

# PURBASA: EAST MEETS EAST

*Synergising the North-East and Eastern India  
with the Indo-Pacific*



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*Editors*

Lalit Mansingh

Anup K. Mudgal

Udai Bhanu Singh



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Synergising the North-East and Eastern India with the Indo-Pacific

*Editors: Lalit Mansingh, Anup K. Mudgal, Udai Bhanu Singh*

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# Preface

The Kalinga International Foundation (KIF) believes that the eastern and north-eastern regions of India are a seamless, homogeneous sub-region of India, sharing historical and cultural ties over centuries with the Indo-Pacific region.

This was the impulse behind the KIF's flagship conference PURBASA, a word with rich shades of meaning implying the rise of the east, the hopes from the east and the message from the east.

At PURBASA: EAST MEETS EAST, diplomats and scholars representing fifteen countries of the Indo-Pacific region engaged in an intensive dialogue on a wide spectrum of bilateral and regional issues with a galaxy of experts from India, including Ministers, MPs, academics, corporate leaders, former diplomats and military leaders.

The conclave was held, appropriately, in Bhubaneswar, the capital of ancient Kalinga—currently, of the state of Odisha. It was from Kalinga that some of the earliest maritime contacts were made with the Indo-Pacific. The Act East Policy of India has rejuvenated these historic linkages and spurred new initiatives to establish closer linkages with the region through three Cs: Connectivity, Commerce and Culture.

This publication brings out some of the presentations by the experts at the conference and attempts to share the flavour of this remarkable confluence of East with East.

It will be our endeavour to continue the PURBASA dialogue in the times to come.

October 8, 2018

**Amb Lalit Mansingh**  
Chairman  
Kalinga International Foundation (KIF)



# Kalinga International Foundation

The Kalinga International Foundation (KIF) is an independent, non-partisan think tank which seeks to analyse and propose solutions to pressing issues relating to international and national security, international trade, India's foreign policy and regional co-operation. Its vision is for peace and prosperity in the region with the mission to build consensus on solutions for fulfilling these goals. It specialises in the ability to establish strong institutional relationships with experts, academics and concerned citizens and further to network with decision-makers.

KIF brings together, for the first time, the eastern and north-eastern region of India with their proximate neighbours—Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and beyond, with the ASEAN nations and the wider Indo-Pacific region. The States located in India's north-east—Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura and in the east—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar in the south-east, have strong common ties of history, culture, language and customs and traditions from early times. Sailors, merchants, farmers, scholars and artisans from this region travelled overseas and established linkages with the people of South East Asia dating back to the fourth Century BCE. The pioneers among them were the *Sadhavas*, the sailor-merchants of Kalinga, a powerful empire straddling the eastern sea coast of India. The great poet, Kalidasa, in the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE described the King of Kalinga as *Mahodadhipati*, i.e. the Lord of the Oceans.

The *Sadhavas* acted as the messengers of peace and couriers of culture between eastern India and the Indo-Pacific region. Indians to this day, are referred to as *Klings*, *Kalings* or *Kelangs* in South East Asia. Kalinga has, therefore, been used as a metaphor for the historic ties that bind this wider region together.

While drawing inspiration from the past, the focus of the KIF will be on the potential for developing new and robust partnerships between India and

the countries of the region. India's eastern region is richly endowed with natural and human resources. It is also a vast repository of rich cultural and spiritual heritage. The potential for trade, investments, tourism and joint ventures is enormous.

Since the Look East Policy was announced in 1992, India has concluded strategic partnerships not only with individual member states but collectively with ASEAN. Under the current 'Act East Policy', a new dynamism and vigour has been introduced in India's foreign policy towards the Indo-Pacific region.

The KIF aspires to play a catalytic role in creating valuable linkages within the region. It will work collaboratively with the Central and State Governments, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, with India's missions abroad and foreign diplomatic missions in India and other think tanks and institutions that share its objectives.

Our dialogues with partner countries will revolve around five major clusters of issues:

1. Political cooperation
2. Trade and investments
3. Strategic cooperation
4. Energy security ; and
5. Cultural connectivity and heritage tourism

Over the coming months, the Foundation proposes to organise seminars, conferences and outreach programmes in New Delhi, in State capitals and in selected venues abroad.

