



## GEN SUNDARJI MEMORIAL LECTURE - 2023



### GEN K SUNDARJI (1928-1999)

INDIA'S ROLE IN SHAPING THE EMERGING  
WORLD ORDER  
ASHOKA HALL, MANEKSHAW CENTRE  
3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2023

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## **SEMINAR REPORT**

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**GENERAL KRISHNASWAMY SUNDARJI, PVSM**  
**14<sup>th</sup> CHIEF OF THE ARMY STAFF**  
**AND**  
**FIRST COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT, MECHANISED INFANTRY**

General Krishnaswamy Sundarji, PVSM was born on 28 Apr 1928. Educated at the Madras Christian College, he subsequently joined the British Indian Army and was commissioned into the Mahar Regiment on the 28th of April 1946. His additional educational qualifications include graduations from the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington in 1959, United States Army Command and General Staff courses from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas from 1967-1968 and the National Defence College, New Delhi in 1971.

His extensive and influential career saw active service in the North Western Frontier of the erstwhile undivided India, and Jammu and Kashmir, post partition. From these beginnings, his career took him across continents to troubled spots, serving as the Chief of Staff of the Katanga Command, where he was the leader of an Indian contingent serving in the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in the Congo in 1963, earning a Mention-in-Dispatches for his gallant actions. His career in India has seen him command an Infantry battalion, the 1<sup>st</sup> Mahar Regiment in 1963 and participation in the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war. His other notable commands include Brigadier General in the XXXIII Corps Staff, which was heavily involved in the operations of 1971, and led to the liberation of East Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh. His promotion to Major General in 1974 saw him become the Indian Army's first infantry officer to command an Armoured Division. However, it was his involvement in Operation Blue Star in 1984 as a Lieutenant General, that had the greatest impact on his life and tenure as a decorated officer of the Indian Army.

✚ A visionary and futurist, General Sundarji was the type of person to always plant his feet firmly in the present, while keeping his sights on the future of the Indian military as a whole. During his tenure as a Major General, he was tasked by Lt Gen KV Krishna Rao to spearhead changes in the reorganization of the Indian Army. This led him amalgamating troops from various battalions of different regiments and converting it into the First Mechanized Infantry Regiment. During his tenure as the Commandant of the College of Combat in Mhow, his love for machines and armor was put on full display, as he rewrote the Indian Army War Manual which put great emphasis on the use of current and emerging technologies. This was done to ensure that the army was always at the forefront of adopting current and emerging technologies. His appointment to the post of Vice Chief of Army Staff in 1985 led to him being a fiercer and more senior proponent of the induction and use of technology in the Army's warfighting capabilities. His tenure as Chief of Army Staff from 1986 to 1988 was marked by *Operation Brasstacks*, the largest combined military exercise conducted by the Indian Armed Forces, an event which has been classified as the largest military exercise since the second World War.

✚ An officer whose interests extended beyond the use of military assets, General Sundarji was also a fierce proponent of the advantages of nuclear weapons and an unambiguous nuclear posture, and being part of the team, which authored India's Nuclear Policy.



### **AMBASSADOR SHYAM SARAN, PADMA BHUSHAN (RETD)**

✚ Amb Shyam Saran is a career diplomat from Indian Foreign Service since the 1970s. He has been India's ambassador to Myanmar, Indonesia, Nepal and High Commissioner to Mauritius. In the Ministry of External Affairs, he headed the Multilateral Economic Division and the East Asia Division which handles relations with China and Japan. As a Joint Secretary in the PMO in 1991-1992, he advised the Prime Minister on foreign policy, nuclear and defence related issues.

✚ Amb Saran was India's Foreign Secretary from 2004 to 2006. Thereafter, he was appointed as Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Indo-US civil nuclear issues and later as Special Envoy and Chief Negotiator on Climate Change. He was appointed Chairman of the National Security Advisory Board under the National Security Council from 2013 to 2015. He served as Chairman, Research and Information System for Developing Countries from 2010 to 2017. He is an Honorary Senior Fellow with the Centre for Policy Research and serves as President of the India International Centre.

✚ Amb Shyam Saran was awarded the **Padma Bhushan** by the President of India in Jan 2011 for his contribution to civil services. The Emperor of Japan awarded him the **Spring Order, Gold and Silver Star** on 30 July 2019, for his services towards promoting India-Japan relations.



## **LIEUTENANT GENERAL RAJ SHUKLA, PVSM, YSM, SM (RETD)**

✚ Lieutenant General Raj Shukla, PVSM, YSM, SM (retd) is an alumnus of Uttar Pradesh Sainik School, Lucknow, National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Pune and Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. He was commissioned into the Regiment of Artillery in December 1982. During his long and illustrious career, he has tenanted numerous command and staff appointments. The General is a graduate of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, Higher Defence Management Course from College of Defence Management, Secunderabad and National Defence College, New Delhi. He has been with the Indian Military Training Team, Bhutan.

✚ He has commanded a Medium Regiment in the Eastern and Western theatres, an Infantry Brigade in Counter-Insurgency operations and an Infantry Division in Kashmir Valley along the Line of Control. He commanded the 10 Corps, before being appointed as the Director General of the Perspective Planning Directorate at the Army Headquarters. He was the GOC-in-C, ARTRAC, from 2020 till his superannuation.

✚ Lieutenant General Raj Shukla has an abiding interest in strategic-military affairs. He was appointed as a member of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) since Jul 2022. He is presently a Research Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (MP IDSA) and a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), Delhi.




## CONCEPT NOTE

✚ The 20<sup>th</sup> century has been marked by fundamental changes in the nature of the world order, and consequently, the nature of geopolitics. Particularly, the end of the Second World War in 1945 brought with it, the creation of a world, based on the principles of bipolarity, with the United States of America (USA) and the erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), leading the two sides of this bipolarity. With this bipolarity, also came the time of decolonization, where former empires were forced to give their respective colonial territories, their independence, right to sovereignty and self-determination. This change in world politics marked the birth of many nations who did not want to be seen as joining any camp, leading to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement, championed by the Republic of India (India), the Arab Republic of Egypt and the former Republic of Yugoslavia. However, with the fall of the USSR, and the period of unipolarity enjoyed by the USA, it was clear that there was only one superpower, while the others had to prove their place within the leadership of the new world order.

✚ This world order has now been further challenged with the rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC), which has been investing heavily in increasing its political, economic and diplomatic presence across the world, creating new competitions for power in the global order, leading to rifts between the PRC and the USA. The impact of this rift can be seen through the recent trade wars, the PRC has been engaged in with the USA, and the Corona virus pandemic which impacted all nations of the world.

✚ In this new world order, India has been fast rising as a new power pole in the regional dynamics of the Asian continent. A growing economy which is projected to be the world's third largest economy by 2030, due to the presence and growth of its own indigenous industries, it has been increasing its capabilities across the military and diplomatic domains. With its strategic partnerships, both bilateral and multilateral, with many nations across the international fora, such as the United Nations(UN), the Quadrilateral(Quad) and the G20, India is increasingly being recognized as an alternative option, where it can achieve the level of development which the PRC has been able to, while keeping the worldwide ideals of

secularism and democracy at the center of its governance. While the nation does face a myriad of problems, ranging from over-dependence on our agricultural sector for economic development, weak and outdated infrastructure, increasing unemployment, to the rise of extremist and polarized opinions within Indian society, the fact remains that, India can aspire to, and realistically achieve, the position of a regionally dominant power, while ensuring that the mutually agreed upon rules-based order of the world is not hampered.


 In conclusion, while it is true that the world order is in a process of flux and constant change, it is imperative for India to prove itself a worthy contender in the regional and global geopolitics. Only through concerted efforts aimed at erasing the weaknesses that are holding back the development of the nation and its people, India can prove itself to be a worthy and long-term multilateral alternative to the PRC and its unilateral expansionist visions.


## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**


*“In the last century, we have supported each other in our fight against foreign rule. We can do it again in this century to create a new world order to ensure the welfare of our citizens”*

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India  
*Voice of Global South Summit, January 2023.*

### **Introduction**

 The world today is in between orders. Regional conflicts such as the ones between Armenia and Azerbaijan, or the recent Russian war against Ukraine have showcased the fact that, in the post-Cold War world, the idealist stances of cooperation and peace have been shattered. The Coronavirus pandemic of 2019 has similarly exposed the fault-lines within societies and economies, pushing the debate of a sustainable and inclusive future to the background. In the evolution of a new world order, the old ideals of power and influence do not hold the same levels of traction as previously held. This evolution has also been complemented by the rise of the People’s Republic of China, a nation that is now competing with the other established world power, the USA. However, one can still see the multipolar nature of the world, with other regional powers competing for their place in the world order, one of whom is India.

 India stands out as a beacon of democracy and humanism, showcasing these ideals through its many initiatives, both during and after the pandemic. Through initiatives such as providing the poorest of nations with vaccines and other emergency medical equipment during the pandemic, to stressing for peace between warring states, India has highlighted the level of influence it can exert over world events, while acting as a power in the Asian hemisphere. Showcasing its ability to establish a dialogue and work with states on different sides of the divide, India has shown itself to be a true worldwide partner, while also maintaining its long-standing policy of strategic autonomy. Despite the challenges faced by a developing nation, India stands as a shining example of how it can be a major player on the international stage, both in times of crisis and peace, to ensure that nations come together in the spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding.

 This summary covers the myriad issues associated with addressing the national security and developmental challenges faced by India and its larger role in the emerging global order.

**Part I: India's Role in Shaping the Global World Order**  
**Ambassador Shyam Saran, IFS (Retd.)**

✚ There are two basic questions which need to be answered if one is to understand the rise of India and its place in the larger geopolitical order; the opportunities which exist within this changing world order for new powers to rise and the ways India can use these opportunities, in alignment with its own development and strategic interests, to position itself as a viable alternative to the rise of powers such as the People's Republic of China.

