

**SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**

Course	M.A. (PISM)
Course Number	IS-488N
Course Title	<b>India's Strategy and Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific</b>
Course Type	Optional
Semester	Winter Semester (January -June)
Course Teachers & Contact Details	<b>Dr Rahul Mishra</b>  Associate Professor, Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies (CIPS), SIS, JNU  Room No: 39, SIS-I, JNU  Email: <a href="mailto:rmishra@mail.jnu.ac.in">rmishra@mail.jnu.ac.in</a> Tel No: Mobile: 9871014440 Landline:
Credits	4
Contact	4 hours per week
Class Schedule and Room Number	To be decided
Tutorials (for difficulties & discussion)	To be decided

<b>Course Statement</b>
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The Indo-Pacific has emerged as the epicentre of global geopolitics. As a region stretching from the eastern shores of Africa to the western Pacific, the Indo-Pacific signifies not just a geographical expanse but a dynamic, contested, and rapidly evolving strategic and economic arena. India, positioned at the heart of this region, plays a crucial role as both a continental and maritime power.

India's Indo-Pacific engagement is directly linked to its more than two millennia old engagement with the countries of Southeast Asia, South Pacific, Northeast Asia as well as the island nations of the Indian Ocean region. With the launch of the Act East Policy the focus

was expanded to include farther regions such as Oceania and the Pacific Island countries. As a part of its outreach under the framework of Act East Policy, India even established the Forum for Indo-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) to reach out to smaller island nations of the South Pacific.

This course offers insights into India's approach, diplomatic engagement and evolving strategic regarding the origin, evolution, and the current state of the Indo-Pacific regionalism, its structure, instruments, and processes as well as its organisational setup. Modules of this course are designed in such a way that it would not only cover the history and current state of India's engagement with the Indo-Pacific but also its foundational and organisational principles.

This course provides a comprehensive analysis of India's evolving strategic, diplomatic, and economic engagements in the Indo-Pacific. It aims to critically examine India's evolving role in the Indo-Pacific, a geopolitical concept that bridges the Indian and Pacific Oceans and encompasses strategic theatres such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Oceania.

It also aims to enable students to analyse India's foreign policy, maritime strategy, defence partnerships, economic initiatives, and soft power engagements with the region and its key stakeholders. The course emphasizes India's role in contemporary geopolitical competition, especially in the context of U.S.-China rivalry, regional multilateralism (such as ASEAN, FIPIC, IPEF, and the APEC), emerging minilateral groupings such Quad, AUKUS, CSC, and JAI, and the rise of middle powers.

It critically engages with theories of international relations, regionalism, and strategic studies to evaluate India's place in the Indo-Pacific order. The course draws from academic scholarship, official documents, policy papers, and strategic think tank analyses to help students gain both conceptual understanding and insights.

## **Course Objectives**

Key objectives of this course are:

1. To evaluate the evolution and significance of the Indo-Pacific region;
2. To understand and assess India's strategic interests and policy instruments in the Indo-Pacific;

3. To assess the impact of global power rivalries on India's regional diplomacy;
4. To evaluate the challenges and threats faced by India in the Indo-Pacific and to understand whether it is equipped to deal with such challenges;
5. To assess India's role in promoting regional and extra-regional dialogue and cooperation in Southeast Asia, South Pacific and the wider Indo-Pacific region.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. Analyse India's role in the Southeast Asian, Indian Ocean region, the South Pacific, and in the evolving Indo-Pacific dynamics;
2. Critically analyse and theorize India's normative principles and behavioural practices;
3. Appraise India's role in dealing with traditional and non-traditional security challenges it faces in the Indo-Pacific.
4. Explain the role of major powers in influencing and shaping India's strategy and diplomacy since the post-Colonial times.

### **Evaluation Methods**

1. Mid Semester evaluation (50%)

- Term paper & Presentation: 20%
- Book Review: 10%
- Examination: 20%

2. End-Semester Examination (50%)

3. SIS Research Manual should be used as a guide to write assignments. Available at

[https://www.jnu.ac.in/sites/default/files/SIS\\_Research\\_Manual\\_0.pdf](https://www.jnu.ac.in/sites/default/files/SIS_Research_Manual_0.pdf)

Students should maintain high degree of academic integrity, which includes abstaining from copying and plagiarism. For details on plagiarism and research ethics refer to the SIS Research Manual.

