EGROW
Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare

# INDIA-OMAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

5000 years of civilisational relationship

**Wednesday**
**4 November 2026**
09:30 am – 4:50 pm

**Conference Room 2**
India International Centre (IIC)
Lodhi Road, New Delhi




## Technical Session I

CEPA, Trade and Investment

## Technical Session II

Energy, Manufacturing & Maritime Connectivity

## Technical Session III

Technology, Food Security & Skills

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**CONCEPT NOTE**

# INDIA–OMAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

## India–Oman at 70: From Enduring Partnership to New Economic Opportunities

### 1. Background

India and Oman share a long history of maritime trade, commercial exchange and people-to-people contacts. Formal diplomatic relations were established in 1955, and 2025 marked the 70th anniversary of these relations. Over the decades, the partnership has evolved into a Strategic Partnership encompassing trade and investment, energy, defence and maritime security, technology, education, agriculture, culture and people-to-people ties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Oman in December 2025, following the visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to India in December 2023, reaffirmed the breadth and strategic depth of bilateral cooperation and provided an opportunity to review progress across key economic, strategic and people-to-people areas.

The economic relationship has grown significantly in recent years. Bilateral merchandise trade increased from US$8.95 billion in FY2023–24 to US$10.61 billion in FY2024–25 and US$11.19 billion in FY2025–26. In FY2025–26, India's exports to Oman stood at about US$4.02 billion, while imports were US$7.17 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of approximately US$3.15 billion.

Against this backdrop, the India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), signed on 18 December 2025 and brought into force on 1 June 2026, marks a major milestone in bilateral economic relations. Oman has provided duty-free access for 99.38 per cent of India's exports by value, covering 98.08 per cent of its tariff lines. The agreement is expected to facilitate greater trade and investment, expand services cooperation and strengthen bilateral supply-chain linkages. It also provides significant scope to diversify and expand India's export presence in Oman.

India and Oman have also developed strong investment linkages over the years. More than 6,000 India–Oman joint ventures operate in Oman, with estimated total capital investments of nearly US$7.5 billion. Cumulative FDI equity inflows from Oman to India were approximately US$606 million between April 2000 and March 2025. The Oman–India Joint Investment Fund provides an institutional platform for investment cooperation.

The scope for cooperation extends beyond merchandise trade and investment to services and emerging areas. Bilateral services trade reached about US$863 million in 2024, with India recording a surplus of US$447 million. Under CEPA, Oman has undertaken market-access commitments across 127 services sub-sectors, alongside enhanced mobility provisions for defined categories of professionals. The partnership also encompasses cooperation in digital payments, IT and innovation, higher education and skills, agriculture and food security, renewable energy and green hydrogen.

The strategic priorities of both countries also create opportunities for deeper economic engagement. Oman's Vision 2040 places emphasis on economic and export diversification beyond hydrocarbons, while India's Viksit Bharat 2047 agenda is advancing manufacturing, services, technology, infrastructure and clean-energy capabilities. These complementarities provide significant scope for expanding bilateral trade, investment, technology partnerships and regional value chains.

## 2. Rationale

The 70-year milestone and the entry into force of CEPA create a timely opportunity to move India–Oman economic relations from a strong traditional foundation towards a more diversified, investment-led and technology-enabled partnership.

While bilateral trade has crossed US$11 billion, the trade balance remains substantially in Oman's favour. The next phase should therefore focus not only on increasing the volume of trade, but also on diversifying the export basket, expanding two-way investment, strengthening services trade and integrating MSMEs into regional and global value chains.

The IMF's 2026 assessment of Oman highlights the need to accelerate export diversification. Non-hydrocarbon activities account for nearly 70 per cent of GDP, while fiscal revenues remain heavily dependent on hydrocarbons. The report emphasises productivity, logistics, the business environment, human capital and higher-value tradable activities as important to broader export diversification.

These priorities align well with India's capabilities in manufacturing, engineering, pharmaceuticals, food processing, digital services, skills, healthcare, renewable energy and technology. Oman's ports, logistics infrastructure and strategic location also provide opportunities to develop regional value chains connecting India with the Gulf and wider markets.

The conference will bring together government, business, finance, academia and research institutions to review progress and identify practical priorities for the coming years, with particular emphasis on translating CEPA and existing institutional arrangements into measurable economic outcomes.

## 3. Objectives of the Conference

1. Take stock of the achievements of 70 years of India–Oman diplomatic and economic relations.
2. Identify priority sectors and opportunities arising from the India–Oman CEPA.
3. Promote two-way trade, investment, joint ventures and stronger business-to-business partnerships.
4. Explore cooperation in energy, green hydrogen, renewable energy, manufacturing, MSMEs and resilient supply chains.
5. Strengthen maritime, port, logistics and regional connectivity cooperation.
6. Expand cooperation in food security, agriculture, healthcare, education, skills, tourism, digital economy and professional services.
7. Promote innovation, technology adoption and knowledge exchange across emerging areas of cooperation.