✚ While the world today is seeing major shifts in the overall world order, India stands at an opportune crossroads. Based on the civilizational past of the subcontinent, which gave rise to the confluence of many ancient trade routes and religions, India is seen as a nation which can leverage these historical strengths, with the capabilities granted by an inter-connected, globalized world, to position itself as a new centre in the 21<sup>st</sup> century multipolar world. India has also used lessons it has learnt from its history and the histories of nations which faced similar oppression, to strive hard to assert its autonomy in decision making, a factor which has led India to be seen as a friendly nation by many contesting superpowers. With a change in the world order coming, India stands poised to play the role of an architect.

✚ The questions thus asked are: do opportunities exist to reshape the world order? What type of transformed architecture will promote the interests of a rising India? What does India see as its key interests in this time of its development and, at present, what instruments does it have at hand to play the role of one of the architects of this reshaping of the world order?

✚ However, the rise of India is not without its challenges, both internal and external. India faces a number of challenges, big and small, which can hamper its growth trajectories and give a contradictory perspective, where a nation is seen as both a developing power, while not being able to provide basic services to its growing population. Ranging from the problems the nation faces from its neighbours, particularly Pakistan and China, the need to keep multilateral partnerships such as the BRICS and the SAARC alive and well and the growing crises in its own neighbourhood nations, including Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the nation faces many problems within its own neighbourhood, to be able to effectively position itself as capable of maintaining and spreading the ideals of peace throughout the world. Compounding these challenges are the various internal

ones which the people of the nation face, from growing levels of unemployment, to a rising cost in living, weak and outdated infrastructure, the need to provide adequate development while also working to eliminate the internal security problems within the nation. Hence, there are myriad challenges which can hamper its uninterrupted rise in the world order.

✚ However, within these challenges also lie opportunities for India to demonstrate its growing capabilities. From its Neighbourhood First policy, created to showcase and provide an alternative path to cooperative development for the rest of the region, India is steadily enhancing its outreach with its neighbouring nations and beyond, working towards creating an inclusive framework to not only face the problems of the past, but also work towards solving the problems of the future. It is this holistic development which India can leverage to battle the emerging threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, mitigating the dangers of emerging technologies and incorporating them into the functioning of the nation's security architecture. In addition, it should be working in a collaborative manner to find lasting solutions to the problem of climate change, as a nation that can work with other nations across the geopolitical spectrum to help enable the world to move towards a more cooperative and inclusive world order.

✚ Thus, while India does face challenges, both internal and external, the nation stands on the cusp of being a new world power which can help guide the rest of the world, while keeping the spirit of cooperation and understanding alive.

## **Part II: Addressing India's National Security Challenges**


### **Lt Gen Raj Shukla PVSM, YSM, SM (Retd.)**

✚ The changing nature of today's world has not only brought with it the idea of multipolarity and the need for cooperation, it has also highlighted the increasing competitiveness among the nations of today. This has seen rising nations engaging in increased competition with the older powers, with the main source of competition being between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China. The rise of China is a signal for the rest of the world, particularly India, that the need for a transformation in the overall national security apparatus is the need of the hour if India is to be made capable to meet the new challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

✚ The rise of China has not been an overnight affair, but has been a calculated rise, fostered since the 1990s as a long-term strategy adopted by the Communist Party of China. This has led to the nation investing heavily in all forms of its security, from its diplomatic efforts to hard military capabilities. From its exponential increase in its defence budget to the investments by the PLA for the development of dual use and emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and quantum technologies, the rise of China is seen as a cause for concern for all nations, in particular those, such as India, who are interested in maintaining and fostering a rules-based order. This rise will lead to a greater push to solidify border regions and see the Indian Ocean Region becoming a new arena of conflict between the two, leading to a 'strategic' squeeze for India.

✚ It is in this environment that India needs to work to ensure its own rise and regional prominence is not hampered by any other nation, no matter how powerful. The nation thus needs to undertake serious and immediate introspection of the weaknesses which lie in the national security architecture and undertake much needed transformations to bring India's security stature into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while also preparing it for the challenges which will lie in the future. From ensuring the inculcation of 'Atmanirbharta' in our defence sector to emphasizing indigenization and promoting self-reliance in all production capacities, to inculcating the latest technologies into our defence architecture, India must adopt a 'whole-of-government' approach in its transformation, while also encouraging the private industry to work as a contributor to the overall defence and security of the nation. The Indian armed forces, in particular, need to embrace this change to be able to transform itself from a military geared only towards self-defence, to one which

can be a major contributor to the overall rise of India. To ensure these reforms take place, the Indian military must see the importance of the space and cyber domains as integral to the rise of India and take steps to ensure India's private industry and military work in concert to bring about secure, dual-use domains for all Indians to securely use. This will also enable the military to quickly adapt to the battlefields of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which are focused on the strengths of a nation's cyber and space infrastructures and gearing towards an increasingly digital and technologically saturated battlespace.

 The nation must thus, from its common citizen to the highest levels of government, pour their considerable talent into the development of the national security architecture of India. This will enable India to draw from its vast reserves of talent, and with government and private support, be able to ensure self-reliance for the Indian military in all important sectors, while also preparing the populace as a whole for the effects this changing geopolitical atmosphere will have on their daily lives.

## Key Takeaways

✚ India has been fast progressing as a nation, playing an increasingly vocal role in addressing the many problems the world is facing today, from the Coronavirus Pandemic to the inequality persisting in the international order, and to the issue of Climate Change. This progress can also be seen in real terms through India's historical and current contributions to the United Nations, primarily its Peace Keeping Forces, to its 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies aimed at connecting and developing the South and South East Asian nations.

✚ While there are obvious risks associated with the state of flux the world order is in, it also presents an opportunity for India to become not only an alternative for the West to extend their presence and partnerships in the region, but also as a beacon of sustainable development for the rest of the world at large. There are, however, certain challenges which the nation needs to look at mitigating if it is to realize its own potential in the near and far future. Some of the challenges are addressed below:

✚ **Continuation of the 'Neighbourhood First' Policy:** due to India's strategically beneficial location within the Asian continent, it needs a stable and cooperative neighbourhood to advance its foreign policies and project itself as a leader in the region. Therefore, India needs to engage with all its partners, to ensure it can work with all the nations present on the continent, be able to chart an inclusive, sustainable and local development roadmap for the entire region, ensuring all are able to reap the benefits of the world economy.

✚ **Realignment of Relations with its Neighbours:** India needs to ensure all nations in its neighbourhood are working towards common economic goals, ensuring it can provide an alternative to the belligerence of others. Therefore, India's participation in multilateral economic institutions will be crucial in making positive inroads into their economies and counter the growing influence of other nations.

✚ **Transformation of Import Trade Regime:** the nation must make serious pushes to ensure the "Make In India" ecosystem becomes the dominant force of the economy, ensuring a high-quality, low cost, indigenous industry is inculcated into the economic performance of the nation. This will enable the creation of better and more resilient agreements with the economies of the



world to work for a mutually beneficial world economy.

✚ **Globalisation:** India needs to advance the cause of globalisation to ensure that world order does not fracture into many disparate poles of competition. India must shoulder the responsibility of being a connector with other nations, ensuring multilateral responses to global problems of the present and future.

✚ **Being a Global Leader in Digitization:** India must work together, both in the domestic and international domains, to ensure its technological advancements benefit the world. Working with developed nations, India can help develop its own indigenous technological capabilities, ensuring it is able to not only use technologies created indigenously, but also provide these technologies to the rest of the world.


✚ **Need for a National Security Makeover:** The nation needs to immediately start a complete makeover of its national security architecture, to ensure it is keeping up with the developed nations to keep its people secure. The same would practically translate into constituting structural and cultural reforms, including synergy within the branches of the Armed Forces and attendant civil entities.

✚ **Technological Transformation with Civil-Military Fusion:** There is a need to ensure India's self-reliance in its overall economy is maintained and advanced, it needs to encourage the private industry to more actively participate in the defence architecture of the nation. From the production of the smallest of components such as Semiconductors to the production of warships and fighter jets, India needs to ensure the private industry works in concert with the government to ensure stable and resilient partnerships which work to advance the security of the nation as a whole. The Armed Forces have a significant role to play in this endeavour.

✚ **Power Projection in Near and Outer Space:** India has a history of having a successful, indigenously developed Space Program since its inception in the 1960s. The nation must work to ensure they have a voice in regulating the usages of space, both Near and Outer, thus helping make the sphere of cooperation, scientific advancement and peaceful exploration.

✚ **Institutional Reforms:** India must initiate reforms in all its institutions to make them more resilient and capable of handling the ever-increasing pace of development the world is seeing.

From ensuring greater jointness in the theatres of the Armed Forces, to giving private industry the freedom to work towards the continuous enhancement of India's industrial capabilities, India must inculcate transformational changes in its thought process and capacities to become a nation which can prove itself as a stable net security provider and developmental partner for nations across the globe.

 **Ensure Timelines are Met:** India cannot afford to have an ad hoc approach to the initiation and completion of any project, be it in the civilian or military domains. The nation must ensure its all its projects are completed in a timely manner to make the best and most recent developments are available to the nation for mass use.

## Conclusion

✚ The speakers echoed the fundamental sentiment of late General Sundarji, which was to always look to the future for the development of India, while being cognizant and celebrating the ancient cultural and demographic diversity, characteristic to the subcontinent for millennia.

✚ The changing dynamics of the current world order needs to form the backdrop for India to navigate and put itself forth as a serious contender for the positions of regional and world leader. There are, understandably, many internal and external challenges the nation faces, particularly in its immediate neighbourhood, however it can take the best practices of other older powers and learn from their mistakes to chart a new world order, which is built on mutual principles of cooperation and humanist values. India and its decision makers, therefore, need to deeply introspect on the current shortcomings the nation faces and work on mitigating these old and fundamental challenges using new solutions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

**Lt Gen P S Rajeshwar PVSM, AVSM, VSM, (Retd.) DG, CLAWS**



*The Director General welcomed each one present at the event organised in the memory of the 'Founding Father of the Mechanised Infantry'. While paying tributes to Gen Sundarji, he remembered his contributions as a soldier, General Officer and COAS, which were immense, contemporary and futuristic. He specially highlighted Gen Sundarji's thoughts in his book 'Blind Men of Hindoostan: Indo-Pak Nuclear War' which focussed on 'institutionalised planning of a strategy' and eventually helped to frame the nation's nuclear doctrine. The General Officer then gave out his thoughts on the contemporary themes of the lecture.*

✚ The advancement of India's national security architecture is synonymous with its objectives of having a larger presence in the international decision-making order. With sustained economic development, working for and with the citizens of the nation, India can achieve these goals and further its regional and global ambitions. A nation which can contribute positively during a global pandemic by not only ensuring that its own population is safe, but also assist other nations to handle the dangers of new diseases, which can effectively handle disasters not only within its boundaries, but also elsewhere in the world, and which can have a neutral stand in today's wars across the globe, will definitely be able to play a positive role in shaping the world order.