**Course Outline:**

This course provides an in-depth exploration of Southeast Asian regionalism, focusing on the history, structure, and evolving role of India in the Indo-Pacific region. Through lectures, readings, and discussions, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of Indo-Pacific construct, its evolution, and its impact on regional and global politics. The course will also examine the principles, norms, and values that underpin India's approach to Indo-Pacific and its various dimensions.

**Modules****Module I: Theoretical Foundations and Evolution of India's Indo-Pacific Engagement**

- Geopolitical significance of the Indo-Pacific for India
- India's Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Doctrines
- Nehruvian legacy to the Modi Doctrine
- India's foreign policy institutions and the Indo-Pacific
- Non-alignment to multi-alignment policies of India
- Look East Policy
- Act East Policy
- Minilateral and plurilateral initiatives
- Security and economic engagements

**Module II: Maritime Strategy and the Role of Indian Navy in the Indo-Pacific**

- India as a Net Security Provider
- Maritime Strategy and the Indian Navy
- SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and MAHASAGAR
- Role of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
- India's Naval modernization and base diplomacy

### **Module III: India and the Major Powers in the Indo-Pacific Order**

- The US influence on Indo-Pacific order and its role in shaping India's Indo-Pacific Engagement
- India-US Relations in the Indo-Pacific Context
- India-China Rivalry and Strategic Competition
- India's engagement with Japan and South Korea in the Indo-Pacific context
- India's cooperation with ASEAN's other dialogue partners in the Indo-Pacific: Convergence and Divergence
- The Taiwan factor
- India and the emerging Minilateral and Multilateral institutions in the Indo-Pacific- Quad, Squad, and JAI

### **Module I V : India-ASEAN Relations**

- India-ASEAN Relations and Southeast Asia Strategy
- Bilateral relations with Indochina (especially Myanmar and Vietnam), the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore
- India's IPOI (Indo-Pacific Oceans Strategy) and ASEAN's AOIP (ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific)
- Indo-Pacific approach of key Southeast Asian states and India (the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand)
- India's role in ASEAN+1, ARF, ADMM-Plus, and the East Asia Summit
- India-ASEAN FTA
- ASEAN Masterplan on Connectivity (AMPC) and India

### **Module V: India, Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific**

- India and the Indian Ocean Islands
- Engagements with Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Seychelles
- Soft power, infrastructure, and military bases
- India's trilateral arrangements in the Indian Ocean: France, Japan, and the US
- Colombo Security Conclave

## **Module VI: India and the South Pacific Island Nations in the Indo-Pacific**

- India and the Pacific Island Countries (PIC)
- India's role in the FIPIC (Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation)
- Engagements with Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands
- Soft power, infrastructure, and military bases
- India's engagement with Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific

## **Module VII: Cultural, Economic, and Non-traditional security aspects of India's Indo-Pacific engagement**

- Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific
- Diaspora diplomacy
- Hindu and Buddhist diplomacy: Role of Education sector - ICCR, and Nalanda
- Role of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Panchatantra, and The Tirukkural
- Role of Indian cinema, media etc.
- FDI, trade corridors, connectivity projects
- India and economic multilateralism in Indo-Pacific: IPEF, APEC, CPTPPP, RCEP  
India's collaboration on resilient supply chains
- Technological trends: India's Semiconductor strategy and cooperation with Indo-Pacific countries, Cyber, AI, space cooperation
- Cooperation on climate change and environmental issues
- HADR cooperation