As we launch this new endeavour, I seek your valued co-operation and support for the success of our mission.

**Amb Lalit Mansingh**  
Chairman - Kalinga International Foundation

# Introduction

The Indo-Pacific presents many possibilities and challenges today. India's East and Northeast has had a civilisational connect with other cultures both overland and through the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean for centuries. India's Act East Policy, has extended India's vision beyond ASEAN to the larger Indo-Pacific region which consolidates the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and the Western Pacific Region (WP) into a singular regional construct. How should the relationship between India and countries of the region develop in this period of geopolitical flux in the wider Indo Pacific?

The Indo-Pacific which accounts for over 3 billion of the world's population and almost 50 per cent of the global GDP features prominently in India's foreign policy. India, especially its eastern seaboard overlooking the Bay of Bengal, seeks to achieve peace and security through the promotion of the 3Cs—Commerce, Connectivity and Culture.

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit (January 25, 2018) themed 'Shared Values, Common Destiny' was attended by the ten Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Heads of State or Government. Earlier, all South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) leaders had been invited by Prime Minister Modi at the swearing-in ceremony in May 2014. In an article published in Straits Times (Singapore) on the theme of Shared Values, Common Destiny he wrote, "We have a common vision for the future, built on commitment to inclusion and integration, belief in sovereign equality of all nations irrespective of size, and support for free and open pathways of commerce and engagement."

The Commemorative Summit issued the 36-para Delhi Declaration. It captures India's commitment to work closely with ASEAN to uphold respect for international law, primacy of United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Seas (UNCLOS), freedom of navigation and overflights in the region,

peaceful resolution of disputes and an early conclusion of the Code of Conduct (CoC) in the South China Sea.

India's Look East Policy (LEP) enunciated in 1992 under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's leadership matured over the years with India's deepening engagement with the ASEAN process. India first became a sectoral dialogue partner and went on to become a full dialogue partner of ASEAN (before China did). In 2012 the ASEAN India Vision Statement raised the partnership to the strategic level. The structural foundation (laid in the LEP phase) was hampered by tardy implementation. It was at the 12th India-ASEAN Summit in Naypyitaw in November 2014 that Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that India's Look East policy had been upgraded to an Act East policy. India now has a dedicated mission to ASEAN (in Jakarta) and the ASEAN India Centre (in New Delhi). The ASEAN leaders were given an assurance that the projects on the India-Myanmar border would be speeded up and trade policy improved. At the Global Investors' Summit- 'Advantage Assam' in Guwahati in February 2018, Mr Modi said "We created the Act East Policy and the Northeast is at the heart of it." Besides, Bangladesh became the first country to open a consulate in Guwahati and Bhutan the second. India has emphasised engagement with the immediate and extended neighbourhood. There were high level visits to Myanmar, Vietnam, Singapore, Japan, Australia and Fiji. PM Modi had said: "India's Act East starts with Bangladesh". This was further buttressed by India's engagement with the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the Ganga-Mekong Cooperation Initiative. In addition, India brought together the Pacific islands at the 2nd Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit, Jaipur in August 2015.

India sees a role for itself in shaping the emerging Security and Economic Architecture, including forums like the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) — evident in the India-US Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region (January, 2015). However, India's involvement in the RCEP process and the ADMM Plus is yet to be fully exploited.

The first part of the book includes chapters pertaining to the Inaugural Session, held on the first day of the Conference (March 16, 2018) at Mayfair

Lagoon, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The session began with Welcome Remarks by Ambassador Lalit Mansingh (Chairman of the Kalinga International Foundation). Second, a detailed Report of Proceedings captures the highlights of the session that included speeches (by Assam Minister Mr C.M. Patowary, Union Minister Mr Dharmendra Pradhan and the Minister of Buddha Sasana of Sri Lanka, Hon. Gamini Jayawickrama Perera) and a cultural extravaganza in the form of a dance-ballet. Finally, the glittering session concluded with the Vote of Thanks by Ms. Shreerupa Mitra.