✚ However, some fundamental questions need to be answered if India is to actively stay on its current and future growth trajectories: How key will be India's economic growth for becoming a leading power? Keeping in view the national interests in mind, what are the foreign policy challenges and how to tackle them? What should be the contribution of the Indian military as replies today in the cusp of jointmanship and integration? How will science and technology, information technology and innovation capabilities add to all this? What are the drivers and impediments, can they be identified?

✚ India needs to develop a strong and technologically capable military, to not only ensure it is able to meet the current challenges the nation faces from within and outside its borders, but also showcase itself as a strong security provider for the region and the world at large.

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**Lt Gen M V Suchindra Kumar, AVSM, YSM\*\*, VSM, Vice Chief of Army Staff**



*The Vice Chief of Army Staff commenced the keynote address by paying tributes and highlighting the contributions made by Gen K Sundarji. He attributed Gen Sundarji as a visionary leader who laid the foundation of the modern Indian Army, transforming it into a more agile, technologically advanced and professional fighting force. The relevance of Gen Sundarji in shaping the army congruent with contemporary and future requirements truly is enduring.*

### **Strategic Outlook**

✚ In today's world, we are seeing major shifts in the global relationships between nations. These relationships are being marked by an increasingly complex interplay of national interests, concerns and aspirations. With the primacy of national interests, the world is witnessing the co-existence of partnerships and conflicts in the stances nations across the world are having when it comes to their foreign relations with other nations across the globe. This change in the world order can be seen in the increasing assertiveness of the rising PRC, the growing importance of the Indian Ocean Region to the world economy, and the growing response to the challenges of Climate Change, only to name a few.

✚ This state of flux and change in the strategic landscape is marked by many multilateral engagements, nations are undertaking, examples of which can be seen in the Quadrilateral partnerships and the military alliance known as the AUKUS. In this state of multilateralism, India has found itself in a beneficial position, where nations regardless of economic and military strength, are looking to India to be a new power centre in international politics.

✚ This state of flux is also seeing the rise in the competitiveness among nations, with the competition being seen across the many domains in the world, such as the space, cyber and maritime domains. It is imperative that India balances its own strategic objectives, while ensuring

it does not get drawn into any of the contests of power which is underlying the relations between nations.

✚ With the rise in the complexity and variety of traditional threats, the world is also seeing many new non-traditional challenges, which can hamper the development of all sections of society. From the challenges posed by the ever-advancing technology, to the need to effect this changing world has on the various security dynamics of the nation, such as its food and energy security requirements, nations across the globe need to be cognizant of the changing nature of securitization and development, ensuring that all citizens in their nations do not have to worry about having access to the basic requirements of life.

### **India's Role in the Emerging World Order**

✚ In these times of geopolitical uncertainty, the influence India wields has increased in significant terms, buoyed with the promise of the nation leveraging its skilled workforce, entrepreneurial potential and demographic dividend to achieve its goal of becoming a 10 trillion USD economy by 2030. This change can be seen in the country steadily making its mark in the global supply chain, promoting the usage of the Indian Rupee as an alternative to the US Dollar in international trade and helping nations in its periphery to connect with the global economy. This rise of India can also be seen in the local achievements the nation is seeing, from the increased adoption of smartphones, to the nation housing the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem, leading the world to see India as a technologically literate and capable nation, able to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the world's largest economies.

✚ These advancements have led the world to see India in a new light, not only as a developing nation which can meet the increasing aspirations of its people, but also as a nation which can help the world in times of crisis and peace. From the 'Vaccine Maitri' Programme, to the provision of humanitarian aid to all nations asking for it, India is increasingly being seen as a provider of sustainable assistance to nations which have need for it. In the many fora of world affairs, India is also seeing itself play an increasingly important role in ensuring the agreed upon rules-based order is maintained and enhanced. India is hoping to embody these messages and stances in the duration of its Presidency of the G20 nations in 2023, helping advance the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world is one family). The nation is also hoping to enhance its relations with nations such as Russia and those in the Central Asian Republics through its presidential tenure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The vision of India as a nation which can prove to

be a world player can be best summarized through the '*Panch Pran*' as laid out by the Prime Minister; the goal of developed India, remove any trace of colonial mindset, take pride in India's roots, unity, and, sense of duty among citizens. Even in times of conflict, India has maintained its stance of non-alignment, instead focusing on solving the humanitarian ramification of conflicts such as the one between Russia and Ukraine has resulted in.

✚ The adoption of the 'India First' policy has enabled it to ensure the development of its own indigenous industrial capabilities, using this as the launching point for its assistance programs across the world. This policy of India First can also be seen in the military exercises and training programs it undertakes across the world, working with many nations in a cooperative manner, ensuring the Armed Forces learns and adopts the required lessons in their own strategic capabilities, while also ensuring the lesser developed nations are able to take advantage of the facilities India has to train and develop their own Armed Forces. These strategic initiatives have led to the development of India's vision for the Indo-Pacific, known as Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

✚ This focus on India First also translates into the 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies of the nation. Through the advancement of such policies, India is able to meet its own strategic requirements, while also serving as a stable and cooperative partner for the other nations in South and South East Asia. Through transparent engagement, holistic and sustainable development initiatives, and work aimed at connecting the region, India has proven itself to be a partner which sees its own rise as a nation to be in tandem with the development of the wider Asian hemisphere.

### **Indian Army's Role**

✚ The role of the Indian Army cannot be understated in the current and future rise of India. Having a Pan-India footprint, while also possessing the capabilities to help other nations in times of strife, the Indian army, as a Citizen-First military, has undertaken many humanitarian operations aimed at developing areas which have seen violent and turbulent times, ensuring these regions are not left behind when it comes to working for the nation's overall development.

✚ The Indian Army of today has recognized the need to stay updated with all developments in this geopolitical environment, while also keeping pace with the evolving technologies and dynamic nature of today's threats. This would not only enable the Armed Forces of India as a while to carry the legacy of the late General Sundarji forward, but also enable them to pursue a

steady policy of enhancing the operational preparedness and bringing in greater efficiency in the functioning and administration of the Armed Forces. To give effect to this intent, it is necessary for Indian Army to transition into a modern, agile, adaptive, and technology-enabled future-ready force, focusing on the five pillars of said transformation, which are: force structuring and optimization, modernization and the infusion of current and emerging technologies, changing the processes and functions of the systems within the Army, efficient management of its human resources and inculcating jointness and integration within the Armed Forces as a whole. To address the cognitive impact of the transition, a 'Change Management Philosophy for the Indian army' has been enunciated. The execution strategy for change implementation at the grass-root level has been articulated. Commanders at all levels have taken ownership of the vision to change.




## India's Role in Shaping the Emerging Order

### Ambassador Shyam Saran, IFS (Retd.)

*Amb Shyam Saran commenced his speech by highlighting the experiences he had through his interactions with the late General Sundarji. Remembering him as one of India's most formative and transformational Chiefs of Army Staff. The Ambassador also spoke of his time serving as a Councillor in the Indian Embassy in Beijing, where he saw the decisiveness of the former COAS at its finest, acknowledging his prompt deployment of army forces in the Sumdorong Chu Valley, which enabled the opening to discussions for the subsequent Peace and Tranquillity Agreements with the PRC. The Ambassador also highlights the futuristic views held by the late COAS, leading the way in ensuring the Armed Forces as a whole incorporates any new and emerging technologies and uses the latest advancements in the science and technology realms in the conduct of warfare. It is this vision which the Ambassador recognizes as being one which the Indian Army employs and enjoys the outcomes of to this day.*

The lecture delivered by Amb Shyam Saran has been paraphrased:

Before analysing *India's role in shaping the world order*, one must ask few questions; namely, do *opportunities really exist* to reshape the world order? Is India really capable of contributing to this reshaping, what kind of *transformed architecture* would best promote India's interests? What are the *key interests of a country like India* at its current level of development and what *instruments are at hand* to enable it to play the role of one of the key architects? The answer to India's role in future lies in its capabilities, the current geopolitics and how India can adopt to its foreign policy needs in the *immediate neighbourhood, within the region* and at *global level*, while, simultaneously *balancing its domestic environment*.

 The opportunities to shape the world order, indeed exist, since India is in the midst of a *secular shift*. This shift is from a western-dominated world order, centred in the transatlantic, to a more diffused, yet, shifting geopolitical terrain with the Trans-Pacific including Asia, emerging as the new political and economic centre of gravity. While this trend is clear, it has not yet settled into a stable pattern. It is also sharply contested, between both the old and the new centres of power and influence. The rising confrontation between the US and China is one manifestation of this

change. The centre of gravity is also being sharply contested within the emerging power poles in Asia, for example, between India and China and Japan and China.

✚ The geopolitical flux of the kind India witnesses today carries a heightened risk, but it also generates significant opportunities for an emerging power like India to find spaces where it can expand its diplomatic clout and influence. Settled orders of the kind which prevailed during the cold war or later, during the 25 year ‘unipolar movement’ of unraveled US hegemony offered only limited opportunities for emerging powers to obtain significant elbow space. But the world today is in between orders, which has created opportunities for a country like India to play a role in shaping the incoming order, in a manner, aligned as much as possible to its interests. India's presidency of the G20, not only reflects its emergence as a major power, but also presents an opportunity to elevate as a leading power globally. This leads us to another question, what are *India's interests*, what kind of power *is India presently*, and what kind of power does *it aspire to become*?