## **Readings**

### Essential Readings

- Rory Medcalf, *Indo-Pacific Empire: China, America and the Contest for the World's Pivotal Region* (Manchester University Press)
- C. Raja Mohan, *Samudra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*, Carnegie.
- David Brewster, *India's Ocean: The Story of India's Bid for Regional Leadership*, Routledge.
- Frederic Grare and Amitabh Mattoo, *India and ASEAN: The politics of India's Look East Policy*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2001
- Muni, S.D., & Mishra, R. (2019). *India's Eastward Engagement: From Antiquity to Act East Policy*. SAGE Publications.
- Jaishankar, S. (2020). *The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World*
- Academic journals: *Asian Survey*, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *India Quarterly*, *International Studies*, *International Affairs*, *Strategic Analysis*.
- Indian Ministry of External Affairs website

### Module specific readings

### Module I

#### Essential Readings

- Rory Medcalf, *Indo-Pacific Empire: China, America and the Contest for the World's Pivotal Region* (Manchester University Press)
- Muni, S.D., & Mishra, R. (2019). *India's Eastward Engagement: From Antiquity to Act East Policy*. SAGE Publications.
- Patrick M. Cronin, "The Indo-Pacific Security Landscape," Center for a New American Security, 2020
- Kanti Bajpai, *India's Grand Strategy*, Routledge, 2021
- Pant, H.V. (2016). Modi and the Reinvention of Indian Foreign Policy. *The Washington Quarterly*, 38(2), 131-145.
- Ganguly, S. (2015). India's Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect.
- Pant, H.V. (2008). The Contemporary Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra. *Strategic Analysis*, 32(6), 903-908.

- Tellis, A.J. (2016). India's Emerging Geopolitical Strategy: Seeking a Strategic Balancing Act. Carnegie India.
- Scott, D. (2012). India's "Look East" Strategy and the "Indo-Pacific". Asia-Pacific Review, 19(2), 81-98.

### **Additional Readings**

- Pant, H.V. & Rej, A. (2018). India's Foreign Policy and Regional Integration in Indo-Pacific. Palgrave, Conclusion.
- Singh, A. (2022). India's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Between Ambition and Constraints. Institute of South Asian Studies Paper.
- Hall, I. (2019). Modi and the Reinvention of Indian Foreign Policy. Bristol University Press, Ch. 8.
- Mohan, C. Raja (2013). India's Pivot to the East: Developments and Constraints. Foreign Policy Review.

## **Module II**

### **Essential Readings**

- Holmes, J.R. & Yoshihara, T. (2008). India's Maritime Doctrine: Steady as She Goes. Comparative Strategy, 27(1), 5-20.
- Ministry of Defence (2015). Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy.



- Ashley Townshend et al., "The State of the Quad 2021," USSC Briefs, 2021
- Nishikawa, Yukiko. 2007. The "ASEAN Way" and Asian Regional Security. *Politics & Policy* 35 (1):42-56.
- Amitav Acharya. 2014. *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*. (3rd edition). London: Routledge.

### **Additional Readings**

- Jones, L. (2010). ASEAN's unchanged melody? The theory and practice of 'non-interference' in Southeast Asia. *The Pacific Review*, 23(4), 479–502.
- Kivimäki, T. (2012). Southeast Asia and conflict prevention. Is ASEAN running out of steam? *The Pacific Review*, 25(4), 403–427.
- Yukawa, T. (2017). The ASEAN Way as a symbol: an analysis of discourses on the ASEAN Norms. *The Pacific Review*, 31(3), 298–314.

## **Module III**

### **Essential Readings**

- The US Indo-Pacific Strategy Reports (2019 and 2022 versions)
- Alyssa Ayres, "India's Relations with the United States," Council on Foreign Relations, 2020
- Ministry of External Affairs, India: Official Statements on Indo-Pacific, 2018–2023

### **Additional Readings**

- Emmers, R. (2019). Security Strategies of Middle Powers in the Asia-Pacific. *International Affairs*, 95(3), 613-632.
- Smith, J.M. (2020). The Quad 2.0: A Foundation for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. CSIS Report.
- Medcalf, R. (2018). Quad 2.0: A Strategic Turn to the Indo-Pacific. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 72(1), 1-15.
- Pant, H.V. & Joshi, Y. (2017). *The US Pivot and Indian Maritime Strategy*. Palgrave.
- Tellis, A.J. (2015). *Making Waves: Aiding India's Next Generation Aircraft Carrier*. Carnegie.

