



1st India-ASEAN Strategic Dialogue

16 October 2025

Pullman Kuala Lumpur City Centre



Programme

0830-0900 **Registration**

INAUGURAL SESSION

0900-0910 **Welcoming address**
(Video recording)

Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah

Chairman

Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS)
Malaysia

0910-0920 **Welcoming address**

Dr Ram Madhav

President

India Foundation

0920-0935 **Keynote address**

HE Shri Prashant Agrawal

Additional Secretary (South)

Ministry of External Affairs
India

0935-0945 **Special address**

YB Liew Chin Tong

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Investment, Trade & Industry
Malaysia

0945-0950 **Photo session**

0950-1000 **Refreshments**

Session 1: The state of geopolitics today: perspectives from India and ASEAN

As India and ASEAN navigate a complex and dynamic geopolitical landscape, there is an unsaid urgency to recalibrate the terms of engagement between India and Southeast Asia. India's ability to adeptly compartmentalise its interests and strategic ties with diverse actors like the United States, China, Russia and the European Union makes it a valuable partner in the region. This also inevitably shapes Southeast Asia's perception of India's strategic intent. In the midst of geopolitical uncertainties, recalibrating India-ASEAN ties must be deliberate and forward-looking. It must identify how India can support ASEAN efforts in addressing regional challenges and greater regional integration. It must also map out ways in which India collaborates on inter-regionalism and minilateral mechanisms. How does the state of geopolitics today impact the India-ASEAN relationship?

Moderator

Dr Yanitha Meena Louis

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Speakers

Shri MJ Akbar

Former Minister of State for External Affairs
India

HE Maris Sangiampongsa

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Thailand

Thomas Daniel

Director
ISIS Malaysia

Joanne Lin

Senior Fellow
ASEAN Studies Centre
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
Singapore

HE Pham Sanh Chau

Managing Director-Chief Executive Officer
VinGroup Asia
Vietnam

Discussants

Lim Menghour

Director
Mekong Centre for Strategic Studies (MCSS)
Asian Vision Institute
Cambodia

Izzah Ibrahim

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Prof Sonu Trivedi

Department of Political Science
Zakir Husain Delhi College
University of Delhi
India

Major General Dhruv C Katoch

Director
India Foundation

1130-1200

Refreshments

1200-1330

Session 2: Converging pathways: AOIP and IPOI synergies and Indian-led initiatives

The ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) share a common vision of an open, inclusive, and cooperative regional order. While the AOIP underscores ASEAN centrality and emphasis on dialogue, connectivity, and sustainable development, the IPOI advances India's practical, pillar-based approach to maritime security, economic cooperation, and environmental stewardship. Both frameworks reject zero-sum dynamics, focusing instead on collective resilience and shared prosperity. The AOIP and IPOI should align, reinforcing ASEAN-India partnership in shaping a stable, rules-based and inclusive Indo-Pacific. How can India and ASEAN operationalize these synergies? Can Indian-led initiatives, joint initiatives and institutional collaboration lead the way?

Moderator

Prof Ami Upadhyay

Vice Chancellor
Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar State Open University
India

Speakers

HE Jaideep Mazumdar

Member
Governing Council
India Foundation

Jaideep Singh

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Jayasimha K R

Li Ka Shing scholar
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
National University of Singapore

Lahpai Zau Goone

Senior Adviser
Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies

Dr Lina Alexandra

Head
Department of International Relations
Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
Indonesia

Discussants

Him Rotha

Deputy Director
Cambodian Center for Regional Studies

Dr Pham Cao Nhat Anh

Deputy Director-General
Institute for South Asian, West Asian and African Studies (ISAWAAS)
Vietnam

Dr Shristi Pukhrem

Deputy Director (Academics & Research)
India Foundation

Khairur Rizal Abd Majid

Deputy Director
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Brunei Darussalam