✚ India is a civilizational state with a certain sense of itself, as destined to be a front-ranking power in the comity of nations. Having emerged from decades of colonial rule, it rejects any limitation on its sovereignty. It pursues strategic autonomy, which may be defined as the ability to take relatively autonomous decisions on matters of vital interests. As a developing country, it would want to contribute to a relatively benign world order which would support, and not constrain, its realization of social and economic developmental aims. There is, thus, a certain dichotomy, which renders this complex exercise of India. On one hand, in terms of overall GDP and macro indices, India may have a relatively large global footprint, however, it may, at the same time, be lagging in terms of per capita incomes and other social indices. Although it is true that, India may have a poor score on the UN Human Development Index, but it is quite different from the development trajectory of Western industrialized countries, where the overall GDP, per capita income and social indices, actually advanced in parallel. This dichotomy sometimes results in *schizophrenic behaviour* on the part of the large developing economies, which have a significant role to play in the management of the global economy and the global commons. At the same time, however, they also have demand from the global system to meet their own developmental needs. India, at the moment, may be sitting at the high table on some issues, and at a low table on few others. This also explains the re-emergence of the concept of the Global South wherein India is looking at itself as one of the members as also representing the Global South at the G20.

✚ The notion of common and differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, which was adopted in formulating a global climate change regime, encapsulated its dichotomy. No global climate change regime can succeed, until a large emerging economy and energy consumer, like India, is on board. It can even prevent a global climate change regime from emerging, which does not suit its interest. But India's own developmental prospects would be severely undermined in the absence of a benign global climate change regime. Therefore, finding the right balance between the demands of a global role and the imperatives of domestic challenges is never easy, but must be sought in every case. A certain guideline must be observed in this respect. India must never sacrifice its substantive interests for the sake of upholding an image of itself as an influential power. There must never be a disconnect between India's real capabilities and its external posture and is also the most difficult exercise for a diplomatic practitioner.

### **External Factors**

#### **Neighbourhood First**

✚ India's role in shaping the world order cannot be diverse from its capacity to manage its own periphery, or in other words, '*it's neighborhood first*' policy. India cannot play a credible regional and global role, unless it becomes the partner of choice for its neighbours in the subcontinent. The asymmetry India enjoys vis-a-vis all its neighbours put together, is an asset. India can emerge as the engine of growth for all its neighbors, creating dense interdependencies. If India were to open its market to virtually everything that our neighbours produce and can sell, the volume would constitute a small fraction of our very large expanding market.

✚ India is a transit country for several of its neighbours with land borders with Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh, but they are most conveniently connected with one another only through India. Indian ports could be the windows for their imports and exports. Thus, if India's transport network, ports and logistics, were open to all its neighbours, it could become the *transit country of choice* with a reputation of reliability and affordability.

✚ The positive political impact of the deep economic interdependence between India and Bhutan is visible to everyone. One of the reasons is India's investment in its hydro-power resources. India is beginning to see this with Bangladesh as well, which is now a significant customer for Indian power and is now connected to India through a gas pipeline. In Nepal, China has been gaining ground through its investment in cross-border connectivity and other

infrastructure projects. There are now six major land routes from Tibet to the East-West highway in Nepal's Terai. Indian commitments to build cross-border rail and road projects in Nepal are plagued with delays which gives China an advantage. The India-Nepal petroleum pipeline is a significant exception, but it is not enough.

✚ Ironically, India and Pakistan are much better connected by rail and road, but the political and psychological barriers diminish this connect. India appears to have abandoned South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and is putting more stress on the alternative, BIMSTEC, which does not have Pakistan as a member. Even if SAARC is put in the deep freeze, India will still need a South Asia strategy which cannot and should not exclude Pakistan. The objective of the economic integration of the entire subcontinent must not be given up, even if relations with Pakistan, continue to be vexed.

✚ India is reaching out to assist Sri Lanka in dealing with its severe economic crisis and has enabled the former to regain some of the diplomatic space vis-a-vis China. The same opportunity has emerged in Pakistan, which too is confronting an unprecedented economic and financial breakdown. China has not been helpful in bailing out its so called 'iron friend' in these challenging times. Thus, even if the gains to India are tactical, they should be pursued. India's ambition to be one of the architects of the new world order demands that it first proved its mettle in shaping its own neighbourhood and prove that the subcontinent is indeed, Indian subcontinent.

### **Regional and Global Cooperation**

✚ India cannot hope to influence the contours of a new world order from behind closed or partially closed doors. It has to be an active participant in the global economy, also maintain and expand the outward orientation of its economy, which began with the successful economic reforms and liberalization in the early 1990s. India's external trade today is only one and a half percent of global trade. Does that seriously translate into India getting the leverage to determine the shape of emerging multilateral trade regime? India may have expanded its security footprint in the Indo-Pacific and become part of a network of security partnerships, both bilaterally and through QUAD, but that may not be enough. In Southeast Asia too, there are expectations of India as a net security advisor. However, India's economic engagement with the countries of East and Southeast Asia has not kept pace. India has walked out of the Regional Cooperative Economic Partnership (RCEP), and in the Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF), which is led by the US, and is not part of its trade pillar, thereby keeping itself away from even becoming a regional economy.

✚ It appears that there is some rethink on the subject. India has reversed its opposition to negotiated free trade agreements with its Asian and Western partners and may reconsider its decision not to take part in the IPEF trade pillar. It must be acknowledged that the present government is open to foreign investment and has undertaken important reforms to improve the ease of doing business in India. It has also invested heavily in improving India's infrastructure. But it needs to reverse the recent trend towards raising tariffs over the range of imports. The keen desire to make India part of regional and global supply chains is incompatible with being a high-tariff economy. This trend may also make India once again a *high-cost, low-quality economy*, as was the case before the 1990 reforms.

### **Globalisation**

✚ There is a view that *globalisation is in retreat*, that more protectionist measures are in evidence across the world, that efficiency, which comes with open economies, must be balanced by reducing risk, that 'just in time' must give way to 'just in case'. It is true that in some respects, the trend of globalization has stalled and even reversed in some cases. There are talks of reassuring, or near assuring India's supply chains, and need to make them more reliable, more trend based, but there should not be any exaggeration of this trend. The evidence on the ground suggests that the global supply chains have proved to be remarkably stable, alternatives are difficult to put in place in the short run and there will be cross overs. Take the case of India's pharmaceuticals, they continue to rely heavily on Chinese Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs). The export of Indian pharmaceuticals would suffer, if relatively cheaper APIs were not available. India in the past had an API industry, but its costs were much higher than the Chinese alternatives, which then began to dominate the Indian markets. More recently, 'Apple' insisted that its proposed manufacturing facilities for iPhones and iPods in India would have to be supported by Chinese component manufacturers for some time because Indian companies did not have the technological capability and quality consciousness which the Chinese suppliers had built over several years. Thus, despite India's current standoff with China at the border, India has reportedly agreed to have 14 Chinese component manufacturers set up production facilities in India as joint ventures through Indian companions. Therefore, globalization is here to stay because it is inherent in technological advancement.

✚ The world has become intensely interconnected through digital technology; the internet has penetrated into the remotest villages of India. During the pandemic, the physical world was

disrupted, but India actually witnessed galloping globalisation in the ‘*virtual world*’. As one of the commentators said, “*globalisation is a bell which cannot be un-rung*”. Societies which stay ahead of the curve of globalisation will be the winners in the future and will shape the emerging world order. India is well-placed in this regard because of its judicious investment in the digital economy, whether it is the biometric system, the promotion of digital payment systems and the adoption of digital governance. Internet penetration and the spread of social media have witnessed remarkable expansion and India is also the fastest-growing smartphone market in the world. The conditions exist for *deep-frogging* in the digital domain, and this would have important implications for national security. Robust privacy building, for example, must go hand-in-hand with this rapid advancement in the digital space.

### **Current Geopolitical Situation and Measures for India to Leverage its Partnerships**

🚩 China's development trajectory since the adoption of its economic reforms and liberalisation in 1978 offers some lessons for India as well. China leveraged a very favourable geopolitical moment to accelerate the growth and modernization of its economy. It took advantage of the US and its allies perceiving a significant threat from the Soviet Union to position itself as a strategic partner in the containment of the latter during the 1970s. The US and the West had a vested interest in building up the economic and military capabilities of China to enable it to play a countervailing role against Moscow. For nearly four decades, China was a recipient of significant flows of capital and technology from the West and was also given free access to the large markets of the US, Europe and Japan. A very large number of Chinese students were able to study at the most prestigious universities in the West, making up for the knowledge gap which China faced after the disastrous decade of the cultural revolution between 1966 and 1976. This benign international environment enabled China to sustain an accelerated rate of GDP growth. In 40 years, China transformed itself from a poor developing country into the world's second-largest economy today. Currently, the US and the West are deeply concerned about the ideological, security and economic challenge that China confronts them with and look upon India as the only potential and credible countervailing power to China.

🚩 The US, Europe and Japan may be in relative decline, but they still remain the chief sources of capital and technology, and are also, still, the most important markets in the world. They have a stake in India's success, as its partnership with it will deny China the hegemonism, it seeks in a new world order. India has a convergent interest in preventing China from acquiring a dominant

role in Asia and the world. Therefore, this geopolitical moment may be leveraged quickly to build up India's own overall capabilities through policies which encourage the flow of capital and technology from its partners, that is, the US, Western Europe and Japan. India also needs to negotiate trade agreements with them in order to gain access to their markets. India's partnerships with them and also in the QUAD, thus, provide it with an opportunity to constrain China's unilateral assertion of power.

