



INDIA FORUM ON **CHINA** @ MUMBAI

4th-6th December 2023



The BRI Transformed ? China's New Global Initiatives on **'Development', 'Security' & 'Civilization'**





CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

02 **CONFERENCE CONCEPT NOTE**

MONDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2023

12 Noon onwards:

Arrival / Check-in and Registration

03-04 **INAUGURAL SESSION**

1730 - 1900 Hours

▶ **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

▶ **CONGRATULATORY REMARKS
BY SHRI SHARAD PAWAR**

TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2023

05-08 **Session 1**

1000 – 1100 Hours

The Global Development Initiative - I

08-10 **Session 2**

1130 – 1300 Hours

The Global Development Initiative - II

11-13 **Session 3**

1400 – 1530 Hours

The Global Security Initiative - I

14-16 **Session 4**

1600 – 1730 Hours

The Global Security Initiative - II

WEDNESDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2023

Session 5

0930 – 1130 Hours

17-19 The Global Civilization Initiative

20 **VALEDICTORY SESSION**

1200 – 1300 Hours

21-22 **ABOUT THE ORGANISERS & FUNDING PARTNERS**



6TH INDIA FORUM ON CHINA @ MUMBAI

4th-6th December 2023
Nehru Centre, Worli, Mumbai

THE BRI TRANSFORMED ? CHINA'S NEW GLOBAL INITIATIVES ON 'DEVELOPMENT', 'SECURITY' & 'CIVILIZATION'

Concept Note

Over the course of the past three years, China has unveiled a set of three key propositions that experts believe would shape its foreign policy in the coming years: **Global Development Initiative (GDI 2021)**, **Global Security Initiative (GSI 2022)** and **Global Civilization Initiative (GCI 2023)**. Together, the three initiatives encapsulate China's approaches to the world economy, international security and its preferred political values. Beijing seems to be articulating a world with Chinese characteristics, even as it contends with myriad domestic economic and social problems, as well as remains at a distance from the US in terms of global military might or economic influence. These three initiatives are however, important, precisely because of China's willingness to promote them despite the drawbacks or weaknesses. It is necessary for scholars and analysts to understand these initiatives and how they scale up from the Belt and Road Initiative, instead of simply dismissing them or assuming them to be more of the same.

Like previous IFCs, the 6th IFC will take a multi-layered and policy-oriented approach to analysing and debating a wide array of themes related to China's approach to international politics and global governance. Under the rubric of the GDI, GSI and GCI, the conference will revisit China's projects as well as narratives on connectivity, the environment, science & technology, history, political systems and global values, among other things. Bringing together some of the finest minds in China Studies from within India and across the world, the various sessions of the Forum will offer a nuanced and in-depth discussion of China's three global initiatives. How does one understand the GDI amidst the backlash against the BRI? What implications does China's alternative security architecture have, on and for existing regional and global security architecture? How does Chinese political culture condition its approach to global values and norms? Can these initiatives be merely understood as China seeking leadership of the efforts by the Global South to 'de-center' the global governance framework? Or are they more properly understood as part of China's structural rivalry with the US, India, EU and other democracies? These are some of the significant questions upon which the 6th IFC will deliberate.

DAY ONE
Monday, 4 December 2023

12 Noon onwards: Arrival/Check-in and Registration

INAUGURAL SESSION

1730 - 1900 Hours

CHAIR & WELCOME REMARKS



Alka Acharya is Professor and Chairperson at the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and since August 2022, she has also assumed charge as Honorary Director of the ICS, an independent research institute in New Delhi. She has been teaching courses on Chinese Foreign Policy and Political Economy to the Masters and MPhil students and guiding doctoral research since 1993. From April 2012 to March 2017, she was on deputation as full-time Director and Senior Fellow of the Institute of Chinese Studies. She is the joint editor of the book *Crossing a Bridge of Dreams: 50 Years of India and China*, has contributed chapters to many books and journals. She was Editor of the quarterly journal *China Report* from 2005-2013. She was nominated by the Indian government as a member of the India-China Eminent Persons Group (2006-2008) and member of the National Security Advisory Board of the Government of India for two terms (2006-2008) and (2011-2012). She has authored a book *China & India: Politics of Incremental Engagement*, published in 2008. Her recent work is an edited volume titled *Boundaries and Borderlands: A Century after the 1914 Simla Convention* (Routledge, New York 2023). Her current research focuses on India-China-Russia Trilateral Cooperation.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Engaging with China: Options and Strategies



Ajit Ranade is the Vice-Chancellor of the Pune-based Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, a 93-year-old institution and a Deemed University under the UGC Act of Government of India. Ranade's thirty-three-year career has spanned both academic and corporate assignments. Prior to joining Gokhale Institute, he was Group Executive President and Chief Economist with the Aditya Birla Group, an Indian multinational conglomerate, with \$ 60 billion turnovers. Ranade has been a member of the executive committees of apex industry chambers CII and FICCI. After completing his PhD in Economics from Brown University, Ranade has

taught at universities in the U.S. and in India and has published articles in scholarly journals. He has been a member of the board of several companies and trusts. He writes regularly in the business press on economics and current topics. He is a co-author of an award-winning book *Rising to the China Challenge* (2021). Ranade is co-founder and trustee of Association for Democratic Reforms, a citizen watchdog body. He is a Trustee of Pune International Centre, and an Honorary Senior Fellow at the Takshashila Institution. Ranade holds a BTech in Electrical Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, and is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from IIT Bombay in 2009.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS



Shri Sharadchandra Govindrao Pawar, popularly known as Sharad Pawar, is the former Union Minister of Defence (1991-93) in Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Cabinet. During his tenure Mr. Pawar made the first ever visit by a Defence Minister of India to China in July 1992. In this visit, it was agreed to develop academic, military, scientific and technological exchanges between the two countries. Pawar's China visit later fructified in the signing of the Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the India-China Border area on 7th September 1993. As the Minister of Defence, he also advocated the role of the private sector to improve productivity of weapons, in the defence modernization process. This culminated in the participation of private players like the TATA group in India's Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme – later renamed as 'Tejas' during the Vajpayee government. Pawar is also the first Defence Minister of India to visit the Siachen region and boost the morale of the Indian soldiers.