Prof Evelyn S Devadason
Faculty of Business & Economics
Universiti Malaya

1330-1430

Lunch

1430-1600

Session 3: Regional AI governance: scope for ASEAN-India cooperation

India's emerging approach to AI safety combines innovation with robust governance. The Indian AI Governance Framework (2025-26) adopts a risk-based model grounded in accountability, transparency, and human-centric values. Backed by the India Stack—including Aadhaar, UPI, and DEPA—India has built scalable, secure, and inclusive digital infrastructure enabling trustworthy AI deployment. This model offers ASEAN valuable lessons on how public-led systems can ensure safety even amid resource constraints. While ASEAN's Guide on AI Governance and Ethics and Generative AI supplement mark regional progress, uneven readiness persists. India's experience with interoperable infrastructure, skills development, and ethical standards provides a foundation for deeper cooperation. How can India and ASEAN align AI safety approaches to regional realities?

Moderator

Samantha Khoo

Researcher
ISIS Malaysia

Speakers

Farlina Said

Director
ISIS Malaysia

Dr Karthik Nachiappan

Research Fellow
Institute of South Asian Studies
National University of Singapore

Ajisatria Suleiman

Associate Researcher
Center for Indonesian Policy Studies

Dr Le Thu Mach

Deputy Director
Centre for Indian Studies
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics
Vietnam

Discussants**Rajat Sethi**

Co-Founder
QuBeats
India

Dr Daphne Teck Ching Lai

Senior Assistant Professor
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Wahyudi Djafar

Executive Director
Catalyst Policy Works
Indonesia

1600-1615

Refreshments

1615-1630

Special address**HE Shri BN Reddy**

High Commissioner of India to Malaysia

1630-1745

Reflection session**Moderator****HE Jaideep Mazumdar**

Member
Governing Council
India Foundation

Discussants**Prof Ami Upadhyay**

Vice Chancellor
Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar State Open University
India

Ahmad Zikri

Researcher
ISIS Malaysia

Dr Sumathy Permal

Senior Fellow and Head
Maritime Security and Diplomacy &
Coastal and Marine Environment
Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA)

Mohd Hisyamuddin bin Haji Basabah

Lecturer
International Relations Programme
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Nory Ly

Lecturer & Researcher
Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Royal University of Phnom Penh
Cambodia

Asoka Rasphone

Deputy Director General
Institute of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Laos

Izzati Shahari

Head of Data Analytics and Project Management
Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies
Brunei Darussalam

Asst Prof Piyanat Soikham

Director
India Studies Centre
Ubon Ratchathani University
Thailand

Mohd Agoes Afiya

Lecturer
Department of International Relations
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang
Indonesia

Vincent Kyle Parada

Emerging Leaders Fellow
FACTS Asia
Philippines

1745-1800

Vote of thanks

Sohana Enver Azyze

Chief Operating Officer
ISIS Malaysia

Major General Dhruv C Katoch

Director
India Foundation

1800-2000

Farewell dinner

Profiles



Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah

Chairman
ISIS Malaysia

Prof Faiz leads the institute's policy development and Track 2 diplomacy, including through the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). He is also the Malaysian representative to the ASEAN Regional Forum Experts and Eminent Persons (ARF EEP) meeting, co-chair of Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) and a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Good Governance.



Dr Ram Madhav

President
India Foundation

Dr Ram has curated major global and national multilateral initiatives like the Indian Ocean Conference, Dharma-Dhamma Conference, ASEAN-India Youth Summit and Counter-Terrorism Conference, involving heads of states, scholars and public-spirited individuals at IF. He is the former Bharatiya Janata Party general-secretary, handling the political affairs of Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and other states in India's northeast. He is the author of *The New World: 21st-Century Global Order and India*; *The Indian Reality*; *Partitioned Freedom*; *The Hindutva Paradigm: Integral Humanism and the Quest for a Non-Western Worldview*.