- Rej, A. (2019). India and Japan: Partners for a Rule-Based Indo-Pacific Order. Observer Research Foundation.
- Brewster, D. (2021). The Australia-India Security Partnership in the Indo-Pacific. Security Challenges, 17(1), 1-19.

## **Module IV**

### **Essential Readings**

- Koga, K. (2014). Institutional transformation of ASEAN: ZOPFAN, TAC, and the Bali Concord I in 1968–1976. *The Pacific Review*, 27(5), 729–753.
- Solidum D. Estrella, 2003. *The Politics of ASEAN: An Introduction to Southeast Asian Regionalism*, Singapore: Eastern University Press.
- Sinha, A. (2020). India-ASEAN Relations: Balancing Regionalism and Realism. RSIS Working Paper.
- Frederic Grare and Amitabh Mattoo, *India and ASEAN: The politics of India's Look East Policy*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2001
- Brewster, D. (2015). India's Strategic Partnership with Vietnam and Indonesia: A Maritime View.
- ASEAN-India Centre (2021). India-ASEAN Connectivity Report.
- ASEAN secretariat official web page ([www.aseansec.org](http://www.aseansec.org)).

### **Additional Readings**

- Mohan, C. Raja. (2016). India-ASEAN Strategic Ties: A Quiet Transformation. Carnegie India.
- Haokip, T. (2015). India's Look East Policy and Northeast India. *Asian Survey*, 55(4), 715-738.

## **Module V**

### **Essential Readings**

- Mohan, C. Raja. (2021). Indian Ocean Challenges: From Climate to Conflict. Carnegie.
- Shyam Saran (2017). Navigating a New World: India's Geopolitics in the 21st Century, Ch. 4-5.
- Thussu, D. (2013). Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood. Palgrave.
- Nye, J. (2004). Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics, Introduction + Ch. 2 (adapted to Indian case).
- Price, M. (2019). India's Cultural Diplomacy: A Buddhist Heritage Approach. Asian Journal of Communication.

### **Additional Readings**

- Suri, G. (2018). India's Connectivity Partnerships: Strategic Alternatives to China's BRI. ORF Occasional Paper.
- Bhatia, R. (2020). India's Infrastructure Diplomacy in Central Asia and the Indo-Pacific.
- Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) publications.

## **Module VI**

### **Essential Readings**

- Kaul M.M. (1993), Pearls in the Ocean: Security Perspectives in the South-west Pacific, UBS Publishers' Distributors Ltd
- by (Author)Das, R.U. (2020). Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: An Indian Vision of Connectivity. RIS Discussion Paper.
- Prasad, A. (2021). India's Developmental Diplomacy: Competing with BRI? KAS Report.
- Chellaney, B. (2016). Water, Peace, and War: Confronting the Global Water Crisis, Ch. on Indo-Pacific security.

### **Additional Readings**

- Kugelman, M. (Ed.) (2019). India's Global Rise: A Conversation with Shashi Tharoor. Wilson Center.

## **Module VII**

### **Essential Readings:**

- Sarita Dash (2023) Cultural Dimensions of India's Look-Act East Policy: A Study of Southeast Asia, Palgrave Macmillan
- Srivastava, A Decadal Snapshot of India's Soft Power Strategies (2014–2024) — ORF policy brief (ORF Online)
- ICCR Annual Reports [iccr.gov.in]
- Nalanda University press materials + analyses of the modern Nalanda project — background on how the Nalanda revival is used for educational diplomacy.  
al Texts (Ramayana, Mahabharata, Panchatantra, Tirukkural)
- The Ramayanas of Southeast Asia” — JSIS / Washington resource: comparative survey of localized Ramayana traditions across SE Asia
- How Bollywood can help India's soft power” and sectoral analyses of film diplomacy — practical for policy recommendations. (IDSA)
- India and Connectivity Frameworks (Delhi Policy Group)
- India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) (ism.gov.in)

### **Additional Readings:**

- MEA & Quad HADR guidelines and policy documents (MEA India)
- L Venkata Subramaniam (2024) Quantum Nation: India's Leap into the Future, Clever Fox Publishing