VOTE OF THANKS



Aravind Yelery is an Associate Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Before that, he was a Senior Research Fellow (Associate Professor Grade) at Peking University, Beijing/Shenzhen. He taught and curated courses for PKU and selected universities globally, and at a few Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in India. In 2019, he won the Best Courseware Project Funds Award at Peking University. Yelery is also a Visiting Faculty at the Fudan School of Management, Shanghai. Before joining PKU, he was an Associate Fellow and Assistant Director at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi, India. Yelery holds a PhD in Chinese Studies with a particular interest in Political Economy. He has co-edited *Tailspin: The Politics of India-China Economic Relations* (London: Routledge, 2021) and authored *China Inc.: Between State Capitalism and Economic Statecraft* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2021).

1900 – 2030 Hours: Welcome Dinner

DAY TWO

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

SESSION 1

1000 - 1100 Hours

The Global Development Initiative – I

CHAIR



Rajat Kathuria is the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Professor of Economics at Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence. He is the former Director and Chief Executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER). He worked with the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India during its Initial years. He is currently the co-chair of the T20 Digital Task Force under India's G20 Presidency. Rajat has a cumulative experience of over 25 years in teaching and in economic policy, besides research interests on a range of issues relating to regulation and competition policy. He has worked with the

World Bank, Washington DC as a Consultant and carried out research assignments for several international organizations, including ILO, UNCTAD, LIRNEasia and ADB. Besides publishing in international and national journals, he has also published in popular magazines and newspapers. He is a founder member of the Broadband Society for Universal Access and has served on the Boards of the Delhi Management Association and the Micro Finance Institutional Network of India. He is on several government and industry committees and has been on the Research Advisor Council of SBI. He has an undergraduate degree in Economics from St. Stephens College, a Master's degree from the Delhi School of Economics, and a PhD from the University of Maryland, College Park.

SPEAKERS



Rajiv Ranjan is an Assistant Professor of Chinese Studies at the Department of East Asian Studies in University of Delhi. He is also an Adjunct Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi. He co-authored *Jìndài dōngfāng guójiā de biàngé*, Jinan University Press, China, 2020 and co-edited *China and South Asia: Changing Regional Dynamics, Development and Power Play*, which was published by Routledge in 2021. He has published in *Critical Sociology*, *Global Environmental Politics*, *Economics and Political Weekly*, *Contemporary International Relations*, *Millennium: Journal of International Relations*, *International Affairs*, etc.

Global Development Initiative and Sustainable Development Goals: Casting 'Chinese Ideology' in Developmental Leadership

ABSTRACT

At the 76th session of the UN General Assembly in 2021, Xi Jinping proposed the GDI to augment the SDGs 2030 Agenda. However, when studied comprehensively, the GDI appears to be restructuring this agenda, to cast Chinese normative framework in developmental diplomacy and thereby leverage China's engagement with the 'Global South'. Since the turn of the century, China has been pushing to project itself as a "responsible" global leader and in recent years has attempted to take development cooperation as a 'duty' under the broader framework of South-South Cooperation. Although the GDI largely echoes the SDG agenda, it aims to project and consolidate Chinese vision of development and construct an ideological framework that supports Chinese narratives. This paper aims, first, to examine the GDI framework within the SDG, to bring out the compatible and conflictive propositions. Secondly, it argues that by aligning the GDI with the SDG, China portrays itself as a 'responsive' power that is comfortable with the existing world order led by the UN. Thirdly, it examines the contours of GDI to suggest that China is re-calibrating its diplomacy. Finally, given that developmental partnerships today are driven more by great power rivalries, the paper maintains that the GDI is one of many Chinese diplomatic strategies to support China 'going global'.



Dilini Pathirana holds a Bachelor of Laws Degree and a Master of Laws Degree from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. After completing the Final Examination for the Admission of Attorneys at Law conducted by the Sri Lanka Law College in 2010, she was admitted and enrolled as an Attorney-at-Law of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka. Since 2009, she has worked as a faculty member in the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, where she teaches International Investment Law and Company Law at the undergraduate level and International Economic Law at the post-graduate level. In 2015, she secured a Chinese Government Scholarship to pursue her doctorate at the China University of Political Science and Law, where she obtained a PhD in International Law, specializing in International Investment Law. Her doctoral studies focused on the much-disputed Chinese investments in Sri Lanka, unpacking their legal and policy issues and geopolitical concerns.

The Legal Implications of Chinese Investments in Sri Lanka: A Critical Discussion on the Colombo Port City Project

ABSTRACT

Chinese-funded infrastructure development projects in Sri Lanka, commonly referred to as 'Chinese investments' in Sri Lanka, have gained heightened attention in the recent past. These development initiatives have often been explained in two main narratives: debt-trap diplomacy and geopolitical manoeuvring. It is however doubtful whether these two frequently used narratives can provide a complete picture of Chinese investments in Sri Lanka. This is because legal frameworks applicable to the disputed Chinese-funded infrastructure development projects are crucial in understanding their very nature and acclaimed benefits and/or potential threats. Against this

backdrop, this presentation sheds light on the legal frameworks applicable to Colombo Port City in Sri Lanka- the country's most prominent Chinese direct investment aimed at building an ultra-modern city on a reclaimed landfill near the Colombo Port. In doing so, this presentation discusses the legal issues surrounding the investment contract(s) entered into between the Chinese investor and the Sri Lankan government relating, to the Colombo Port City Project. It further draws attention to the domestic legal framework applicable to the newly established Colombo Port City Special Economic Zone in the reclaimed land and its regulatory framework set forth by the Colombo Port City Economic Commission Act enacted in 2021. The presentation critically analyses the Supreme Court judgment relating to the constitutionality of the Port City Bill and other litigations brought against the project by the affected communities and interested parties through a fundamental rights petition and a writ application, respectively. In conclusion, the presentation provides a framework for discussing the legal implications of Chinese investments in Sri Lanka, and Chinese investments along the Belt and Road, in general.