HE Shri Prashant Agrawal

Additional Secretary (South)
Ministry of External Affairs
India

HE Prashant has served as India's Ambassador to Lao People's Democratic Republic and High Commissioner to Namibia. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1998. He has served in India's Missions in Paris, Port Louis, and in Bangkok where he served as Deputy Chief of Mission and India's Deputy Permanent Representative to UNESCAP. He has also served as India's Consul General to Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR. From 2016-2018, he served as Joint Secretary in Development Partnership Administration-I Division of Ministry of External Affairs, handling implementation of India's entire portfolio of Lines of Credit (LoCs) to partner countries, and prior to that as Joint Secretary for regional cooperation under SAARC and BIMSTEC.



YB Liew Chin Tong

Deputy Minister
Ministry of Investment, Trade & Industry
Malaysia

YB Liew is the Iskandar Puteri MP and Perling Assemblyman. He is a former Senator and served as Deputy Defence Minister from 2018-2022. He works with Minister Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz with the New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP 2030) as a guiding document, focusing on semiconductor and steel industries, among others. He recently published *Second Takeoff: Strategies for Malaysia's Economic Resurgence*, which outlined his vision for Malaysia as a middle-class society.



HE Shri BN Reddy

High Commissioner of India to Malaysia

HE Reddy belongs to the 1993 batch of the Indian Foreign Service. He has had varied experience of diplomatic assignments, having served in Indian Missions in Indonesia, (1995-1998); Lao PDR, (1998-2002); the US, (2005-2008); Malaysia, (2008-2011); Switzerland, (2013-2016) and Nigeria, (2017-2018). He was the Chef de Cabinet in the Office of Minister for External Affairs from 2011 to May 2013, and headed the International Cooperation Division in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas from February 2019 to September 2021. Shri Reddy did his intermediate schooling at Andhra Loyola College, graduated from BITS Pilani in 1987 in Mechanical Engineering and MTech (Thermal Engineering) from IIT, Mumbai in 1991.



Sohana Enver Azyze

Chief Operating Officer
ISIS Malaysia

Sohana Enver Azyze is the Chief Operating Officer at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. In her current capacity, Sohana oversees organisational operations and governance matters, ensuring alignment with institutional objectives and adherence to audit, financial, and government standards. She also builds and maintains strategic relationships with key stakeholders, including project funders, Board Members, and government representatives.



Prof Ami Upadhyay

Vice-Chancellor
Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar State Open University
India

Dr Ami serves as professor and director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Gujarat. She is a member of the Governing Council of India Foundation. Her research interests include the English language and its literature; comparative literature; gender studies; translation studies; and the performing arts. She has lent her expertise to various committees established by the Ministry of Education, University Grants Commission, Association of Indian Universities, the Gujarat Sahitya Academy, and numerous state and central universities throughout India.



Ahmad Zikri

Researcher
ISIS Malaysia

Zikri focuses on Southeast Asia-China relations and the foreign policies of Southeast Asian states. He is a former research assistant in the field of international relations and security studies.



Asoka Rasphone

Deputy Director-General
Institute of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Laos

Asoka Rasphone has served as Deputy Director-General at the Institute of Foreign Affairs, Lao PDR since February 2024, overseeing strategy research and international issues. Previously, he was Minister Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Laos Embassy in France, promoting relations with several European countries and handling Francophonie, UNESCO, and OECD affairs. He has also worked extensively with international organizations, including the UN, focusing on various global issues. A diplomat since 1994, he is passionate about green diplomacy and community outreach.



Ajisatria Suleiman

Senior Associate Researcher
Centre for Indonesian Policy Studies
Indonesia

Ajisatria's research focuses on digital finance and technology policy. His work on sustainable digital finance will be published in 2026. He is also the author of Digital Safety Net: Social Welfare and Citizen Rights in the Age of Disruption. He is a former digital development specialist at the World Bank Indonesia, where he contributed to the flagship study on Indonesia's digital economy and supported the Ministry of Home Affairs in its digital transformation agenda. He is a former country representative at the Asia Internet Coalition where he acted as a regulatory adviser to Google Cloud, Meta and Apple.