## **Domestic Factors**

### **Domestic Balancing through Steady Capability Development**

🇮🇳 India is the only country in terms of its area, population, economic potential, the scale of scientific and technological capabilities and, above all, its democratic dispensation is uniquely placed not only to catch up with China, but to overtake it, eventually. In this context, India's proven capacity to manage immense diversity and sustain a vibrant plural democracy is an incomparable asset. Though, there is a certain envy of China as a successful authoritarian state, which has delivered remarkable economic benefits to its people, but its historical trajectory is different. The cultural temper of Chinese people is different. China has a degree of homogeneity of its majority Han population, which does not exist in India. Moreover, even today, authoritarian instruments have failed to subdue the embers of separatism in China's Xinjiang and Tibet. India's democracy is indispensable to managing its diversity of religions, cultures, traditions, languages and even cuisines.

🇮🇳 Democracy promotes national unity, not by suppressing diverse and multiple identities, but celebrating them in a spirit of fraternity, in promoting a larger identity of common citizenship with constitutionally guaranteed individual rights. The Indian Armed Forces have remained a shiny example of embracing India's morality and promoting a sense of solidarity that transcends the community-based identities. The invaluable tradition of harmony among the armed forces would continue to serve as an example to the people of India, a fact which is as indispensable to India's success as are its economic and technological capabilities. *The future of democracy in the world will be determined by its sustenance in India, and that is India's most critical role in shaping the world order.*




## Addressing India's National Security Challenges

**Lt Gen Raj Shukla, PVSM, YSM, SM (Retd.)**

*Lt Gen Raj Shukla started his speech by paying tribute to General K Sundarji and remembered him as 'one of India's foremost soldiers', 'one whose contributions to the Indian Army were profound in terms of his sheer ability to dominate the mind space of national security and bring about consequent changes'. He further stated that there would hardly be any Chief (of the army staff) except Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, whose impact was so cutting edge and substantive. He quoted an article of Dilip Bobb and Inderjeet Badhwar in India Today magazine of May 1988, that "Gen Sundarji combined in his very formidable persona, the showmanship of George Patton, the drive and conceptual vision of Rommel, the ego of Winston Churchill and the hawkishness of Douglas MacArthur". He described Gen Sundarji as an extremely forward-looking, having a distinctive voice on matters of strategy, technology and military diplomacy, him being a spokesman for a 'credible minimal Indian nuclear deterrent' and his contribution in formulation of India's Nuclear Doctrine.*

His Speech on the subject has been paraphrased:

 India, in the recent past, has done very good work in terms of fortifying its national security posture. It has made strong edifices, or springboard, and from it, must now, make the multiple residual transitions to complete the *national security makeover*. Whether this makeover is possible, remains a question, because, makeovers are never easy, since their primary thrust is dismantling of the 'status quo'. India should explore, and debate the matrix of this larger transition that are alluded to national security makeover. The Indian military needs to make a transition from one, that is focused, rather narrowly, on India's defence to one, that can also enable and secure India's rise.



## Cold War 2.0

✚ The world, today, seems to have the Cold War 2.0 brewing. Henry Kissinger thinks that “*we are in the foothills of such a Cold War*”. Probably, it (the world) is in the mid slopes, closer to the peak. There is growing evidence of a violent strategic competition, which could spill over into conflict. Russia-Ukraine may be the first hot war of this new Cold War. This new Cold War has new protagonists; *USA*, perhaps the declining hegemon, and, the *West* on one flank, *China*, the *new alpha male* of international politics, and *Russia*, which, can be called a weak great power making up the other. India was *friends* on both sides of the divide, USA and Russia. But unlike Cold War 1.0, one of the key protagonists this time, is not only an adversary, but an approximate adversary, with whom the relationship is rather testy, and to quote the Ministry of External Affairs, “is also fragile and dangerous”. The economic centre of gravity also seems to be shifting decisively in favour of China. Many estimates suggest that by 2035, China may account for 24% of the global GDP and the USA will account for a mere 14%, a statistical fact, which is deeply staggering. There is possibility, that new hotspots would emerge in the West Asia, for instance, with Iran approaching weapon grade proficiencies, there is the possibility of an Israel-Iran conflagration breaking out violently. Therefore, there is a likelihood of the American economic power, its focus and prowess splitting over three theatres - Europe, the Indo-Pacific and West Asia. All this poses huge and new challenges before Indian foreign policy and its strategic autonomy, in terms of choices, partnerships and alignments.

✚ As recent writings on the subject suggest, the *whole charade of China's peaceful rise has military implications*, it is perhaps one of the most brilliantly orchestrated, surgically executed, piece of strategic deceptions in recent times. The US and India have nobody to blame, but themselves. Few of the events which have been classified now and as Michael Pillsbury mentions, “right from the days of Mao and Chou Enlai, while they were travelling to the USA, meeting Franklin Roosevelt and George Marshall, and telling them that, if they give us money, weapons and technology, we will become like you one day”. China was willing to change the way, the Chinese Communist Party operated. However, due to the Korean war, the idea stagnated and it was Kissinger, later, who re-established this idea. In those days, US even used to give satellite imageries of Soviet Military locations to the Chinese; offered them US bombers and nuclear weapons be located in China, in the event of a Soviet invasion. The Secretary of the Navy in the

Reagan administration gave Mark-46 torpedoes, anti-ship and anti-submarine, to the Chinese. China too, had two lobbies: the Hawks and the Shanghai investors. While the investors were busy making their money, the Hawks were making the most of the US' largesse to grow China's not only military, but its strategic techno-military poise too. So, it is the US, who strengthened China over these years. America's strategic innocence has fueled China's rise and they have created this adversary on India's borders. Alex Joske in his book, 'Spies and Lies: How China's Greatest Covert Operation Fooled the World', and Aaron Friedberg in 'Getting China Wrong', speak volumes on this common theme. China's Ministry of State Security (MSS) is now a force of 100,000 plus. It has global fronts across capitals in the World and over the last four decades, have successfully manipulated and fooled the West in terms of full sophisticated cyber espionage campaigns, through interlocutors; be it Australian Prime Minister, the US Congress, academia, think tanks, businessmen and the US military. Their purpose is to obtain trade secrets, cutting edge technology, proprietary research, ICT, technology, and other wherewithal of military value. The Chinese '*Thousand Talent Plan*' is driven by the CCP in concert with the PLA and its stated objective is to recruit geniuses from all around the World. People like *Dr. Chen Ning Yang*, Noble laureate in Physics and *Dr Andrew Yan-Tak Ng*, known as the father of AI, are driving Chinese military proficiencies in artificial intelligence, blockchain, quantum, robotics and others. All this has been used to build technologies in the civil space and to power the PLA military. In China, most of these technologies are in the cusp of civil-military fusion and are easily shared. Much of the American pushback today, is driven by the anger of having been taken for a ride. President Nixon admitted to such a prospect in one of his writings that "*we may have created a Frankenstein*". Consequently, the PLA has transformed and moved from *humility* to *hubris*.

🚩 Xi's nursing of the PLA has been very intimate and crafty. Hoover's Institution study report suggests that the PLA has grown 44 times across military matrix over the last three decades. This growth, though, is not linear entirely though, there are some areas which has witnessed this 44 times growth. The PLA defence budget has grown 800 times over the last three decades. They have carried out very *measured* and *smart asymmetric balancing* of the USA. The US defence budget is three times that of China and China's defence budget is 3 times that of India's. On one hand, Beijing is causing much displacement and anxiety to the US, but India does not cause the same to the Beijing. This does not include only the defence budget, but all other aspects associated with the military. India needs to figure out the reasons for the same. Niall Ferguson has adequately

summed up this changed power balance and he says that while the US verbal commentary in the Taiwan context is growing stronger in terms of comparative military capacities, the USA actually appears weaker. C-in-Cs of USINDOPACOM have also testified similar concerns. So, Taiwan may well turn out to be America's '*Suez Moment*'. American inaction or loss of Taiwan would be seen all over Asia as the end of American predominance. It would cost a run on the dollar and it could also turnout to be a seminal moment in the Sino-American contest and great power politics.

### **Cold War 2.0: Challenges and Opportunities for India**

✚ The challenge for India, therefore, is not merely from the PLA, but from the wider Chinese strategic military juggernaut, which is formidable, sophisticated, deep, complex and sustained and that is a matter of concern. Therefore, India must learn from the past and take its ambitions beyond LoC and LAC. Some may argue or contest this point of view, that, these assessments are exaggerated, that the PLA is merely a parade-ground military and a lot of social media fluff. If that is really the case, then India need not worry; however, if the same is really true, which might as well be the case, then India needs to remain well prepared and do a lot more. India must, thus, visualise, plan and craft its national security futures on this grim strategic lens. India must acknowledge that it may virtually be in contest with the world's new superpower, a China that no longer *hides* and *bides*, but the China consciously growing *loud* and *proud*.

✚ What are the opportunities and challenges that lie in India's national security path? On many accounts, India is indeed the geopolitical toast of the world, leader not only of the G20, but also a voice of the Global South. But India must not mistake its growing clout and weight; but put in efforts to make this conversion from growing clout and weight, *to power*. India has a resilient, if not buoyant, economy. As *Michael Spence*, Stanford Economist and Nobel laureate mentions "India is the most outstanding economic performer now, it remains the most preferred investment decision". India has done exceedingly well on the terror challenge, vaccines, and digital public infrastructure. There are several notable achievements of India on many accounts. As it moves ahead in 'Amritkaal' and endeavour to become a 'Vishwa-guru' (world teacher), there are exciting prospects for the future including a youthful demographics. Even in this endeavour, there is need for urgency because the dream of a 'Vikasit Bharat' or 'developed India', must happen within the time frame of 2047-2050 and not far beyond, or else the 'youthful profile' shall grow old before it grew rich. For similar reasons, India's national security pursuits too must require a visible sense

of urgency, pace and scale. India should be equally mindful of the accumulating strategic adversity around it. If there is one thing that could disfigure ‘Amritkaal’, derail India’s aspirational rise, it is its major national security reversal. Therefore, India needs to do everything to guard its journey over the next three decades to secure its aspirational rise.

