indian National IC Engines Conference and the Journal of Marine Engineering. He has also authored service papers on matters of importance to the Indian Navy and has written a dissertation on Comprehensive National Power. His articles and poems on Shipbuilding in Ancient India, Energy, Emissions, Environment, Quality Techniques, Leadership and Personnel Management have been published in Naval Despatch, Personnel Update, among several other magazines and periodicals. He is a keen sportsman, weekend-golfer, avid reader and sometimes poet.



**Mr Peter Max Rimmele** is the former Resident Representative of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Office, India. 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 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 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 for 7 years. He was also Principal Advisor Good Governance/Justice Program in Rwanda. Earlier he was Resident Representative Lebanon, Director of Rule of Law Program Middle East North Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.



**Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, IN (Retd)**, who was the Republic of India's 24th Chief of the Naval Staff (31 May 2019 to 30 November 2021), assumed the Chairmanship of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, on 17 January 2022.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, and the College of Naval Warfare, Mumbai, the Admiral was commissioned into the Indian Navy in July of 1980. A Naval aviator of repute, he earned his wings as a helicopter pilot in 1981 and has flown extensively on the Chetak (Alouette Mk III) and several variants of Kamov helicopters. Over the four decades of his sterling service under the Indian Navy's White Ensign, he has commanded the Indian Coast Guard Ship Chandbibi, the guided missile corvette INS Vijaydurg, and two of the Indian Navy's frontline guided-missile destroyers, namely, INS Rana and INS Delhi. He has also tenanted the seagoing appointment of Fleet Operations Officer of the Western Fleet. Ashore, he has served in the Directorate of Naval Air Staff at the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy) and has been Captain (Air) and Officer-in-Charge of the Naval Air Station at Mumbai. On promotion to flag rank, the Admiral distinguished himself as the Chief of Staff of the Eastern Naval Command. His has also done himself and his nation proud while tenanting other critical flag-appointments including Chief of Staff of the Tri-Services Unified Command in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and the Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra and Gujarat Naval Area (FOMAG).

As a Vice-Admiral, he was the Director General, Project Seabird, and oversaw all aspects of the development of the Indian Navy's expansive and modern base at Karwar in India's southern state of Karnataka. Appointed thereafter as the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, he admirably discharged his responsibilities for the Indian Navy's current and future operational and combat capacity and capabilities. He then graced the office of the Vice Chief of Naval Staff, providing lasting value to the development of the "future Navy". He has a rich store of senior command experience and has been the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, with his headquarters at the port-city of Visakhapatnam. He assumed Command of the Indian Navy on 31 May 2019, serving with uncommon distinction until his retirement from active service on 30 November 2021. For his exceptional contribution to the robust development of the nation's defence, the President of the Republic of India twice afforded him public honour through the award of the Ati Vishist Seva Medal, and the Param Vishist Seva Medal.



**Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla, PVS, AVSM, NM, VSM, IN (Retd),** Former Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla was commissioned in the Indian Navy on January 1, 1982. A Navigation and Direction specialist, Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla commanded Coast Guard Ship C-01, the Vinash a missile boat, the missile corvette Kora, Stealth frigate Tabar and the aircraft carrier Viraat. His ashore and staff appointments

include stints at the prestigious National Defence Academy, Centre for Leadership and Behavioural Studies Naval Attaché Jakarta, Senior Instructor (Navy) and HOTT (Navy) at the Defence Services Staff College and Naval Assistant to CNS.

As a Flag Officer, Vice Admiral A.K. Chawla has held critical staff appointments as the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Foreign Cooperation & Intelligence) and the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Policy and Plans) at Naval Headquarters. He was the 28th Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Southern Naval Command (SNC). VAdm A.K. Chawla has also Served as the Chief of Personnel at the Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence, Navy at Delhi. He commanded the Western Fleet from August 16, 2013, to October 1, 2014. On promotion to the rank of Vice Admiral he took over as the Director General Naval Operations on December 31, 2014.

He was awarded the Nausena Medal in 2003 while in command of INS Kora during Operation Parakram, Vishisht Seva Medal on January 26, 2013, and Ati Vishisht Seva Medal on January 26, 2015 and the Param Vishisht Seva Medal on January 26, 2020. He is also a keen environmentalist and was conferred the prestigious ‘Golden Peacock Environment Management Award’ in December 2020. An active contributor to various defence journals, he is currently an Eminent Resource Faculty for the Rashtriya Raksha University and a Distinguished Member of several think tanks, besides being involved in various social and environmental initiatives.