Major General Dhruv C Katoch

Director
India Foundation

Major General (Retd.) Dhruv C Katoch, a third-generation officer of the Indian Army with nearly four decades of distinguished service, was commissioned in the Dogra Regiment on 31 March 1972. He has held instructional assignments in the Infantry School, Mhow, and The Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, and senior staff appointments at the brigade, division and Corps levels. He writes and speaks on defence and security-related issues. He has edited/co-edited 8 books and contributed chapters to over a dozen publications.



Dr Daphne Teck Ching Lai

Senior Assistant Professor
Universiti Brunei
Darussalam

Dr Lai is the programme leader for the data science major at the School of Digital Science. Her research focuses on applying AI and data science, including clustering and evolutionary algorithms, to solve problems across various fields, from medicine and geology to environmental monitoring. Last year, she became the first winner from Brunei to receive the UL Research Institutes-ASEAN-US Science Prize for Women in the mid-career category. This award recognised her application of AI for initiatives, such as forest and water quality monitoring. Prior to her current role, she led the university's Institute of Applied Data Analytics.



Prof Evelyn S Devadason

Faculty of Business and Economics
Universiti Malaya

Dr Evelyn's research expertise lies in international trade and regional integration, with a strong focus on policy relevance and cross-regional comparative analysis. In 2023, she was appointed as a board member of the East Asian Economic Association and Malaysian representative to the Pacific Trade and Development international steering committee. She currently serves as an associate editor to the International Journal of Social Economics and Asian Economic Journal and member to the editorial boards of the Journal of Contemporary Asia and the International Journal of Rural Management.



Farlina Said

Director
ISIS Malaysia

Farlina heads the Cyber and Technology Policy programme and has been involved in crafting various dialogues and forums on cybersecurity, technology policy and digital governance. Her research focus is on cyber stability, Malaysia's national interests in emerging technologies as well as peaceful and meaningful use of cyber and digital tools. She has facilitated workshops on cyber norms and chaired the CSCAP Study Group on International Law in Cyberspace.



Him Rotha

Deputy Director
Cambodian Centre for Regional Studies (CCRS)
Cambodia

Rotha is a former research fellow at the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace, and researcher and lecturer at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the Institute for International Studies and Public Policy, Royal University of Phnom Penh. His research interests include Cambodia's domestic affairs and foreign policy as well as political security in Southeast Asia. He helped to produce the CCRS book *Cambodia and ASEAN at 25: Addressing Challenges Together towards A Forward-Looking Community*.



Izzah Ibrahim

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Izzah is part of the Foreign Policy and Security Studies programme. Her research areas cover defence and security developments of Southeast Asia, nuclear non-proliferation and peacebuilding and conflict resolution. She is also interested in Malaysia's foreign and defence policies, ASEAN's capacity in managing regional affairs and the applications of diplomacy.



Izzati Shahari

Head of Data Analytics and Project Management
Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies
Brunei Darussalam

Izzati is Head of Data Analytics and Project Management at the Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies, where she leads the application of data-driven approaches to strengthen evidence-based policymaking. Her work spans advanced statistical modelling, data science, and complex survey methodology, ensuring research outputs are both analytically rigorous and policy relevant. Izzati works closely with government agencies and strategic partners on socio-economic policy initiatives, contributing to projects that enhance foresight, innovation, and institutional capacity.



Joanne Lin

Senior Fellow
ASEAN Studies Centre
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
Singapore

Lin has more than 20 years' experience in the Singapore public sector, regional and international organisations, think-tanks and civil society. She served at the ASEAN Secretariat from 2015 to 2021 and headed the External Relations Division under the ASEAN Political-Security Community Department. At ISEAS, she is an author of the institute's flagship State of Southeast Asia Survey and regularly publishes on ASEAN affairs.