The second part of the book is devoted to the proceedings of the Academic Sessions. It included separate sessions on Economic Cooperation; Maritime Connectivity and Security in the Indo-Pacific, Regional Connectivity (two sessions); Energy Cooperation; Connecting Women, Youth and Civil Society; Tourism, Culture, Buddhism; India's Bilateral Relations with Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indonesia and ASEAN in general, and Japan: Valedictory which included speeches by Lalit Mansingh and Ajarn Sulak Sivaraksa and finally the Valedictory Address by the Governor of Odisha, His Excellency Dr. S.C. Jamir. The book concludes with 'The Purbasa Conference: A Critical Evaluation' by Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia.

## **Economic Cooperation**

India and ASEAN have a combined population of 1.8 billion or one-fourth of the world's population and a combined GDP which exceeds \$4.5 trillion. Yet, China had a decisive edge in the Indo-Pacific with its \$12 trillion economy and \$450 billion trade with ASEAN and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China has a growing economic and political presence in the Pacific islands too. This is marked by a perceived US withdrawal from the region and its abandonment of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). That inevitably puts the focus on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The 16 RCEP negotiating parties who are working towards concluding their negotiations have to narrow their differences on competition, intellectual property rights and rules of origin; and table revised offers for services and investment. But given the Chinese influence in the region, there is also a tacit acceptance of China's leadership role in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

PM Modi at World Economic Forum (WEF) Davos (January 2018) spoke

against the trend towards protectionism. China's BRI uses ASEAN as a market for its exports and investment. By 2025 India will be the fifth largest consumer market and ASEAN will have 163 million strong Middle Class. By 2020 India could potentially reap the demographic dividend when it will become the world's youngest country (with an average age of 29). India's fast growing internet user base and a growing digital economy could indicate a role for India in the Indo-Pacific.

At the summit level, relations with ASEAN have been growing since 2002. The ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, which went into effect in 2010, promises to increase trade between the two sides to \$200 billion by 2022. A new milestone in the relationship has been the India-ASEAN Agreement on Trade in Services and Agreement on Investment. ASEAN is India's fourth largest trade partner, India is ASEAN's seventh. Although India-ASEAN trade has grown 25 times in as many years, at \$70 billion (2016-17) the potential is yet to be fully exploited. The current record of investment is less than adequate. India accounts for only 1.8 per cent of FDI inflows into ASEAN during 2010-2016. In fact, the Prime Minister of Singapore urged ASEAN and India to redouble efforts to promote trade and investment.

The Academic Sessions began with the session on Economic Cooperation, highlighting the key role economics has come to play in international relations. V.S. Seshadri explores some aspects of India's trade cooperation with East and South East Asia. He also points out some of key steps India needs to take to derive benefit from the FTAs. Ton Sinh Thanh (Ambassador of Vietnam) strikes a note of caution as he flags the challenges that stand in the way of improved cooperation between the two regions. Anil Wadhwa notes that development of the North East India is required for an alternative model to China's Belt and Road Initiative to be crafted. Palitha Kohona concludes that greater economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region including through China's BRI could be a force for the good. Prabir De while discussing Indo Pacific connectivity, emphasizes the need for a bottoms-up approach of developing regional supply chains rather than a top-down approach imposed by governments, as a more effective way to regional integration.

## **Maritime Connectivity and Security in the Indo-Pacific**

In considering Maritime Connectivity, Trade and Security are but two sides of the same coin. Session II devoted to Maritime Connectivity and Security in



the Indo-Pacific addressed the concerns of all those countries of the region whose very economic sustainability depends on secure sea lanes of communications and in devising common strategies to deal with potential threats and instability.

From India's perspective, security is a prerequisite for internal cohesion, economic development, and consolidation. India's primary interest is to create an enabling external environment for the economic progress of the country. Unless there is regional security, economic development cannot be envisaged.