**Captain Kamlesh Kumar Agnihotri, IN (Retd.)** is a Senior Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation (NMF). Prior to this assignment, he was a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS), New Delhi, till his retirement in June 2021. His specialised field of work for last 15 years, has been on Chinese Defense Forces, particularly the Chinese Navy.

The Officer has had a prolonged tenure at NMF earlier too, during which he developed specialised knowledge-base on China and consolidated the same to a great extent. His in-depth knowledge of the China related security matters enabled him to publish four books, and author several research articles in various think tanks’ Journals. His two notable books are: the most recently published one titled **“Leveraging of High Technology Developments by China in Military and Maritime**

**Domain: Impact on the Indian Ocean Regional Security” (2021); and “Strategic Direction of the Chinese Navy: Capability and Intent Assessment” (2015).**

He is a naval missile and Gunnery specialist. He commanded a Landing Craft Utility ship (LCU) at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He has also qualified as a Remote Sensing, satellite imagery interpretation and Photogrammetry analyst. He has also acquired an Advanced Diploma in Chinese language in order to complement his scholarly and research work.



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



**Dr Jabin T Jacob** is Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations and Governance Studies at the Shiv Nadar University, India and Adjunct Research Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. He was formerly Fellow and Assistant Director at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi and Associate Editor of the journal China Report. Jacob holds a PhD in Chinese Studies from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and has spent time as a student / researcher / faculty in Taiwan, France and Singapore.

His research interests include Chinese domestic politics, China-South Asia relations, Sino-Indian border areas, Indian and Chinese worldviews, and centre-province relations in China.

As part of his research, Jacob has travelled in many of India’s border states and visited parts of the country’s disputed borders with China and Pakistan as well as the international borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh. He is a PhD supervisor at the Naval War College, Goa and a regular speaker at various other Indian defence training institutions. He is a member of the editorial boards of the Review for Indian and Asian Studies, Institute for Indian and Southwest Asian Studies of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and of the NMF journal, Maritime Affairs. Jacob’s latest publication is a co-edited volume with Hoang The Anh titled, China’s Search for

'National Rejuvenation': Domestic and Foreign Policies under Xi Jinping (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). Some of his work can be found at <https://indiandchina.com/> and he tweets @jabinjacobt.



**Dr Roger Chi-feng Liu** is Associate Professor of international politics with the Department of Social Sciences, FLAME University. He also serves as the Chairs of International Studies discipline and the Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies (CSSAS FLAME).

Professor Liu earned his Ph.D. in political science from University of South Carolina, and his research interests span political geography, geopolitics/geo-economics, interstate/intrastate conflicts, geographic/quantitative IR methodology, India's foreign policy, and China-India Relations. Dr Liu's recent research focus is on China's policy towards India, India in the Indo-Pacific strategy, great power politics in the context of QUAD (the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in South and Southeast Asia.

Prof. Liu has been actively engaging the Indian academic and policy communities with think tanks and universities such as ORF, Pune University, JNU etc. Dr Liu's opinion and policy pieces have been published on The Diplomat and Taipei Times, as he also participated frequently in major news channels such as CNN-New 18, News X, Raja Sabha TV, Lok Sabha TV, CNBC News 18, as the commentator, panelist or discussant for international politics and foreign policy related topics.



**Vice Admiral Pradeep Chauhan, AVSM & BAR, VSN, IN (RETD)**, Director-General, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, the Defence Services Staff College, the Naval War College, and the National Defence College, with BSc, MSc and MPhil degrees under his belt, Admiral Chauhan, is currently the Director-General of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, which is India's foremost resource centre for the development and advocacy of strategies for the promotion and protection of India's maritime

interests.