HE Jaideep Mazumdar

Member
Governing Council
India Foundation

HE Jaideep Mazumdar is a former secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. He is the former ambassador of India to Austria, the Holy See and Montenegro and permanent representative to the United Nations and other international organisations in Vienna. He is also the former governor of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In his stints in New Delhi, he served in the Prime Minister's Office on foreign affairs, defence and security issues, atomic energy and space.



Jaideep Singh

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Jaideep is part of the Economics, Trade and Regional Integration team. His work focuses on industrial and trade policies, including their interplay in geoeconomics. His recent publications include an analysis of Malaysia-India economic relations and a report on the impact of US tariffs on Malaysian trade. He is a former special officer to the deputy investment, trade and industry minister in Malaysia and Overseas Development Institute fellow in Zanzibar, Tanzania.



Jayasimha K R

Li Ka Shing scholar
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
National University of Singapore

Jayasimha is a Li Ka Shing Scholar and Master in Public Administration (MPA) candidate at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Before joining LKYSPP, he was a Consultant with the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India (EAC-PM), where he contributed to key policy initiatives in the areas of digital public infrastructure, administrative reforms, and governance. Prior to his policy career, he was a journalist with The Hindu, reporting on governance and public policy issues.



Khairur Rizal Abd Majid

Deputy Director
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Brunei Darussalam

Khairur serves in the Department of Asia and Africa, which oversees Brunei's engagement with countries across the Middle East, North Africa and Africa, as well as South and Central Asia. His work supports efforts to strengthen friendship and deepen cooperation with partners in these regions. His diplomatic career began in multilateral affairs, where he was involved in Brunei's work at the United Nations and Commonwealth. His posting to the ASEAN permanent mission in Jakarta coincided with Brunei's chairmanship in 2013, which broadened his perspective on regional diplomacy.



Dr Karthik Nachiappan

Research Fellow
Institute of South Asian Studies
National University of Singapore

Dr Karthik's current research focuses on India's geoeconomics, and how issues like climate, trade and technology affect Indian foreign policy. He is the author of *Does India Negotiate?*



Lim Menghour

Senior Fellow
ASEAN Studies Centre
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
Singapore

Menghour's research interests include international relations, foreign policy, security, geopolitics, ASEAN and the Mekong. He has published articles, book chapters and research papers in newspapers, institutions and other platforms. As the MCSS head, he has led and conducted several research projects, including the flagship project of the Mekong-Lancang Peace Boat, funded by Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Special Fund of China, and Fish and Rice Corridor Project that facilitates the modernisation of the Cambodian agricultural sector.



HE Lahpai Zau Goone

Senior Adviser
Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies

HE Zau Goone is a former diplomat, whose overseas assignments included assistant commercial attaché and second secretary at the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo; deputy chief of mission and deputy permanent delegate to Unesco; minister counsellor in Tokyo; and minister counsellor in Moscow. With extensive experience in international diplomacy, he contributed significantly to strengthening Myanmar's bilateral and multilateral relations. Between 2011 and 2014, he was a member of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, where he played an important role in promoting human rights awareness.



Dr Lina Alexandra

Head of Department of International Relations
Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)
Indonesia

Dr Lina is the coordinator for the CSIS Myanmar Initiative Programme. Her research interests include Indonesian foreign policy, conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, human rights and atrocities' prevention in Southeast Asia.



Le Thu Mach

Deputy Director
Centre for Indian Studies
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics
Vietnam

Dr Le Thu serves as the External Relations Director of the Southeast Asian Media Studies Association. Her primary research interests are journalism, social media, public diplomacy, and the public sphere. Her work contributes to understanding how contemporary communication shapes both domestic and international relations, particularly within the Southeast Asian context.



HE Maris Sangiampongsa

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Thailand

HE Maris Sangiampongsa joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986 and retired in 2019. He served as Thailand Ambassador to Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Nepal.