## India’s Strategic Environment

✚ India’s strategic environment can be described in the form of a metaphor, a pincer with three arms; *the first pincer lies towards the LAC, Chinese Western Theatre Command (WTC) and beyond*. Significantly, there is a massive upsurge in Chinese combat capacities in terms of infrastructure development, its signature projects, viz, it’s Rocket Force and the SSF, for which India needs to develop comprehensive answers. A case in point is the use of missiles in the Russia-Ukraine war where precision strikes have remained dominant. US and China have taken four decades to develop such ecosystems consisting of Global Strike Precision, Long Range Stealth Bombers, space capacities etc. Further, the kind of readiness exercises, training and manoeuvres, and other activities witnessed in the Chinese WTC are near similar to what is being also seen in their Eastern Theatre Command (ETC). Therefore, India needs to act with speed on these accounts.

✚ *Along the Western horizons*, the geostrategic space has been vacated by the US and there are new claimants, and new alignments, like China, Pakistan, Taliban, Iran and Turkey, which could be regarded as worrisome developments. The geopolitics of Eurasia is being written, while the possibility of terror threat is re-coalescing.

✚ However, *the bigger challenge lies in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)*. PLA Navy (PLA N), in the region is already India’s maritime neighbour. With a very potent eastern maritime flank, growing western maritime flank, they are now acquiring a base in the Atlantic (Ocean) and possibly bases in the Argentina. So, China has got global ambitions. There are major enhancements in its staying power in the IOR. And with all of India’s complications, it simply has to make this urgent turn to the seas because if it does not, a decade from now, it will be faced with the prospect of a ‘*strategic squeeze*’ from the LAC and the Indian Ocean region.

## The Need for a National Security Makeover

Keeping all the above issues in mind, India needs to do a lot more to counter the threats around. This practically necessitates a complete national security makeover, and nothing short of it. To meet these challenges, it is not only the Indian military, but wider defense, foreign policy and the strategic establishment too, will need to transform. The comprehensive national security makeover of the nation, must begin with reimagination and greater understanding of its strategic outlook. *In the present context, in every other domain, Indians are beginning to think big and think global.* India wants to lead the globe in millets, in terms of creating a great, green energy hub and even in culture. With the inauguration of a world class Cultural Centre at Mumbai by the Ambani family, India is now aspiring to take Indian culture to ‘Broadway’. *Therefore, lack of an ambitious approach in terms of National Security is a matter of concern.* This plea is also important because the profile of a military tasked to secure a \$30-\$35 trillion economy (which, perhaps, India will be in 2047) should be significantly different from a military structure to secure a \$3 trillion economy. Technological tsunamis are already sweeping the strategic military landscape. India needs to begin planning and strategizing for this scenario from now, turn its gears outwards, review its power projection capacities, *not to jackboot around the world, but to develop calibrated capacities* to be able to intervene when our interests are so threatened. The game is beginning to move to the outer space, not only in terms of military capacities, but also economics.

Thus, reimagination of India’s strategic outlook has to begin now, in the duration of ‘Amritkaal’, only then, it will take effect by 2047. India needs to start the structural corrections in its theatre commands as also bring about cultural transformation through such new structures. It needs to work aggressively towards civil-military fusion, to undertake what China and the US are trying to achieve. China is already pursuing its civil-military fusion. The US also has a dedicated four-star officer heading their ‘Futures Command’ which drives innovation through the armed forces by setting up ‘cross functional teams’ comprising of civilian experts (technology, AI specialists etc). These experts go on ground to various theatre commands to decide on *ideations and innovations* for the military. In India too, other ministries are taking similar initiatives, which are cross pollinating, inducting from private sector and domain specialists. Thus, the MoD too needs to plan a strategy to get the civil servants, start-ups, foreign policy officers, technologists and businesses on board. If India really wants to establish ‘Atma-Nirbharta’ (self-reliance) in

defence, then it needs to create '*innovation councils*', a concept which even the Israelis have also done. In Ukraine, the private sector is not only doing capacity building, it is also doing war fighting. There are numerous other private players working on military applications, eg, Elon Musk's Starlink and Peter Thiel's 'Palantir Algorithm'. These applications are doing intelligence fusion, battlefield management. Even Microsoft teams have been operating with the US Cybercom.

### **Use of Technology, Capacity and Organisational Building**

✚ There would be some counterarguments that technology is not everything in military. Technology, of course, cannot replace the blood and gore, squadron and company in the battle. But conventional war, in today's times, is riding a very strong technological dashboard and that is what Indian Army needs to examine and refine in its approach. India needs to improve its multi domain capacity. To be more precise, India's first Theatre Command should be such, which would be able to converge space, EW and cyber. Even China has created a separate and independent service for Strategic Support. US too, has upgraded its two commands, namely, the Space and Cyber commands with the status of being a 'combatant command'.

✚ **Digitisation of Battlespace:** India needs 'digital connectivity' and data pipelines for its battlespace. An upgraded instrument of force which is joint (tri-services), technologically enabled, ready, calibrated and optimised, must be part of this larger national security makeover. This 'Jointness' has to come fast; the makeover has to happen soon as it will take about 30 years to get technologically enabled. India also needs to ensure 'readiness' for futuristic battles, else, it might suffer the plight of a powerful nation like Russia. There are huge challenges placed in front of India especially in the context of China. The edifice for this transition has already been laid by establishment of CDS and DMA which has adequate powers to drive a change for the National Security System.

✚ **Self-Reliance in Defence:** India's operational rebalancing has narrowed China's options considerably, along the LAC. 'Atmanirbharta' in Defence has taken off very well, but, there is a lot more to be done. In the words of the Indian Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi, 'Atmanirbharta' is not about technological self-reliance, this 'Atmanirbharta' is different. India needs to release the forces of innovation, energy and enterprise, startups, and businesses from the surge of process and

procedure. There is also, a need to realign rules and procedures to make a more favourable environment for the startups. Though India has worked in this direction, but we need to do more. The Financial system of armed forces has numerous bugs, and needs to be addressed. The armed forces, thus, need to refine the financial system and institutions like IFAs, which should be transformed into CFOs, making them imaginative, to enable them facilitate innovation. *There are no innovations without failures*, thus, India must have procedures to under-ride failures otherwise ‘self-reliance’ may not happen.

✚ **Planning the Technological Transition:** India should carry out in-depth analysis of the transitions that it needs to make. The import and gravity of the ‘China Challenge’ cannot be undermined. Incremental actions may not bring results in national security domain. The required transformation even with ‘whole of government’ approach may not bring in fruitful results; it should be ‘more than government’. Then only, it can guide India to the path of both, transition, and transformation, and with speed and scale. *The nation needs to take steps to prioritise ‘talent’ in its national security structure*. When China’s PLA can be powered by Noble laureates, have a national academy on AI; even the US ‘Futures Command’ can hire 3000 top academics to drive technology for the US Army, India too will need to do lot more to get these new talent pipelines in technology and strategic military ideation. A will need a chief data officer at the MoD could easily harness data, prepare it and put in place the kind of technology, algorithms and combat applications to be developed.

✚ **Self-Reliance in Semi-Conductors:** India has a semiconductor mission, the ISM (India Semiconductor Mission) as an independent business division within the Digital India Cooperation. The mission already has several administrative and financial powers with the aim of catalysing the Nation’s semiconductor ecosystem. To bring in transformational changes in the defence technology, India needs to setup another semiconductor mission in parallel to the present one. The Indian industry is already ahead of the armed forces in ‘semi-conductors’, thus, the MoD and the Army should also work in similar direction.



✚ **Need for Long Range Precision Strike Systems:** Long range precision is a sophisticated ecosystem of global precision strike which lies at the convergence of missiles and hypersonics; a technology is revolutionising the missiles. To match the capabilities of adversaries, India needs to adopt a new philosophy of deterrence and targeting. The US armed forces have concluded that they would not be able to penetrate the First Island Chain with F16s/ F18s alone, so they are hybridising their fleets, like, F16 and drones. Thus, India's response to penetrate the Chinese A2/ AD wall in the Western Theatre Command should find similar answers. Thus, the Indian Army's Ordnance Corps needs to explore a marriage of 'explosives and chips' to facilitate 'India's Precision Strike systems. The entire story of Russia Ukraine war hovers around the use of precision weapons, whether it is FGM – 148 Javelins, HIMARS, ATACMS is on precision strikes. The days of straddling the targets are over, now is the time to hit the targets with precision.


✚ **Transition to Digital Combat:** India needs to make this urgent transition to digital combat and Ukraine war has demonstrated the urgency. *Data is the new engine of warfare.* What is revolutionizing war fighting is data, algorithms and the miniaturization of computing power, which are taking war fighting to a new high. These electronic kill chains in Ukraine, had tactical effects in Kherson, in Kharkiv and Izyum. Ukrainian battalions today are moving with coders; on-the-spot coding with algorithms, is happening at a fast pace in battlefields. India, therefore, needs to make this transition into digital combat and upgrade its capacities.


✚ **Space and Outer Space:** Space, is no longer a support domain, instead, it is a domain of war fighting in the present era. In fact, the Chinese studied the power projection capabilities of the Americans and came out with a new concept of targeting their satellites, through ASATs. Now, ASATs were not the technology demonstrators alone, this year, these ASATs got operationalized by the PLA. India must start building its capability in Space and Outer Space.


✚ **Infusion of Emerging Technologies:** India needs to infuse emerging technologies like AI and microelectronics into its battlefield systems for changing the military balance. These technologies have become the new high ground for national security. India needs self-reliance not only on these systems as whole, but various associated components too. Russia has suffered in this regard when 30 of their military systems were impacted because of sanctions on 450 semiconductor components in these systems. This has resulted into a decline in Russian efficiency



in the battlefield. Thus, as a nation, India must build its capacity to build own semiconductors as these form part of every device, be it night vision or targeting navigation complexes, avionics, sonar etc.

 **Institutional Reforms for Long Term Ideation:** India also needs institutional reforms for long term ideation. ARTRAC can become a lead in joint and tri-services ideation. It also needs to bring in organisational and structural reforms to ensure 'jointmanship'. Passing out from a triservices institution or doing a course or two may not bring in the cultural change necessitated for jointmanship for creating a theatre command. India needs to bring in serious reforms to the existing tri-services institutions like DSSC, War Colleges, CDM or NDC. It also needs to transform the organization and training at these institutions to courses/ capsules on National Security with people from other government as well as private sectors. India should also reform its 'Think-Tanks'. If MEA can successfully conduct 'Raisina Dialogue', the armed forces too can initiate events where it can shape conversations in strategic military domain.