The admiral retired on 30 November 2013 after an illustrious, rich, and varied four-decade-long career in the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy. This included a stint in Antarctica, as also a three-year deputation to the Government of Mauritius, where he set up and commanded the Mauritius National Coast Guard. His sea-going service incorporates as many as four command-

appointments. After doing the 42nd NDC, he was the Principal Director of Naval Operations and thereafter went on to command the Indian Navy's sole aircraft carrier of that period, the *Viraat*. As a Rear Admiral, he was the Navy's first Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Foreign Cooperation & Intelligence), where he conceptualised and executed the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). As a Vice Admiral, he has been Chief of Staff of the Western Naval Command; and was, in his last naval appointment before retirement, the Commandant of the Indian Naval Academy (Ezhimala). He has been commended three times by the President of India for sustained distinguished service. Not one to rest on past laurels, he has remained active even after retirement and is a much sought-after thought-leader and leadership mentor. Apart from being on the visiting faculty of the higher-command establishments of all three of India's defence services, as also tri-Service establishments such as the College of Defence Management, Hyderabad and the National Defence College, New Delhi, he has also been advising the government through his interaction with the Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (Navy), the Ministry of External Affairs, and the National Security Council Secretariat. He is, in addition, a prolific writer with over 95 published professional articles and papers, and, a respected Adviser and Fellow of several important think-tanks.



**Admiral Ravindra C. Wijegunaratne (Retired), WV, RWP & Bar, RSP, VSV, USP, NI(M), ndc, psn, MPhil(D&SS), BSc(Hons) WS.**

Admiral Wijegunaratne was the former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of Sri Lanka Armed Forces, the highest position of Sri Lanka Military. He studied at Royal College, Colombo and joined the Sri Lanka Navy as a Cadet on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1980 at the young age of 18 years. He is a recipient of “Best International Midshipman” award in prestigious Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, UK in 1982. His contribution to the Sri Lanka Navy and the country was immense, especially during the conflict time fighting against the terrorist group LTTE.

He is a recipient of Weerodara Vibhushanaya (WV), the highest gallantry medal in Sri Lanka for exceptional gallantry and valour in non-military nature and three more gallantry medals. He is the founder of Sri Lanka Navy Special Boats Squadron (SBS), the Naval Commando unit in 1993. In 2016, as the Commander of the Navy, he raised Sri Lanka Navy Marines with the support of US Marines.

He was the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy for two years and two months and the Chief of the Defence Staff for two years and six months.

He is a recipient of BSc (Hons) War Studies degree from Karachi University, Pakistan and MPhil (Defence and Strategic Studies) degree from Madras University, India.

He was an outstanding sportsman during younger days, winning Sri Lanka Navy Colours in Rugby Football, Sailing and Rowing. He was also, a top marksman and was the President of the National Rifle Association (NRA).



He is married to Yamuna De Saram, the Miss Sri Lanka for Miss Asia Pacific contest 1989 and they have 26 years old son, Sathyajith.

He retired on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020, after 39 years of military service and now enjoying 'organic-farming' in his ancestral home Yatadolawatta, Matugama.



**Prof Dr Heribert Dieter** is Senior Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Visiting Professor of International Political Economy, Zeppelin University, Lake Constance (since 2013) and Adjunct Professor at the University of Potsdam (since 2017). He studied Political Science and Economics at the Free University of Berlin. After his position as a Senior Fellow at the University of Duisburg researching global economy and regional integration he joined the Central European University, Budapest as a visiting Professor in 2004. From 2005 to 2010 he worked as a Coordinator, a Member and Principal Writer of the “Warwick Commission on the Future of the Multilateral Trading System” and a Member and Co-Director of the “Warwick Commission on International Financial Reform” at the University of Warwick. During that time, he also was a visiting Researcher and Professor at the University of Sydney and submitted his habilitation in political science. Besides his current positions he has been Professor and Chair of International Relations at Ruhr University Bochum and Visiting Professor at the Australian National University, Canberra; Murdoch University, Perth. His current research focused on the future of globalization, the consequences of rise of China for the world, bilateralism and plurilateralism in trade governance and Germany’s position in the 21st century’s global economy.



**Captain Sarabjeet Singh Parmar, IN**, Senior Fellow, National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. An alumnus of National Defence Academy (NDA) Khadakwasla, and Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) Wellington, Captain Parmar was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 01 July 1987. He is a Sea King pilot who has commanded two ships and a frontline Sea King Squadron. He was member of the XI Indian Antarctic Summer Expedition in 1991 and has attended the South Asia Regional Governance and Management Defence Course Conducted by the British Government at Colombo in 2005. He represented the Indian Navy in the first international HOSTAC (helicopter operations from ships other than aircraft carriers) conference held at Norfolk, USA in 2008. He has served as Joint Director Naval Plans in Directorate of Naval Planning at IHQ MoD (Navy). He has been Directing Staff at Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington, where he was responsible for the national strategy and international law modules. He was a Research Fellow at the then

Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi from Sep 2010 to July 2014, and looked at maritime strategy and security related issues. Post IDSA he was Director (Strategy) in the Directorate of Strategy Concepts and Transformation at IHQ MoD (Navy) from Jul 2014 to Apr 2016, where as part of the core team revised Indian Navy's unclassified maritime security strategy document and doctrine. From Apr 2016 to Apr 2018, at the Maritime Doctrines and Concepts Centre, as Director Strategic Maritime Assessment and Doctrine Development he carried out regional maritime assessments and completed the doctrine development plan. He has written extensively on maritime security aspects and presented papers at various national and international conferences. He joined the NMF in April 2018 as Senior Fellow and was the Executive Director from 04 June 2019 to 31 January 2022. He is presently a Senior Fellow at the NMF and looks at maritime strategy and security related aspects in the Indo-Pacific, piracy, and international maritime law with a focus on lawfare.



**Dr Piti Srisangnam**, Director, ASEAN Studies Centre, Chulalongkorn University; Assistant Professor of Economics, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University; 2019 Royal Thai Government Scholarships Association Award: Rising Star; 2021 Dongfang Scholars, Peking University, China. Dr Piti Srisangnam holds a PhD degree in Economics from the University of Melbourne (Australia), and an MA Degree in International Economics and Finance from Chulalongkorn University (Thailand). He has been teaching International

Economics and Microeconomics for bachelor and master degree students at Chulalongkorn University since 2002.

He has been Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the Centre for European Studies from 2010 to 2012 and Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the ASEAN Studies Centre in 2012, both at Chulalongkorn University, before he became Director of the Centre in 2013.

He has been selected for the 2019 Rising Star Royal Thai Government Scholarships Association Award: Rising Star. In 2021, he was granted the Dongfang Scholarships to become a visiting scholar at Peking University for 1 semester.

He has published several papers in journals and book, e.g. on the economic development in Southeast Asia, on trade in services among ASEAN member states, on regional economic integration of ASEAN and of the European Union, on the economic reform and SME development in Thailand, on ASEAN-India, ASEAN-China, ASEAN-Japan and ASEAN-ROK relations. Apart from academic works, he also hosts 3 radio programs related to current issues in ASEAN.



projects.

**Mr. Pankaj Madan** has been active with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, India since February 1991. At this juncture, he is the Team Leader Programme and deputises for the Resident Representative to India of KAS as and when the need arises. During his long experience with KAS, he has been responsible for building, maintaining, and enhancing old partnerships while forming new ones with political parties, think tanks, institutions, and personages of repute. He has authored reports on various topics focusing on geo-strategic and geo-economics issues and curated many programmes as well as research

## ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

Located in India's capital, New Delhi, the **National Maritime Foundation (NMF)** is one of India's premier think-tanks and the only one in India that is focused entirely upon the maritime domain and is the foremost resource-centre for the development of strategies for the preservation, promotion, pursuit, and protection of India's maritime interests. The NMF is a 'Track 1.5' institution, with a healthy mix of highly-qualified and experienced uniformed and civilian scholars, who conduct research on a wide range of important strategic, economic, socio-economic, socio-cultural, environmental, scientific, legal, and historical issues in the maritime domain. For more information, visit <https://maritimeindia.org/>. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#) for regular updates about our events and activities.

### **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)**

The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as "Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education", in 1964 the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom, and justice through political education. We promote and preserve free democracy, a social market economy, and the development and consolidation of the value consensus. We focus on consolidating democracy, the unification of Europe, and the strengthening of transatlantic relations, as well as on development cooperation.

The leitmotif of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation "Germany. The next chapter" is supported by a thematic focus. With the three main topics Innovation, Security and Representation, and Participation, it is quite clear which topics the Konrad Adenauer Foundation will focus on in the coming years.

We cooperate with governmental institutions, political parties, and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, we seek to intensify political cooperation in the area of development cooperation on the foundations of our objectives and values. Together with our partners, we make a significant contribution to the creation of a global

order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible manner.

The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung has organized its program priorities in India into five working areas:

1. Foreign and Security Policy
2. Economic, Climate, and Energy Policy
3. Rule of Law
4. Political Dialogue focused on Social and Political Change
5. Media and Youth

The India Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation takes great pride in its cooperation with Indian partner institutions that implement jointly curated projects and programs.