Shri MJ Akbar

Member
Governing Council
India Foundation

Shri Akbar is a former Union Minister of State for External Affairs. He is the author of several books, mainly on the Indian subcontinent's complex history and turbulent interaction between faith and definitions of nationalism. He launched India's first weekly political news magazine, *Sunday*, and started two daily newspapers – *The Telegraph* and *The Asian Age*. He is the former editorial director of *India Today* and *Headlines Today*, and editor of the *Deccan Chronicle* and *The Sunday Guardian*. He is the former Bharatiya Janata Party's national spokesperson.



Mohd Hisyamuddin Haji Basabah

Lecturer
International Relations Programme
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Hisyamuddin is actively engaged in teaching and research, with a particular focus on nation-building, international relations, and strategic analysis. He is frequently involved in training programmes, public forums and youth engagement activities and has appeared on media platforms such as RTM1, Sinar Harian TV and Bernama.



Mohd Agoes Afiya

Lecturer
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang Indonesia (UMM)

Mohd Agoes is a lecturer in international relations, UMM and a PhD candidate at the Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India. His doctoral research examines Indonesia's maritime strategy in the Indo-Pacific. At UMM, he teaches courses mainly on Indonesian foreign policy and South Asian politics and previously served as secretary of the International Relations Office. Drawing on more than a decade of academic engagement and experiences in India, he reaches wider audiences through his YouTube platform, where he shares insights into education, culture and international affairs with a focus on South Asia, particularly India.



Nory Ly

Lecturer
Royal University of Phnom Penh
Cambodia

Ly is a researcher at the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies where her research areas focus on Cambodia's maritime security and Southeast Asian security. She also contributes research and opinion pieces to several media platforms, including Cambodianess and *Phnom Penh Post*. She teaches politics and government in Southeast Asia and Asia-Pacific security studies.



Dr Pham Cao Nhat Anh

Deputy Director-General
Institute for South Asian, West Asian and African Studies
Vietnam

Dr Nhat Anh's research interests are security and political diplomacy issues in the Asian region. He is the co-editor of *Roles of India and Vietnam in Developing global South Cooperation* and *50 years of Diplomatic Relations between Vietnam and India: Retrospect and Prospects*. He frequently provides expert commentary for Vietnam Television, Vietnam National Defence Television and news agency.



HE Pham Sanh Chau

MD-CEO
VinGroup Asia
Vietnam

HE Sanh Chau has held numerous high-level positions, including special envoy of the prime minister and assistant to the foreign affairs minister. He is a former vice-president of the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, where he contributed to shaping Vietnam's diplomatic education and strategic thinking. His ambassadorial assignments have included postings to India, Bhutan, Nepal, Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union, where he played a key role in advancing Vietnam's strategic partnerships and trade agreements.



Asst Prof Piyanat Soikham

Director
India Studies Centre
Ubon Ratchathani University
Thailand

Dr Piyanat is the founding director of the India Studies Centre and serves as assistant professor of politics and international relations. His research focuses on India's politics and foreign policies, South Asian studies, and India-ASEAN relations. He is a recipient of the ASEAN-India Youth Award and ICCR's Bharat Mitra Samman. He has organised numerous academic and cultural programmes that strengthen people-to-people ties and advance collaboration across the Mekong, ASEAN and India.



Rajat Sethi

Co-Founder
Qubeats
India

Rajat Sethi is the co-founder of QuBeats, a defence-tech start-up pioneering quantum sensing solutions, and leads AI-driven legal innovation at Counsellia. He is a visiting fellow at India Foundation. Rajat has advised the Chief Ministers of Manipur and Jharkhand on security and policy and contributes frequently on platforms like NDTV, Hindustan Times, and The Indian Express. He co-authored the book, *The Last Battle of Saraighat: The Story of the BJP's Rise in the North-East*.