It is in this context that New Delhi's emphasis on the potential of the Blue Economy becomes relevant. The Blue Economy includes economic activities pertaining to sustainable development of resources and assets in the oceans, related rivers, water bodies and coastal regions in a manner that ensures equity, inclusion, innovation and modern technology. Prime Minister Modi in fact likened the blue chakra or wheel in India's national flag to the potential of Blue Revolution or the Ocean Economy in the coastal areas organically linked to the hinterland and the PM's vision of 'Security And Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR). The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) can be effective mediums for pursuing the vision of the Blue Economy.

China's military and economic rise is being closely monitored in the region. When China rejected the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling of July 2016 which went against it in the Philippine-China dispute in the South China Sea, it was seen as a blow to the rules-based global order. India remains concerned as the bulk of its trade is via maritime routes and thus requires freedom of navigation and the security of sea lanes of communication. Even though India is not a party to any of the disputes in the South China Sea, it has a significant stake in the stability of the region because any conflict would disrupt the flow of trade and supplies. In contrast, in a similar maritime dispute between India and Bangladesh, in July 2014 when the court awarded Bangladesh 19,467 square kilometers of sea area in the Bay of Bengal, New Delhi readily accepted the decision.

To address challenges in the maritime domain, the Indian Navy has stepped up its activities in regional waters. The Indian Navy released its maritime security

strategy *Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy* at the Naval Commanders' Conference in October 2015, which replaced and updated the 2007 strategy. India was a founding member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). It also founded the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2009, which provides a forum to discuss issues that have a bearing on maritime security in the Indian Ocean region. Moreover, the Indian Navy has adopted a proactive approach to maritime security by organizing the 2016 International Fleet Review (its second ever) and the latest March 2018 Milan ("confluence") exercises in the Bay of Bengal.

Non Traditional Security challenges in the Indian Ocean region require joint defence responses to the common problems of environmental degradation/ climate change, and resource wars (especially over food and water). While bilateral agreements help in mitigating these challenges, due to the trans-border nature of most of these problems often resort to multilateral agreements and regimes is more effective. India's business links have a glorious past which is best exemplified by the fact that the Kalingas traded with the East some 2000 years ago.

R.K. Dhowan in his opening remarks introduces India's essentially maritime character while emphasizing the need for synergy in waterways connectivity, maritime security, in the Indo-Pacific region. He also advocates freedom of navigation, adherence to international law, peace, safety and security of the waterways. P.K. Singh highlights the security challenges of maritime connectivity in the context of China's grand design for dominance through its Belt and Road Initiative. The Sri Lankan view on maritime security has been articulated by Jayanath Colombage who sees Indian Ocean become increasingly a place for strategic competition wherein a maritime cold war is unfolding. He supports a maritime 'code of conduct' and a greater role for existing organisations like IORA and BIMSTEC in building a rule based order. Aruna Gopinath of Malaysia brings out the element of security cooperation between India and ASEAN especially through ASEAN-led mechanisms. Vietnam's Vo Xuan Vinh explains the Indo-Pacific concept, India's perception of it, and the place of South China in it. Myanmar's Naing Swe Oo highlights Myanmar Navy's role in the rapidly changing maritime security scenario in the Indian Ocean. Dhruv Jaishankar traces the maritime history to highlight robust sea based trade and the change that the arrival of the Europeans brought about to the security and the economic architecture of the region. With exponentially

growing challenges, India is emerging as a security provider in the Indian Ocean region. In a Closing Remarks the chairman refers to Indian initiatives for development of the maritime domain (through SAGAR and Project Mausam) by harnessing the Blue Economy.

## **Regional Connectivity**

The future of the Indo-Pacific region is going to be greatly impacted by the enlarged connectivity. Hence, the Challenges of Regional Connectivity deserve greater attention. Two important projects on the Indo-Myanmar border nearing completion are: the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar Thailand Trilateral Highway. Great potential exists for border trade through the Northeast region. Four Northeastern States: Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland share 1,643 kms of border with Myanmar. At present the existing Land Customs Station (LCS) between India and Myanmar suffers from lack of infrastructure, when compared with Myanmar's other border points - such as the Sino-Myanmar and Thai-Myanmar. Rail connectivity through the Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) network once the missing links on the Myanmar and Indian sides are completed, would bring an immense improvement in connectivity. Air connectivity through the major cities of the region, to Eastern India is still inadequate. Digital connectivity could be India's USP given India's experience.