 **Nuclear Transitions:** China's nuclear arsenal is growing in sophistication. They have got one arsenal for tactical signaling and another for strategic signaling to the US mainland. They have developed a nuclear capable hypersonic "FOBS or Fractional Orbital Bombardment System" which can even bypass the US missile defence shield, virtually, a nuclear vector through space. Therefore, India needs to seriously revisit its doctrines whether they should reflect transparency, or should they reflect ambiguity, eg, Israel, when asked on their stand on No First Use (NFU) would just say that, they will not be the first, but will also not be the last too. Thus, India too, needs to take a doctrinal relook into its own nuclear strategy.

 **Improve India's Industrial Capacity;** India needs to revisit its industrial capacities. The NATO in the USA, together, are running low on 155 mm artillery stocks. Ukraine witnessed 13 years of Javelin stocks getting consumed in just one year. Poland is finding it difficult to deploy 14 Leopard 2 tanks, which reflects the state of readiness of Europe to take on a war, as the Europe of today has not been used to fighting. In case of India too, there were talks of reduction in holding ammunition reserves, a step which may prove to be wrong. India must revisit its ammunition holding capability, particularly those pertaining to its smart munitions.

## Conclusion

✚ China is a problem, and India must take a note of it. Securing India's rise is a huge challenge, not one that is unsurmountable. The National Security makeover is a strategic imperative. It is as much about conceptual, cultural, attitudinal and doctrinal change, as it is one of surgical implementation. If the Indian military and the military can't do it on its own given the nature of the challenge, wider defense and the national security establishment, can make this huge leap of faith. There is no reason why India cannot become a 21<sup>st</sup> century 'Vishwaguru or global leader', peace loving and prosperous, but also influential, strong and secure. India must never forget, 'if you have the power, your values rule, else you submit'.

## Questions and Answers

✚ The house was thrown open for the audience to put across their questions. The lecture delivered by both speakers received a huge response from the offline as well as online speakers. A large number of questions were asked and were answered by the speakers in equal passion. These questions and answers have been paraphrased to drive home the key issues.

### Q1. Question to both speakers

✚ *You had articulated about the Neighbourhood First Policy, especially SAARC. Recently, China has brokered a deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia and its influence is increasing in Iran. Will it have an impact on India's connectivity issues in the Central Asia? Secondly, there is yet another loose grouping coming up, which is China, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran. Do you think more countries are going to join it or will it fizzle out?*

✚ *The question is based on India's nuclear policy. Do you feel that India's nuclear deterrence has worked against China, specially at a low intensity conflict level, since, a full intensity spectrum may not take place? Secondly, do you think that hypersonic technology can be used for dual purpose, that is, for delivering a nuclear head too? And there is going to be a dual use hypersonic that will take out nuclear weapons also. Even the UCAVs and drones too can be for dual use. Keeping these in mind, how should India modify its nuclear doctrine?*

### **Answers**

✚ **Amb Shyam Saran** – There is no doubt that China has increased its presence in the West Asia since it happens to be the largest energy importer from this region. The US no longer depends upon this region for the same because it now has its own oil and gas supply. Therefore, the US is trying to build new coalitions in the region, of course, backed by it, but these do not require its direct intervention or presence. For example, it has tried to build up a coalition amongst the Sunni states, like the Saudi Arabia and UAE, Egypt and other Gulf countries. It has also encouraged the Arab states to establish more benign relations with Israel, which was not the case before. These efforts resulted into the Abraham accords, which was basically bringing Israel and the other countries together. There was an expectation and anticipation that eventually, even Saudi Arabia would normalize its relations with Israel. Following that, there is yet another interesting coalition, in which India too has participated, that is I2U2; India and Israel, US and UAE. This is yet another

way to establish a security architecture in the region which would take care of Israel's security, but would also ensure that the US, despite, not being involved directly, is able to, manage the region. As regards China, it appears to be setting up a kind of countervailing coalition by brokering peace between Saudi Arabia and Iran. But I also feel that, Saudi Arabia has played a very critical role in that. Therefore, it is not necessary to regard China in making this deal possible because, Iran and Saudi Arabia were already talking to one another for quite some time. In fact, one of the rounds of talk was also done through Iraq and now Qatar. So, it is not that it was China which brokered the deal, but China, certainly brought it to a conclusion. The very fact that the meeting took place in Beijing made it appear as a 'Camp David Accord', and that China is a very major player in the region. Potentially, it may appear to be a countervailing kind of a coalition, however, it is a shifting geopolitical space, being unstable and dynamic. A stable pattern has not yet emerged. Although, I agree that we must understand the nature and scope of the challenge China poses, but it too has major vulnerabilities, its progression is not linear either. In fact, understanding Chinese vulnerabilities and limitations in terms of its assertion of power, is also part of this geopolitical shift. Therefore, India needs to be prepared for any kind of unpredictable, the manner in which we can make it much nimbler footed, having issue-based partnerships and coalitions. India needs to bring in this flexibility and nimbleness while planning for its national security strategy which too is an urgent and inescapable need.

✚ **Lt Gen Raj Shukla** – The policy on nuclear doctrine is in the domain of the 'Executive', hence cannot be commented upon further. At the same time, it would be prudent to have a military point of view on such issues to get independent opinion/ feedback while formulating such doctrines.

## **Q2. Question to Both Speakers**

✚ *Which are the three nations other than the P5 with whom India should engage with foster its national interest?*

✚ *What measures beyond military domain can India undertake to expose/ encash Chinese vulnerabilities and suitably assist the nation in overtaking China in three to four decades?*

### **Answers**

✚ **Amb Shyam Saran** – Japan and Germany can be key partners for India's growth. Within the region, Indonesia is an emerging power which India can engage to foster its national interest.

✚ **Lt Gen Raj Shukla** – There is a need to understand the complexity of the challenge posed by China, hence, steps to counter, other than military becomes the preferred choice. There are various options available with India; firstly, it must deepen its debates and analysis over China within the nation for a better and broader understanding. The think-tanks, academia and other institutions must carry out such activities to draw lessons and enable the nation to take concrete steps. Secondly, India should focus on development of emerging technologies like data engineering, AI, blockchain etc for overall improvement in the international market. Thirdly, it should focus on self-reliance and innovation. Grassroot technologies can be executed by startups, only deep technologies by DRDO. We also need comprehensive reforms in our systems and procedures.

### Q3. Question to Both Speakers

✚ *Why does India not consider China as an opportunity? The impression during various discourses is that it is a major challenge. Both the nations got independence together and due to various reasons, the latter progressed faster. It seems today that India is envious of this progress as was also brought out during the lecture. However, should this progress not give us an opportunity to learn from this adversary or a neighbour who is to our North?*

✚ *There is a view in the US that by supporting China, they have probably created a Frankenstein. Is that actually the case or was it deliberately created? Even China, few decades back have realized that they were being forced to become a Frankenstein and thus trying to bring in an image makeover with various initiatives at global level. Therefore, India too needs to learn from what the Chinese have gone through and do not become a China itself, because, it is in a very good position, both geopolitically as well as historically. Your views on this.*

### Answer

✚ **Amb Shyam Saran** – There are no reasons to believe that there was some kind of a master plan that the US put in place in the 1970s to build up China's economy and other capabilities with a view of making it like the US. The early years of US-China engagement has nothing to do with the issue of ideology. The specific reasons of Kissinger and Nixon reaching out to China was due to a perceived threat from the Soviet Union. Even between those early years of 1971 to 1978, there were no economic interests between China and the US, they were purely strategic interests. This was a very insular kind of China, ruled by the respective communist leaders, which had no notion

of becoming like a state capitalist system that it eventually became. Therefore, to think that there were some great strategists who were involved in making China like a capitalist and democratic country is simply not true.

✚ Reforms in China were brought about by a large number of American companies and military industrial complex like Boeing which saw it as a potential market. It was in their interest to integrate China into the market system by helping it through capital and technology, with an aim that, China too, will be able to follow the East Asian model, like South Korea and Taiwan, which also started off as authoritarian states, but as their per capita income increased, they also became democratic. The transformation of China, though, was not based on any study on China's history and culture. However, China is certainly a challenge, and not just a threat. We need to make a distinction between the two. If we have to deal with a certain kind of aggressiveness on our borders and China is penetrating into our neighbourhood undermining our positions, that is a reality. But that should not mean that we cannot treat China as a friend. If the need arises, China can be a huge opportunity for India just as India can be an opportunity for China. There is a sense that there are issues on which there are differences with China but there are other issues on which there is a convergence between the two states and that becomes an opportunity. As regards the growing tension between the two nations for the last two years, there is a Chinese philosophical statement, which suggests that harmony can prevail only when hierarchy is respected and everybody knows where he/she belongs in the ladder. The problem which China has today with India, is that India refuses to agree to be where it wants India to be in the world. While theoretically, it can be agreed that China is an opportunity, but in today's scenario, India is left with no option then to countervail Chinese power.

✚ **Lt Gen Raj Shukla** – As Michael Pillsbury writes, during the past few years, successive US governments helped China in growing in return of something or the other. This exchange of favour in return for help stopped during the regime of President Donald Trump. The resultant transformation of China is a shining example of a great strategic deception carried out by it on US. Clausewitz states that “trickery and deception are weapons of the weak”, while Sun Tzu says “they are weapons of choice”. That is how the Chinese think and act. Even during the first decade of this Century, India was attempting to carry out operational rebalancing to the Northern Borders, but when 26/11 happened, Indian Army's focus returned towards the Western neighbours. We need to look at the opportunity created due to Chinese overtures in the past few years, and the


opportunity is to transform. We may not be heading for a conflict immediately; however, we need to take China seriously.