Sadia Rahman is an Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations at Ataturk University in Erzurum, Turkey. Her research interest primarily focuses on China Studies. Specifically, she seeks to understand China's domestic and ethnic policies, foreign policy towards India, and Cross-Strait relations. Rahman's research also delves into the critical viewpoints of IR theories, human rights, international order, and global governance. Additionally, Rahman has published academic papers indexed in the WoS database and Scopus journals, including book chapters and articles in popular media outlets.

China's Global Development Initiative in its Peripheries — Why is Central Asia Left Out?

ABSTRACT

At the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Chinese President Xi Jinping launched the GDI (*Quanqiu fazhan changyi*) to implement development projects related to human development issues, particularly targeting the Global South. GDI is part of China's economic statecraft--offering a parallel normative dialogue to the established Western Liberal International Order (LIO) on the global development agenda. GDI is pictured as a multilateral initiative that would help to foster the momentum of achieving the SDGs 2030. However, unlike BRI's (*yidai yilu*) focus on infrastructure projects which are economically challenging to accomplish, GDI underscores prioritizing--poverty alleviation, food security, COVID-19 vaccines, financing for development, climate change mitigation and green development, industrialization, digital economy, and connectivity. Nearly 100 states, including international organizations have supported the Initiative and 70 states have joined the Group of Friends at the United Nations (UN). The initial list of projects under GDI covers the ASEAN countries, African and South Asian states and the Pacific Islands, but not the Central Asian states. While the BRI was launched in Central Asia emphasizing its key role in connecting China with the Eurasian belt, the same centrality seems missing when it comes to China pursuing developmental initiatives. The paper attempts to underscore the discernible duality of China's engagement with Central Asia. Relatedly, it argues that China is more inclined to BRI projects in Central Asia than GDI. This is because of political reasons that underlie economic

cooperation, namely, China's interests in safeguarding its national security (Xinjiang's stability) and other strategic interests.

1100 – 1130 Hours: *Tea/ Coffee Break*

SESSION 2

1130 – 1300 Hours

The Global Development Initiative – II

CHAIR



Mrudul Nile is Professor at the Department of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai. He was selected for the Hays-Fulbright Scholarship sponsored by the U.S State Department to study National Security Policy Making at the United States Institute on 'U.S. National Security Policy Making in 2011. He has also received a scholarship from the Indian Council for Social Science Research, Government of India, for a month-long International Seminar on Economic Development for Young Scholars organised by the Chinese Academy of Social Science, Beijing, People's Republic of China. He has a PhD in Political Science titled *Right to Information - Its Implementation, Causes and Concerns* and specialises in Political Process, Public Policy, Marginalisation and Exclusion, and Election Studies. He has been a part of research projects under the aegis of the Indian Council of Social Science Research; the Department of Tribal Development, Government of Maharashtra; and, the State Election Commission, Maharashtra. His recent publications include *Re-Engineering Grass Root Governance: An Electoral Intervention* (Edited), 2018, and *Tailspin: The Politics of India-China Economic Relations* (Co-edited), 2022.

SPEAKERS



Priyanka Pandit is an Assistant Professor at the Shiv Nadar University, Delhi-NCR, India. Her research interests are international and comparative political economy with an emphasis on China and the developing world, as well as international negotiations and global economic governance. She was formerly an Ashoka-Harvard Yenching Post-Doctoral Fellow in Chinese Studies. She holds an MPhil and PhD in Chinese Studies from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Master's degree in East Asian Studies from the University of Delhi. She was formerly Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi, and Visiting Fellow at the Chongyang Institute of Financial Studies, Beijing. Before joining ICWA, she taught at the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, where she also pursued an intensive year-long course in Mandarin. She is currently completing her book project on China's negotiating strategies at the World Trade Organisation.

ABSTRACT

The Chinese President Xi Jinping's unveiling of the Global Development Initiative (GDI) at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2021 has yet again put China's State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in the spotlight concerning their global presence. Although the SOEs remain the lynchpin of China's overseas developmental projects, scepticism also runs high around their underlying motivations and modalities. This can be partly attributed to the party-state SOE nexus as well as the opaque corporate governance practices of Chinese SOEs. For instance, the mergers and acquisitions by Chinese SOEs in the Western markets have not only raised flags about potent 'security concerns', but their expansion into developing countries is being seen in the light of neo-colonial extraction and control of external markets. Thus, the GDI initiative raises pertinent questions around the GDI and Beijing's renewed push to internationalise its SOEs. If the Chinese party-state interests drive the overseas expansion, are the SOEs merely the passive actors in the global market? To what extent, the regulatory institutions of host countries shape the corporate governance of the investing Chinese SOEs? And lastly, whether these, in turn, have any positive modernising influence on the parent SOEs headquartered in Beijing? The talk will shed light on the complex interactions between state entities and market institutions and examine how the pressures of globalisation pose a continuous struggle between these actors connected via networks of global capital.