Given the importance of Regional Connectivity two separate sessions were devoted to it—chaired by S.D. Muni and Baladas Ghoshal respectively. Arvinder Lamba underlines the fact that connectivity of India's Northeast with the region would be a gamechanger. Rajiv Bhatia concerns the challenge of regional connectivity with a focus on a two decade old—BIMSTEC. Rizal Abdul Kadir's paper provides a sharp critique of India's Look East/Act East policy from a Malaysian perspective and suggests the way forward. Sonu Trivedi enumerates in some detail the connectivity corridors designed as development corridors between Northeast India and Myanmar.

The second part of Regional Connectivity focuses on the role perceptions play in developing connectivity, or ideational connectivity. It deals with the response of countries to the emerging security scenario and the evolving geopolitical and structural changes. Baladas Ghoshal opined that ideational connectivity is the key to linking the regions, peoples, values and cultures.

Udai Bhanu Singh then carries the discussion further by providing an Indian perspective on regional security challenges and connectivity. Mustafizur Rahman emphasises the importance to Bangladesh's economy of connecting to India's North East. Shankari Sundararaman argues how connectivity would help overcome some of the security challenges. Connectivity and enhanced economic cooperation would be aided by the communication revolution. Yet challenges will continue to persist. Harsh Pant indicates that India's geopolitical and economic interests in the region can be best served by reimagining a role for itself and engaging with different nations.

### **Energy Cooperation**

Energy cooperation has become important for the Indo-Pacific in the face of exponential rates of energy consumption, the declining hydro-carbon reserves and the uncertain security situation in West Asia. States seek to secure multiple energy sources and identify multiple sources of supply. For instance, although India sources its oil and gas primarily from West Asia, it is looking to Vietnam, Myanmar and other sources in the Indo-Pacific. The session on Energy Cooperation addresses regional cooperation in both conventional and non-conventional sectors. According to Prabhat Singh we have entered a 'Golden Age of Gas'. Govind Pokhrel on the other hand emphasises the need for tapping the renewable hydro-potential resource.

### **Women, Youth and Civil Society**

People to People connectivity is an important part of India's ties with the region. It is in this context that the session on 'Connecting Women, Youth and Civil Society' assumed significance. The two important sectors which could play an important role in this are- promoting health and education along the India-Myanmar border. In addition, significantly, India has a six million strong diaspora in the ASEAN region alone. This somewhat complex, multidimensional subject has been put across ably by three women panelists representing the two regions. Mary Teresita Daza (Ambassador of the Philippines to India) provides a twin perspective on the role of women: the Philippines' perspective and the ASEAN perspective. Alana Golmei sees an opportunity in the Act East Policy which could provide better connectivity to the people of the North East to link with the people of South East Asia as they share common interest, culture and beliefs. Finally, Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai's paper studies

Divine Feminine deities (Durga, Tara, Sophia and others) from India to Southeast Asia and beyond that are revered in diverse religious and folk cults. She attempts to highlight this diversity through oral tradition and mark its relevance in contemporary times.

### **Tourism, Culture, Buddhism**

There was a tremendous intermingling of India and the Pacific region civilisationally which was primarily commercial and cultural. The session on Tourism; Culture; Buddhism delves in to the common civilisational strands which serve to both bind us and provide the richness of diversity. Kalidas Nag wrote a book on India and the Pacific World (1941) while Jawaharlal Nehru had foreseen the decline of the Atlantic in his *Discovery of India* in 1944. The Kalinga and Chola influence is still visible in Southeast Asia- the earliest beginning of India's Look East Policy. But, the cultural connect between India and the Indo-Pacific is not limited to the past. In the contemporary period the exchange has been a two way process, whether through the Bollywood cinema, social media and the internet, the books or the Universities although it is yet to be fully documented.