#### **Q4. Question to both Speakers**


*A recent report suggests that China is hedging towards India, possibly due to Indian stand on Ukraine as well as inability of its army to change status quo in Eastern Ladakh and Arunachal due to the stand taken by Indian Army. What are your views on this?*

*Do you think there is a need for an overhaul about the concept of 'command' in the Indian context?*

#### **Answers**

 **Amb Shyam Saran** – There is no shift in China's attitude appearing to be taking place towards India. China, in the present, looks at its relationships with other countries through the prism of its rivalry with the United States. US too had the same attitude during an earlier period of Cold War. Therefore, the way China looks at India is through its relationship with the United States and sense that India has made its choice in alligning itself with the United States in the containment of China. Now, the US may say that India is not containing China, it is only trying to constrain Chinese aggressive behaviour. Xi Jinping's recent statement is that the United States of America is leading the West to suppress and to contain and to bully China.

 While speaking in Moscow, Xi remarked that there is a cataclysmic kind of change taking place in the world. Massive changes are taking place in the World and the Ukraine war is a sideshow. The real real issue is how we can work together in order to shape the world order? So, in that context, India does not figure in the Chinese perception. India does not figure as a possible ally to bring about the kind of change that they are looking for. So, I would also caution you not to think in terms of India's position on Ukraine. The Chinese may rhetorically be neutral but they are obviously on the side of Russia. There is not even a pretence of being neutral. In India's case, the nuanced position, in fact, is very neutral. It is neutral, but still rather uncomfortable with what Russia is. But it has brought us certain advantages in terms of oil and gas sales and has a certain legacy relationship with Russia. It is valuable that we should retain that but I don't think that there is any kind of similarity between our position and the Chinese position.

 **Lt Gen Raj Shukla** – The Americans today are saying they are oversized and they must downsize because China and the PLA are exceedingly technologically. Despite their budgets,

unless we downsize, the Chinese being so smart at this specific balancing and technology, are leading us in five metrics of emerging technology domains. The Chinese are leading in all. There is an AI Stanford Gold competition and China won all five of those competitions. I am saying he happens to be your neighbour, please take him (China) seriously. I am not saying we are heading for conflict. Operational rebalancing must happen. The military must have a view and judgement of its own and it must be refined.

✚ The other question that we have to answer is whether the Chinese execute better or do they ideate better? Kishore Mehboobani says that “China is a closed society with an open mind,” They can execute better while thinking better than us. People are arguing about building our talent pool and keeping the head down and just accumulating power. There is nothing shameful about responsible power, which is in your own self-interest. I am making this humble submission that lets us acquire power.

#### **Q5. Question to Both Participants**

✚ *The armed forces are is an instrument of national power, how do both of you see its preeminent position? The way it is today, and the way it ought to be in years to come to face the challenges that we are about to face. More importantly, if you feel that we need to be doing more to pull up this instrument of national power, is it convincing to be led by the armed forces, or does it require a national discourse and national mission to identify and make sure that it can be pulled up and brought to the place that it requires to be. Your views?*


#### **Answer**

✚ **Lt Gen Raj Shukla** – I have done a very limited study of Chinese writings. Kevin Rudd paraphrased President Xi to say that “in the contest between nations, while economic power is important, it is military power, which lies at the heart of the contest”. Now, that's the central difference between how China looks at things and how we look at it. In our case, for various reasons, I think at one time, rightly sometimes wrongly, the instrument of force has been peripheral to our state craft. It has not been central or not reasonably in the centre. Recent events post Ukraine seems to suggest that it would be prudent to move this instrument of force closer to the centre of state craft. It will take military articulation, but more important politico-bureaucratic realization that this is in the national interest. It is if not in the overall national interest at least as a response to the current reality. Once this happens, this servicing of military instrument will be far better. As




regards military budgets, at one point of time, when needed, the US spent more than 10% of its GDP on defence budget, but when it didn't, they brought it down to 3%. Therefore, the wisdom that one must first grow economically, is not strictly followed everywhere. Even China uses defence for its economic rise. We now have a CDS and DMA and are in a better position to bring about transformational changes, but if we falter, it will only need greater introspection. We have already made a beginning and need to continue doing better work.

#### **Q6. Question to Amb Saran**

 *In the Human Development Index, India is placed very low. So, if India's social indices are so low, how does it aspire to become a world power?*

#### **Answer**

 There are indeed a few places where India stands low vis-à-vis other nations but there are a few strong points also. Therefore, at global level, India has a larger role to play in some issues, like Climate Change being the major energy consumer, being one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Therefore, both domestic policy making and external policy making are complex in case of a country like India. Therefore, India needs to keep a fine balance on what we can do with regard to India's strengths and at the same time, see how India itself can be transformed in certain matters. The disconnect between what India can do and what India can transform will continue but we must identify as to what we can do to mobilize or leverage the global position we have, obviously, to transform India only. In today's era, national security not merely defence, it has got a larger meaning and we must understand it in the correct perspective of comprehensive national power. As the Chinese premier says, 'the battlefield of the future is technology'. India needs to take steps to transform itself in all fields. Towards this end, it is strongly recommended that India must take steps to formulate its National Security Strategy.

## **VOTE OF THANKS**

**Lt Gen PS Shekhawat, AVSM, SM, Colonel of the Regiment, Mechanised Infantry**



✚ The Colonel of the Regiment, Mechanised Infantry conveyed his gratitude to the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and everyone present at the venue as well as online for the huge response. He also thanked Mrs Jayanti Chatterji, daughter of the Late General Sundarji, for gracing the occasion. He also thanked the speakers on the insightful thoughts shared during the course of their lectures. He acknowledged the role played by CLAWS in conduct of the event and thanked the DG. He remembered Gen Sundarji for his great contributions to the Mechanised Infantry as well as to

the Indian Army and the Nation.

✚ The world today is undergoing unprecedented changes, political, economic and social. These changes in the inter-state relations are at the centre stage today. Within a span of three years, the world politics has substantially been altered. Ukraine is heading towards a turmoil, Russia has been so fragile, China poses a challenge to the West and is becoming more assertive and coercive. New alliances are emerging in the Middle East, US dominance is being challenged and dollar is losing its lustre. A quote from Alice in Wonderland adequately describes the world situation today, “curiouser and curiouser”. India has an essential role in the emerging political scenario, by the virtue of its good equation with both the US and Russia, its economic prudence, its robust democratic values, decisive leadership and indomitable military strength will play a prominent role in shaping the world scenario.

✚ More importantly, India can provide leadership to ‘Global South’. India’s role in providing humanitarian aid and disaster reliefs during challenging times to various nations, has played a key role in enhancing the ‘trustworthiness’. The world is looking at India as a bridge to larger peace and tranquility. India needs to follow its policy of ‘Neighbourhood First’ in the region as also take Pakistan along. India needs to seize various opportunities which comes in its way to harmonise relations with various nations. India has the capability of not only catching up with China, but, also overtake it in the times to come.

✚ The current situation along the LAC has its own security ramifications. Chinese civil military integration is something to learn from and India must endeavour to leverage its private sector in matters concerning security. India must carry out necessary transformation, rather a complete security makeover, to ensure that its economic growth continues unhindered.

## PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Defence

### THIRD GENERAL K SUNDARJI MEMORIAL LECTURE ON 'INDIA'S ROLE IN EMERGING WORLD ORDER' CONDUCTED AT MANEKSHAW CENTRE ON 3RD APRIL 2023

Posted On: 03 APR 2023 6:13PM by PIB Delhi

The 3<sup>rd</sup> General Sundarji Memorial Lecture was organised by the Indian Army at Manekshaw Centre to commemorate the memory of one of India's foremost military thinkers, under the aegis of Mechanised Infantry Centre & School (MIC&S) and Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS). The event was attended by serving and retired officers of the three Services as well as literati and various think tanks. The lecture remembered the dynamic and visionary General K Sundarji, the 13<sup>th</sup> Chief of the Army Staff, who is also fondly called as the 'Father of the Mechanised Infantry Regiment'.

In his keynote address, Lieutenant General Suchindra Kumar, Vice Chief of the Army Staff said that the Nation has upheld its global image as an emerging leader by taking responsible roles at various occasions especially during pandemic; and the Indian Army stands fully committed and prepared to fulfil the Nation's expectations wherever possible. The speakers for the event were India's former Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Shyam Saran and Lieutenant General Raj Shuka (retired), Member UPSC and former Army Commander, who spoke on "India's Role in Shaping the Emerging World Order" and "Addressing National Security Challenges" respectively. The informative talks were followed by a Question & Answer session, wherein the audience interacted with the speakers on both the contemporary topics.



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SC/VY/GKA

(Release ID: 1913389)

## Social Media Reports





## **PHOTO GALLERY**



**Group Photograph with Dignitaries**



**Gen K Sundarji Memorial Lecture in Progress**



**Lecture by Amb Shyam Saran, Retd**

**Lecture by Lt Gen Raj Shukla, Retd**



**Questions & Answer Session in progress**



## **SCHEDULE**



Serial	Time	Event	Speaker
1.	1000h	Arrival and Registration	
2.	1000h - 1030h	Introduction to event and brief about Gen K Sundarji	Movie
3.	1030h - 1040h	Movie Clip: Mechanized Infantry Inception and Journey so-far	Movie
4.	1040h - 1050h	Welcome Address	Lt Gen P S Rajeshwar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.) DG, CLAWS
5.	1050h - 1110h	Keynote Address	Lieutenant General MV Suchindran Kumar, AVSM' YSM***' VSM, VCOAS
6.	1110h - 1140h	India's Role in Shaping the Emerging World Order	Amb Shyam Saran (Retd.)
7.	1145h - 1230h	Addressing National Security Challenges	Lt Gen Raj Shukla, PVSM, YSM, SM (Retd.)
8.	1230h - 1250h	Questions & Answers	
9.	1250h - 1300h	Vote of Thanks and Closing Remarks	Lt Gen PS Shekhawat, AVSM, SM, Colonel of Regiment, Mechanized Infantry
10.	1300h - 1310h	Presentation of Mementos	
11.	1310h - 1320h	Group Photo	
12.	1330h	Lunch and Dispersal	Banquet Hall