Lin Ya-ling is an Associate Research Fellow in the Division of National Security Research at the Institute for National Defense and Security Research, Taiwan. She received her PhD from National Chengchi University. Her research interests are Chinese economic development, economic security, and international political economy.

Multilateralism with Chinese Characteristics: Comparing BRI and GDI

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how China's external relations have changed from the BRI to the GDI. Since Xi Jinping took office, China's foreign trade policy has taken a different direction compared to the past. As China's economy has become more connected to the global economy and its position and influence in the international political and economic system has grown, Xi has become more proactive and engaged in international system-building. The BRI, launched in 2013, is primarily focused on creating a vast network of trade and infrastructure, aiming to enhance regional connectivity. In contrast, the GDI, introduced in 2021, expands on these principles with a heightened emphasis on sustainable development, aligning closely with the United

Nations' SDGs. The study delves into how these two monumental initiatives reflect the unique approach of Chinese multilateralism, a blend of economic, political, and cultural diplomacy that diverges from traditional Western models. By conducting a comparative analysis of BRI and GDI, the paper highlights their objectives, scope, and geopolitical implications.



Amit Bhandari has nearly two decades of experience as a public policy researcher, an entrepreneur, and a financial analyst. He is the author of *India and the Changing Geopolitics of Oil* (Routledge, 2021), that looks at India's changing role in the global oil trade and how it can use this heft to secure energy supplies. He is also the lead author of the report "Chinese Investments in India" (Feb 2020), which examined China's penetration of India's start-up ecosystem. He is the founder of *tezbid.com*, a numismatic portal. Bhandari started his career with *The Economic Times*, where he tracked the energy sector. He was also a part of the start-up team of ET Now, the business news channel. Bhandari was responsible for setting up India Reality Research, a new research organisation within CLSA India, a stockbroking firm. He has also worked with the Deccan Chronicle Group as the business editor for their general dailies. He holds a Master's degree in business administration from IIM-Ahmedabad and a Bachelor's degree in Technology from IIT-BHU.

BRI in South Asia: Sri Lanka and Pakistan

ABSTRACT

India's South Asian neighbours, particularly Pakistan and Sri Lanka, signed on early on to China's BRI, and have a number of big-ticket infrastructure projects to show for it. A mix of push factors from China and pull factors from the host countries led to the BRI's seeming success in Pakistan and in Sri Lanka. A decade on, Sri Lanka has already defaulted on its international commitments, while Pakistan remains in a near default state. Loans from China, for the BRI projects, have played a significant role in the economic crisis in both countries, along with local economic distortions. Both countries now face major challenges to economic normalcy.

1300 – 1400 Hours: *Lunch*

SESSION 3
1400 – 1530 Hours
The Global Security Initiative – I

CHAIR



Jabin T. Jacob is Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations and Governance Studies, and Director of the Centre of Excellence for Himalayan Studies at Shiv Nadar University, Delhi National Capital Region. He is an Honorary Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Adjunct Research Fellow at the National Maritime Foundation, Visiting Faculty at the Naval War College, Goa and Non-Resident Fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress, New Delhi. He was formerly 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, Singapore and France. His research interests include Chinese domestic politics, China in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, Sino-Indian border areas, Indian and Chinese worldviews, and centre-province relations in China. Jacob's latest publications include two co-edited special issues of the journal *China Report*, on the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China (February and August 2022); co-edited volumes titled, *How China Engages South Asia: Themes, Partners and Tools* (2023) and *China's Search for 'National Rejuvenation': Domestic and Foreign Policies under Xi Jinping* (2020). Some of his work can be found at <https://indiandchina.com/>

SPEAKERS



Shen Ming-shih is Research Fellow and Director, Division of National Security Research and Acting Deputy CEO of the Institute for National Defense Security Research, Taiwan. Shen served in the Republic of China Army for 36 years and retired at the rank of colonel. He was the former Director of Graduate Institute of Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Taiwan. He is also the Adjunct Associate Professor of GISS, National Defense University, Adjunct Associate Professor of GIASS, Taiwan Tamkang University and Visiting Professor of Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) (Defense and Security University) in India. He teaches PLA military culture in RRU. He was a Visiting Fellow of IDSA, India in 2010. He received his PhD in Political Science from the National Defense University, Taiwan. His research areas are Strategic Theory, PLA Studies, Indian Defence and Security, Civil-Military Relations, and National Security Research.

The Military-Civil Fusion in GSI

ABSTRACT

The resignation of China's Minister of Defence and top leadership of the Rocket Force has attracted attention from the outside world, which also indicates that there has been a major corruption case in China's military equipment development. China's military-civilian fusion policy is its main approach to upgrade the military system development. When malpractices occur in the Armament Development Department, it means that military-civilian fusion will also have negative results. In the past, many senior leaders of China's private defence companies resigned due to corruption cases. China has also begun re-investigations of various arms plans after October 2017. This all points to the fact that China's military-civilian fusion policy is not only affected by U.S. technology sanctions but affected by internal corruption cases among military and civilian officials. Military-civilian fusion can promote military-civilian cooperation in armaments development, and also integrates military-civilian cooperation in China's military corruption cases.



Lt. Gen. S.L. Narasimhan (Retd.) is an Infantry Officer, who served in the Indian Army for 40 years. He has completed his graduation in Mathematics, post-graduation in Defence Studies and PhD in India China Relations. Narasimhan served as the Defence Attaché in the Embassy of India in China for three years. He is qualified in Chinese language. His expertise spans international relations, internal issues, economy and defence related subjects of China. Narasimhan is a former Member of the National Security Advisory Board, India and was the first Director General of the Centre for Contemporary China Studies. He is presently a

Distinguished Fellow with Centre for Air Power Studies, India and Emeritus Faculty with Rashtriya Raksha University, New Delhi.