The Indian mainland was the source of successive waves - of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam- footprints of which are visible even today in Southeast Asia. Imprints of these influences can be seen today in Borobudur, Angkor Wat and equally in the intangible cultural heritage. These cultures adopted Hindu icons while continuing to follow the principal tenets of Islam. It is the spread of Buddhism from India that has had the most lasting influence in the region where it blossomed into a living faith. Buddhism continues to play a major role in linking the region. Tourism, culture and Buddhism are closely intertwined in the Indo-Pacific. Paramjit S. Sahai with many years' diplomatic experience has laid out clearly the steps to carry out cultural diplomacy and promote people to people relations. Benudhar Patra shows how maritime history of Kalinga is preserved in South East Asian traditions and makes a case study of Kalinga and Java in Indonesia. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai (her second paper in this book) attempts to document the connectivity across intangible cultural traditions of South and Southeast Asia. Finally, Jatin Das provides an artist's view of the cultural similarities that exist between Odisha and Bali and bring the regions close together.

## **Bilaterals: India's Most Favoured Nations**

The most crucial yet the most difficult relationships are the bilateral relationships India has with its immediate neighbours. V. Suryanarayan reminds us that we can choose our friends but not our neighbours. He points to the shared heritage of India and Sri Lanka relations, and the need to build mutual trust and understanding. Sidharto S. Suryodipuro welcomes the crescendo in India-Indonesia bilateral relations but also warns that we must learn from past mistakes and avoid indifference. Pinak Chakravarty, having served in Bangladesh as India's High Commissioner and in Thailand as India's Ambassador, is most suitably placed to comment on India's relations with these two countries. In his paper on India-Bangladesh ties he point out that there are over 50 bilateral institutional mechanisms in place. But, as the two countries head for elections in 2018 and 2019 respectively, domestic issues could come to the forefront and affect bilateral ties (especially the issue of illegal migration and the National Register of Citizens in Assam; and the sharing of river waters). Pinak Chakravarty's second paper, on India-Thailand relations points out that Thailand is India's natural ally given the rapidly evolving geo-strategic scenario in which China's influence in the neighbourhood is increasing. Moe Kyaw Aung, Ambassador of Myanmar in India, feels that while his country stands as a bridge between South and Southeast Asia, trading volume between India and Myanmar was below potential.

Deepa G Wadhwa, India's former Ambassador to Japan points to the synergy that exists between India's Act East Policy and Japan's Free and Open Pacific strategy although there is still considerable distance to be covered. Chitranganee Wagiswara, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India, while acknowledging ancient cultural ties with India, notes that it is China which plays an important role in Sri Lanka's economic development.

The penultimate chapter Valedictory Session includes the Special Address by Lalit Mansingh, the Valedictory Message by Ajan Sulak Sivaraksa and the Valedictory Address by the Governor of Odisha, Dr SC Jamir.

The final chapter 'The Purbasa Conference: A Critical Evaluation' by Rajiv Bhatia analyses the outcome of the three day deliberation in Bhubaneswar from a critical perspective and concludes that the mission, for peace and prosperity in the region, undertaken by Kalinga International Foundation (KIF) is aptly served through the process of consensus building in such dialogues.

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The views expressed in the papers are those of the participants in the Conference (and not necessarily to the institution to which they belong) and have been reproduced without any significant change. We compliment them for their contribution. We must thank the four Rapporteurs during the Conference: Mr Jayadev Parida, Dr Mathew Sinu Simon, Ms. Divisha Srivastava and Mr Pfokehrii Pekosii for their valuable contribution.

Bhubaneswar, provided the right setting and ambience for issues that were at times contentious, to be discussed and debated in a frank yet relaxed manner. We thank the Chairpersons of the eight sessions: Prof Rajat Nag (Session I), Admiral RK Dhowan (Session II), Prof SD Muni (Session III), Prof Baladas Ghoshal (Session IV), Amb Neelam Deo (Session V), Mr Sabyasachi Dutta (Session VI), Amb Lalit Mansingh (Session VII), and Amb Pinak Chakravarty (Session VIII). Our gratitude to Ms. Preeti Singh, who copyedited the manuscript at short notice. Finally, a word of thanks to Mr. Rajan Arya and his team in the Pentagon Press for their professional efficiency in bringing out this book.