Samantha Khoo

Researcher
ISIS Malaysia

Khoo is part of the Cyber and Technology Policy programme. Her scope of research includes cybersecurity, social media regulation and AI governance. She has published a thematic brief on cybersecurity in Southeast Asia and several other pieces on digital safety and security sector governance. She is a former YSEALI fellow under the Technology and Innovation 2025 cohort and serves as a policy group member within the Global Majority team for the Centre for AI and Digital Policy.



Prof Sonu Trivedi

Department of Political Science
Zakir Husain Delhi College
University of Delhi
India

Dr Sonu is a distinguished fellow at the India Foundation. She is a former fellow at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and a visiting fellow at the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, CASS, Beijing. She was a member of the Myanmar core group at the Indian Council of World Affairs and convenor of Southeast Asia studies at University of Delhi. She is the author of *Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy: Comparative Study of Indonesia and Myanmar and Democratisation in Myanmar: Progress and Prospects*.



Dr Shristi Pukhrem

Deputy Director of Academics and Research
India Foundation

Dr Shristi's research areas include India-ASEAN relations, India's bilateral relations with Southeast Asian countries and the Act East Policy with a broader focus on the Indo-Pacific. She is a former researcher at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis and visiting scholar at the ASEAN Studies Centre, Chulalongkorn University. In 2019, she was one of the Canberra fellows and participated in the Trilateral Canberra Fellowship in Australia. She is also a former US Department of State International Visitor Leadership Programme Quad fellow and non-resident fellow at the Indian Studies Centre, Ubon Ratchathani University.



Dr Sumathy Permal

Senior Fellow and Head Maritime Security and Diplomacy & Coastal and Marine Environment
Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA)

Dr Sumathy's research areas are maritime security governance in the Indo-Pacific, geopolitics, energy, and resource security in the South China Sea. She is on the editorial board of the Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs Australia and Associate Member of the Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies. She was an International Expert Panel for National Bureau of Asian Research and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA on Maritime Awareness Program, 2016 and a Profession Fellow On-Demand Exchange Program by the US Department of State for Think-Tank in Asia.



Thomas Daniel

Director
ISIS Malaysia

Thomas is director of the Foreign Policy and Security Studies programme. His interests lie in the strategic-security challenges of Southeast Asia, including the impacts of major power dynamics on ASEAN. He looks mainly at the South China Sea dispute, political-security cohesion within ASEAN and Malaysia's security and foreign policies. He also focuses on government policies towards refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced people in Malaysia, as well as the impacts of the crisis in Myanmar on the region. He is a member of the Malaysia Study Group on Myanmar.



Vincent Kyle Parada

Emerging Leaders Fellow
FACTS Asia
Philippines

Parada is a defence analyst specialising in Philippine politics and foreign policy, maritime security, revolutions in military affairs, and US-China great power competition. He was previously a research assistant at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore and has held analyst positions at the Office of Naval Strategic Studies and Strategy Management, Philippine Navy and the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil-Military Operations, Armed Forces of the Philippines.



Wahyudi Djafar

Executive Director
Catalyst Policy Works
Indonesia

Wahyudi is one of the authors of the National AI Roadmap, initiated by the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, Indonesia. Over the past 15 years, he has conducted various studies and policy advocacy related to data protection, internet governance, digital rights, cybersecurity and digital identity. Between 2021 and 2025, he served as executive director of the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy where he initiated the birth of Raksha Initiatives, a non-profit foundation engaged in digital governance, strategic security and human rights. He is a former fellow at Global Network Initiatives.



Dr Yanitha Meena Louis

Analyst
ISIS Malaysia

Dr Meena is an analyst with the Foreign Policy and Security Studies programme. Her research focuses on Indian foreign policy, the geopolitics of South Asia and Malaysia and ASEAN's relations with the region. She is also interested in Global South cooperation mechanisms and understanding how regionalism or regionalisation, inter/intra-regionalism, minilateralism and multilateralism function in the Indo-Pacific. She is a 2025 Raisina Young Fellow and represented Malaysia at the 2023 ASEAN-India Youth Summit.



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