The GSI and its Implications for South Asia

ABSTRACT

Starting from September 2020, China has been announcing initiatives at frequent intervals. GSI is the third of such initiatives announced in April 2022. Ever since GSI was announced, China has been making consistent efforts to get other countries to support it. The crux of the GSI lies in two points. One, China has been trying for an alternative security architecture and two, GSI encompasses GDI and OBOR. These and other initiatives are subsumed in the Proposal on the Reform and Development of Global Governance. All these need to be seen as one initiative that aims to make China a global leader. Amongst the six core commitments of GSI, the first one, namely, maintaining common, comprehensive, cooperative & sustainable security, is where China has been trying to make inroads into South Asia. In July 2020, in a four-nation meeting, China called for stepping up cooperation for regional peace and security. In December 2021, China had stated that it supported the Maldives in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence, and national dignity. China also proposed a Forum for Island Nations of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) in January 2022 in Sri

Lanka. All these have security implications. A fourth commitment, namely peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries, is gaining importance in the China-Bhutan relations, as indicated in recent developments in their ties.



Ümit Alperen is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations in Suleyman Demirel University in Turkey and Senior Researcher at the Ankara Policy Center in Ankara. He is also Taiwan MOFA Fellow at National Chengchi University, Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies. He received his BA from the Department of International Relations at Gazi University in Ankara, Turkey, MA from the Department of International Relations at Fudan University in Shanghai, PRC, and subsequently his PhD from the Department of International Relations at Süleyman Demirel University in Turkey. He was Visiting Scholar at Peking University in Beijing, PRC in 2014 and again from 2019-2020. Alperen's PhD thesis is an analysis of China's policy towards Iran. At present, Alperen is a Visiting Researcher at the School of International Studies in Peking University, Beijing. His research interests are Chinese politics, Chinese foreign policy, and China-Middle East relations.

China's Global Security Initiative and Evolving Regional Dynamics in Central Asia

ABSTRACT

Central Asia is strategically important to China due to its abundant natural resources, key transportation connectivity, and crucial 3,000 km of shared borders. China's security presence in Central Asia has grown along with its economic and political influence, notably under the BRI. China is becoming a more powerful economic, political, and military actor in Central Asia, but its soft power is not keeping pace with this growth, which is detrimental to China's ability to project political and military power. In particular, China has been pushed to take the lead in Central Asian governance as a result of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021, and Russia's waning influence as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. China views its relations with the nations of Central Asia as essential to maintaining its national security. In this context, although it may appear to be a transformation of the BRI, the GSI can be seen as a multi-layered, integrated strategy. Through the BRI, which is driven by both political and economic considerations, China has built infrastructure to exert influence over Central Asian security. With the GSI, it is building a new layer over the structure it created with the BRI. China's relations with Central Asia under the GSI can be analysed at the national, regional, and global dimensions. The main driver of China's security engagement in Central Asia is the perceived threat of terrorism, separatism, and extremism in Xinjiang. Beijing believes that any instability in Central Asia, whether internal or external, can have a direct impact on China's security. At the global level, in the context of the US 'Pivot to Asia' strategy since 2011, China's threat perception of being contained from its eastern periphery is increasing. With the GSI, China seeks to create an alternative security route through Central Asia and an alternative geostrategic gateway to the East/Maritime Axis.

1530 – 1600 Hours: *Tea/Coffee Break*

SESSION 4

1600 – 1730 Hours

The Global Security Initiative – II

CHAIR



Amitabh Mattoo is Chairperson and Professor at the Centre of International Politics, Organisation and Disarmament Studies in School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Jammu. He is concurrently Honorary Professor of International Relations at the Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne and also serves as the President of the Indian Association of International Studies. He was founding Director/CEO of the Australia India Institute, Melbourne, and is currently also on their Board. He was founding co-chair of the Australia India Leadership Dialogue.

Mattoo has been a Cabinet-ranked Advisor to the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir; a member of the Advisory Board of India's National Security Council (NSAB); and a member of the National Knowledge Commission. Mattoo was a member of the task force constituted by the Prime Minister on India and Global Strategic Developments. A DPhil from the University of Oxford, Mattoo has been Visiting Professor at various institutions including the Centre for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University. He has published 12 books, and over 25 research articles. He has been awarded Padma Shri in 2016, one of India's highest civilian awards for contribution to Education and Public Life and Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa) by the Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Tamil Nadu.

SPEAKERS



David O. Shullman is Senior Director of the Global China Hub at the Atlantic Council, where he leads the Council's work on China. Prior to joining the Atlantic Council, Shullman was Senior Advisor at the International Republican Institute, where he oversaw the Institute's work, building the resilience of democratic institutions around the world against the influence of China, Russia, and other autocracies. Shullman served for nearly a dozen years as one of the U.S. Government's top experts on East Asia, most recently as Deputy National Intelligence Officer for East Asia on the National Intelligence Council (NIC) in the Office of the Director of

National Intelligence (ODNI). Prior to joining the NIC, he was a Senior Analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency. He is an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University, served as an advisor on China for the 2020 Biden campaign, and has also been an Adjunct Senior Fellow with the Center for a New American Security. Shullman has offered testimony on China before both houses of the U.S. Congress and publishes regularly in outlets including *Foreign Affairs*, *War on the Rocks* and *The Washington Post*. He earned his PhD in Political Science from UCLA, a MALD from the Fletcher School, and a BA from Georgetown.

China's Global Security Initiative: The Blueprint for a Transformed Global Order

ABSTRACT

Since Chinese leader Xi Jinping first proposed the GSI in April 2022, it has become clear the initiative is part of a broader effort to transform the international system to better suit China's rise to global leadership under the Chinese Communist Party. China's new "vision for global security" forms the ideological backbone of a push for an alternative order stripped of commitments to democracy and individual rights and friendlier to autocratic governments in the name of commitment to national sovereignty. The GSI, along with partner initiatives --- the GDI and the GCI, will become increasingly central to Beijing's bid to forge a China-centric system of global governance, justify China's aggression against its neighbours, undermine U.S. alliances and partnerships with like-minded democracies in favour of new China-led multilateral groupings, and firmly establish China's leadership of the Global South.



Wu Tsung-han is an Assistant Research Fellow at the Division of Cyber Security and Decision-Making Simulation at the Institute for National Defense and Security Research (INDSR), and also an Adjunct Teacher at the Graduate Institute of International Security, National Defense University (NDU). Wu's areas of expertise encompass cybersecurity, cognitive warfare, ethnic conflicts, and Chinese politics. Wu closely examines China's cognitive warfare operations and disinformation campaigns against Taiwan. He is also concerned about the conflicts between Russia and Ukraine since the occurrence of the Euromaidan Revolution. He is co-hosting a project examining Russia-Ukraine War and China-Taiwan relations at INDSR. Wu received his PhD from the Lau China Institute, King's College London. He also holds an MA from the Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University, and a BA from the Department of Chinese Literature, National Chengchi University.

The Digital Silk Road under the GSI

ABSTRACT

The Digital Silk Road (DSR) has become a focal point of China's BRI, President Xi Jinping's great plan that aims to strengthen an interest-bond between China and other countries since 2013. China has used the DSR to promote its products and services, as well as to engage in critical information infrastructure construction with BRI partner states. While Beijing claims to support an open international cyberspace, it has increased its dominance over physical systems and norms by shaping digital standards in UN-based organizations. The DSR has also drawn criticism for China's export of surveillance technologies to authoritarian regimes. To counter such arguments, Beijing launched the Global Initiative on Data Security which later became a component of the GSI. Indeed, the principle of indivisible security of GSI echoed Russia's narrative to justify invasion of Ukraine, but the GSI, in general, also served China's strategy for responding to the US' competitive approach. Consequently, the success of DSR demonstrates mutual needs of China and its partners: China can

expand its influence and the partner states can accelerate their modernization and digitization. However, those who have expressed their concerns on the Chinese values and ambitions have largely withdrawn from the DSR and BRI. The US-China strategic competition has conditioned and reshaped the map of DSR. So far, while the DSR in GSI has not achieved its objective of being a 'global' initiative, it has built a network of cooperation with non-western partners.



Anand Parappadi Krishnan is a Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for Himalayan Studies (CHS), Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence, Delhi National Capital Region, and a Visiting Associate Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi. His research interests are labour relations in China and India, labour and supply chains in the Global South, state-society relations, and labour's interface with urban questions in East and South Asia. Before joining the CHS, he was a Visiting Faculty at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. He holds a PhD in Chinese Studies from the Centre for East Asian Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has also been a Non-Resident Fellow under the China-India Scholar Leaders Initiative of the India China Institute, The New School, New York City, and a Visiting Fellow at the Harvard-Yenching Institute, Cambridge, Massachusetts, US.

Private Military Contractors and China's GSI

ABSTRACT

China's Global Security Initiative (GSI) focusses on both traditional and non-traditional security in equal measure, emphasizing its goal of crafting a comprehensive security architecture. However, many of the challenges cannot be addressed only through conventional military means and mechanisms under the purview of the state. It is here that the role of non-state entities becomes crucial. Specifically, the Chinese Private Security Companies (PSCs). The decade-long BRI has facilitated the gradual rise of the PSCs to secure assets and investments. However, unlike the western private military contractors which have power to take up arms and become involved in violent conflict, the Chinese Party-state is cautious in expanding the role of the PSCs including arming them. Analysing the experiences of the PSCs in the BRI, this presentation will look into their role, areas of their engagement, level of their possible involvement, and the potential constraints in their operations within the GSI framework. The presentation will explore whether the Chinese PSCs will have a more expanded role in the GSI, and how they hope to build synergies with other state and non-state entities of other partner countries.

1730 – 1800 Hours: *Tea / Coffee Break*

DAY THREE

Wednesday, 6 December 2023

SESSION 5

0930 – 1130 Hours

The Global Civilization Initiative

CHAIR



Manoj Kewalramani is Fellow-China Studies and the Chairperson of the Indo-Pacific Studies Programme at the Takshashila Institution. He is also a Senior Associate (Non-resident), Freeman Chair in China Studies, with the Center for Strategic and International Studies. His research interests range from Chinese politics, foreign policy and approaches to new technologies to addressing questions of how India can work with like-minded partners to deal with the challenges presented by China's rise. He also publishes a daily newsletter tracking the discourses in the People's Daily. Manoj is the author of *Smokeless War: China's Quest for Geopolitical Dominance*, which discusses China's political, diplomatic, economic and narrative responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. In August 2022, he testified as an expert witness before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission on China's zero-COVID policy. Prior to joining Takshashila, he spent over a decade working as a journalist in India and China.

SPEAKERS



Shih Chien-yu is an Associate Research Fellow at Taiwan Institute for National Defense and Security Research (INDSR). He has taught courses on Politics and International Relations at Taiwan National Tsinghua University, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese University, and Hong Kong Chuhai College for last 20 years. He received his PhD in Social and Culture Studies at Taiwan National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, MSc in International Politics at SOAS London, and BA in Political Science at National Taiwan University. His research mainly focuses on China's frontier policy and ethnic politics, China's relations with neighbouring states, with particular reference to China-Central Asia relations, Uyghur nationalism and Islamism.

The Place of Ethnic Minorities in the GCI

ABSTRACT

China's GCI aims, on one hand, to engage in dialogue with, or even express frustration over the United States, as the representative of Western civilization. On the other hand, it seeks to

cultivate favour with the Global South, by assuring these countries that China will not interfere or impose its national culture on them. But the GCI does not really touch upon the issue of minority politics. China may not intend to impose its language, cultural values, and business practices on neighbouring countries or those involved in the BRI. Still, this courtesy does not extend to ethnic minorities within China's sovereign territory. This article argues that the GCI is an excessive, if not a transitional document or claim. Currently, China is restructuring its multi-ethnic territory inherited from the Qing Empire, especially under the administration of Xi Jinping. The process involves the brutal Sinicization of ethnic groups, eradicating their mother language, religious practices, and everyday culture. China is actually building a modern empire where the imperial core has to be consolidated successfully before expanding globally. The GDI and the GSI can be seen as a complementary or an amended version to strengthen what the BRI has not been able to achieve. However, it must be noted that the modern Chinese Empire is evidently taking shape.



Abbos Bobokhonov holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of World Economy and Diplomacy. He earned his Master's degree in Theory and History of International Relations from National University of Uzbekistan. He is a specialist with more than 10 years of experience in the analytical centers (think tanks) of Uzbekistan. Bobokhonov is the Head of the China Studies Program at the Institute for Advanced International Studies at UWED. He has a great interest in China's foreign policy, China's policy in Central Asia, including SCO, Uzbekistan and China bilateral relations, as well as China's "Soft Power"

policy.

The GCI and Central Asia

ABSTRACT

The growing influence of China in Central Asia has gained greater momentum against the backdrop of geopolitical upheavals such as the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, the "January events" in Kazakhstan, and Russia's military operation in Ukraine. These circumstances compel Beijing to reassess its Central Asian policy and make corresponding adjustments. China is no longer willing to remain in the "shadows" and conceal its capabilities. Its actions in the region are becoming more assertive, facilitated not only by the weakening or engagement of its main competitors, the US and Russia, "in other arenas," but also by the China's desire to firmly establish itself as the key partner of Central Asian republics. To achieve this goal, Beijing is likely to increase the use of "soft power" tools, which it considers as effective means to implement its strategic course of strengthening its geopolitical presence and becoming a leading global power, including in Central Asia. Furthermore, in promoting its interests and solidifying its status as a key partner of the Global South, China is increasingly showing interest in advancing multilateral cooperation formats such as the BRI, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), "C+C5," and more recently, the GCI. These initiatives are intended to further strengthen China's positions in the region. Despite the active participation of Central Asian states in the BRI, AIIB, and "C+C5" initiatives, they are not in a

hurry to officially support the new concept of the GCI. This is because the main hypostasis of this idea is still unknown to them and therefore are not extensively discussed in official and expert circles within the Central Asian “five”.



Parimal Maya Sudhakar is affiliated with Pune-based MIT School of Government (MIT-SOG) since 2015. He is Associate Dean-External Relations and Director, Research Cell, National Legislators’ Conference (NLC) (nlcbharat.org). MIT-SOG is the first institute in India to impart training to youth to join politics, and NLC is a novel platform of policy discourse comprising all the State Legislators in India. Parimal has completed his Masters, MPhil and PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His PhD thesis is titled *State and Society Relations in China in the Context of Globalization: 1989-2004*. He has presented papers in several national and international conferences, and has travelled to mainland China, Hong Kong, Netherlands, Italy, and U.S. for the same. He writes regular columns on International Relations focusing on China and India-China relations.

The GCI and South Asia

ABSTRACT

The GCI can be termed as the first major global ideological campaign of China in the post-Mao era. It is aimed at convincing the majority of the countries in the world about their harmonious existence with China as a global power. China’s President Xi Jinping, in his announcement of GCI in March 2023, has attempted to portray a multi-civilization world order led by China in contrast to the incumbent rules-based order as led by Western countries, particularly the US. In this venture, the neighbourhoods become the most important arena for China to assess the acceptance and influence of its civilizational doctrine based on the concept that modernization is not equivalent to Westernization. As per Xi Jinping’s speeches and the follow-up Chinese writings on GCI, the doctrine is to be tested on the six parameters of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom. In its neighbourhood, China faces a stiff competition in the civilizational discourse from India, and thus, Xi’s leadership might face a tough challenge in incorporating the South Asian region in its GCI. Although the South Asian countries, with the exception of India, are welcoming more Chinese financial investment and may not be averse to partnering with China in its GSI, the historical civilizational bonds amongst South Asian countries are centred around India. It opens an opportunity for India to counter China’s GCI by propagating the yardsticks of inclusivity, diversity, representation, and constitutionalism. This paper will discuss the Chinese approach towards South Asia in GCI and Indian challenge to China on the civilizational turf.

1130 – 1200 Hours: Tea / Coffee Break

VALEDICTORY SESSION

1200 – 1300 Hours

CHAIR



R.D. Kulkarni is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mumbai. Prof Kulkarni also served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (2018-22) of Mumbai University before assuming the office of the Vice-Chancellor in June 2023. He is also a Senior Professor of Oil Tech at the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai. He has an exceptional academic career graph with extensive research, publications and patents. He is a recipient of awards and recognitions such as the UAA-ICT Distinguished Alumnus Award - Academics' (Dec. 17, 2022), Prof. J. G. Kane Memorial Award-2022, Fellow of Maharashtra Academy of Sciences (FMASc), Elected Life Fellow of Indian Chemical Society (FICS), AMDP, Korea. During his tenure as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kulkarni was instrumental in taking the University of Mumbai to new heights with NAAC Accreditation of A++.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS



Admiral Arun Prakash (Retd.) was India's 20th Naval Chief and served concurrently as Chairman and Chiefs of Staff. A naval aviator by specialization he commanded a fighter squadron as well as a number of warships, including the aircraft-carrier Viraat. As a flag officer, he commanded the Eastern Fleet, the Andaman & Nicobar Joint Command and the Western Naval Command. He headed the navy's personnel and aviation branches, and was the Vice-Chief, before taking over as CNS, in 2006. Post-retirement, he served two terms in the National Security Advisory Board and headed the National Maritime Foundation. He writes and speaks on maritime and strategic issues and, till recently, held a Distinguished Chair in India's Naval War College.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Aravind Yelery, Convener, 6th IFC; Associate Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mrudul Nile, Professor, Department of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai.

1300 - 1430 Hours : Farewell Lunch



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INSTITUTE OF CHINESE STUDIES (ICS)



The **Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS)**, New Delhi is engaged in and committed to interdisciplinary research on China. Apart from the annual All India Conference of China Studies (AICCS), the Institute undertakes various collaborative research programs and multilateral initiatives with prominent institutions in India and abroad, and brings together leading and upcoming scholars through multiple fora. Among its many legacies, it has been conducting the iconic Wednesday Seminar for over 50 years and publishes the *China Report*, a peer-reviewed quarterly journal on China and East Asia, currently in its 59th year of publication.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR HIMALAYAN STUDIES, SHIV NADAR INSTITUTION OF EMINENCE, DELHI-NCR



The **Centre of Excellence for Himalayan Studies** under the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence (SNIOE) is a research centre focussed on the economy, borders and identities, the environment and regional geopolitics of the wider Himalayan region including the Hindu Kush and the Karakoram. While there are scholars of the Himalayas and small centres and research groups focused on the region, there is a need for institutionalised efforts at the national level that brings together a wide variety of disciplinary and sectoral approaches to the study of what is one of the world's most environmentally sensitive and politically fraught regions and one that simultaneously has a significant influence on the economic livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people. At the same time, it is difficult to ignore the role of geopolitics in this region.

Therefore, even as the Centre pushes for an approach to studying the Himalayas that crosses both national and disciplinary boundaries as well as engenders a three-way conversation between central and local governments, academia and the people who live in the region, it also remains sharply aware of and is attuned to geopolitics and the policy imperatives that surround it.

The Centre reflects SNIOE's global outlook and ambitions, focusing on engaging researchers with niche or specialised interest in the wider Himalayas, and identifying and creating a network of scholars in the field, both in India and externally, to support its work. This critical mass of scholars of and from the region will redress the longstanding neglect or asymmetrical representation of the Himalayas and beyond, in knowledge, discourse and policy interventions. It also aims to develop and utilise strong links with the policy community and government agencies in a mutually supportive exercise.

The Centre also signifies a leadership role for the SNIOE, as it attempts to fill gaps in both academic and policy spaces. This leadership role is in keeping with the University's identity and goals of promoting innovation, creativity and interdisciplinary engagement in the field of Indian education. The Centre also offers the SNIOE's own faculty and students opportunities to collaborate with counterparts from across the wider Himalayan region as well as those working on the region from elsewhere in the world.

THE CENTRE FOR ADVANCED POLICY RESEARCH AND INITIATIVES (CAPRI)



Centre for Advanced Policy Research and Initiatives

The Centre for Advanced Policy Research and Initiatives (CAPRI) is a policy research institute established to positively intervene in policy processes to enhance research on social and economic policy issues. Based in Navi Mumbai, CAPRI is committed to bringing newer dimensions and perspectives to policy with advanced policy research and opinion tools, ensuring a prosperous future for Maharashtra and India by promoting sound policy ideas.

By underscoring the importance of academic freedom and the promotion of independent research and studies, CAPRI aspires to provide foundations for advancement in knowledge and application of overlapping areas of academic concerns in humanities and social science.

UNIVERSITY OF MUMBAI



मुंबई विद्यापीठ
University of Mumbai

The University of Mumbai is among the first three universities to be established in the year 1857. It is proud to have Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R Ambedkar as its most illustrious and internationally acclaimed alumni. The University has made many other notable contributions to the Indian National Movement and the Social Reform Movement of the Nation. Widely acknowledged as one of the foremost universities in the country, it has left an indelible mark on scholarly and academic growth in India. While the geographical expanse of the university is 700 km, it has more than 850 affiliated colleges and more than 100 recognised institutions. From the tribal students in Palghar district to the metropolitan youth of Mumbai - the University is equally renowned for accommodating all diversities.





INSTITUTE OF
Chinese
STUDIES, DELHI
ESTABLISHED IN 1969
中国研究院
德里
成立于 1969 年

The Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) is a pioneering research institute in India. It evolved from the China Study Group (CSG) established in Delhi in 1969, by academics and researchers from the University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University and the then Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, along with some diplomats and journalists.

Now more than fifty years old and with a nation-wide fellowship and network, the ICS has emerged as an internationally-acclaimed research institute, and a credible non-partisan policy institute, focused on studying and analyzing historical and contemporary issues related to China and the East Asian countries.

ICS ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

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- ◆ ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF CHINA STUDIES
- ◆ INDIA FORUM ON CHINA
- ◆ ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES
- ◆ CONFERENCE ON DOMESTIC GOVERNANCE IN CHINA
- ◆ CS-CSMCH PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH PORTAL

ICS RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAMMES

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ABOUT THE COVER

The dragon sculpture on the cover is from the Nanputuo Temple in Xiamen, Fujian Province, PR China. This temple was first built during the Tang Dynasty (618 -907 CE) and underwent several cycles of destruction and restoration over ten centuries. The latest restoration was done in the 1980s. The Green Dragon depicted sits on the rooftop of the Hall of Heavenly Kings (Tian Wang Dian).

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