8. Develop a forward-looking action agenda with priority areas, responsible stakeholders and indicative timelines.

## 4. Expected Outcomes

1. Priority Sector and Opportunity Matrix covering trade, investment and business partnerships.
2. CEPA Action Agenda identifying priority sectors, products and institutional measures to expand bilateral trade.
3. Investment and Joint Venture Pipeline identifying potential projects and areas for private-sector collaboration.
4. India–Oman Green Partnership Priorities covering renewable energy, green hydrogen, green ammonia and related technologies.
5. Maritime, Logistics and Connectivity Agenda covering ports, shipping, warehousing and regional supply-chain integration.
6. MSME, Manufacturing and Technology Cooperation Priorities identifying opportunities for industrial collaboration and technology partnerships.
7. Skills, Education, Healthcare, Tourism and Professional Mobility Priorities identifying areas for deeper cooperation and capacity building.
8. Conference Outcome Document and Action Plan setting out priority actions, responsible stakeholders and suggested timelines for implementation over the coming decade.

## 5. References


1. Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, TRADESTAT – Country-wise Export, Import and Total Trade data, accessed 2026.
2. Embassy of India, Muscat, India–Oman Bilateral Relations and Trade & Economic Relations, 2025–26.
3. Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), 2025–26.
4. Press Information Bureau, Government of India, releases and backgrounders on India–Oman CEPA, bilateral relations and Prime Minister's visit to Oman, 2025–26.
5. International Monetary Fund, Oman: Selected Issues, IMF Country Report No. 26/005, January 2026.
6. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sultanate of Oman, India–Oman bilateral relations and cooperation, 2025–26.
7. U.S. Department of State, 2026 Investment Climate Statements: Oman.
8. Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs / Press Information Bureau, India–Oman cooperation in trade, investment, energy, logistics, agriculture, technology and human-capital development.

# Program Schedule

**INDIA–OMAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE**
**India–Oman at 70: From Enduring Partnership to New Economic Opportunities**
**November 4, 2026**
**Conference Room 2, IIC, Lodhi Road, New Delhi**

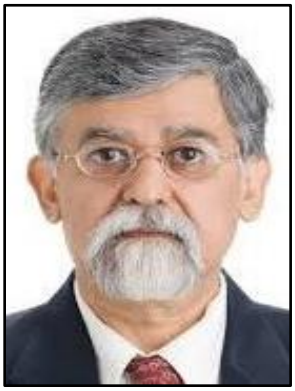
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| 09:30am -10:00am | **Registration** |
| 10:00am – 11:00am | **Inaugural Session**<br><br>**Welcome and Setting the Context**<br><br>Dr. Charan Singh, CEO, EGROW Foundation<br><br>**Chair**<br><br>Dr. Arvind Virmani, Chairman and Founding Director EGROW, Former Member, NITI Aayog<br><br>**Chief Guest**<br><br>Hon. Shri Naveen Jindal, Member of Parliament and Chairman Jindal Steel<br><br>**Guest of Honour**<br><br>Mr. Yahya Al Dughaishi, Counsellor, Sultanate of Oman in India<br><br>Ambassador Anil Wadhwa, Former Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman<br><br>Ambassador J.S. Mukul, IFS, Former Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman<br><br>Prof. Rakesh Mohan Joshi, Former Vice Chancellor, IIFT |
| 11:00am –11:30am | Tea Break |

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| 11:30am –1:00pm<br><br>***Key Discussion Areas:***<br><br>a. Using CEPA to expand and diversify trade<br>b. Investment and joint ventures<br>c. Standards, certification and practical barriers | **Technical Session I: CEPA, Trade and Investment: Turning Market Access into Business**<br><br>**Chair:**<br><br>Dr. Murali Kallummal, Professor, Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT<br><br>**Panelists:**<br><br>Shri Ritesh Sinha, GM and Head, Financial Institutions Group, SBI<br><br>Shri Tilak Pati, Vice President, Middle East & Africa, Invest India<br><br>Dr. Geethanjali Nataraj, Principal – Trade Policy and EXIM, CII<br><br>Dr. Arpita Mukherjee, Professor, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations<br><br>Dr. Pankhuri Gaur, Asst. Prof., RIS<br><br>Shri DP Singh, Former Deputy Managing Director and Joint Chief Executive Officer of SBI Mutual Fund<br><br>Shri Gaurav Pundir, IRS, Director, Department of Commerce |
| 1:00pm–2:15pm<br><br>***Key Discussion Areas:***<br><br>a. Energy transition and green hydrogen<br>b.Manufacturing, engineering<br>c. MSMEs<br>Ports, shipping and logistics | **Technical Session II: Energy, Manufacturing & Maritime Connectivity**<br><br>**Chair:**<br><br>Ambassador Mahesh Sachdev, IFS<br>President, Eco-Diplomacy & Strategies; Distinguished Fellow, Ananta Centre<br><br>**Panelists:**<br><br>Cmde. Sujeet Samaddar, Visiting Fellow, RIS<br><br>Shri Anil Bhardwaj, Secretary General, Federation of Indian Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises<br><br>Shri Mukesh Mohan Gupta, President, Chamber of Indian Micro Small and Medium Enterprises<br><br>Shri Anuj Jain, Director (Finance), Indian Oil Corporation |

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| 2:15pm - 3:15pm | Lunch |
| 3:15pm – 4:15pm<br><br>***Key Discussion Areas:***<br><br>a. Digital economy and technology<br>b. Agriculture, food processing and fisheries<br>c. Education, skills, healthcare, tourism and professional mobility | **Technical Session III: Technology, Food Security, Skills & New Areas of Cooperation**<br><br>**Chair:**<br><br>Prof. Ram Singh, Head CDOE, IIFT<br><br>**Panelists:**<br><br>Dr. Ashok Vishandass, Former Chairman, Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices<br><br>Dr. Rattan Chand, Founder Director EGROW Foundation<br><br>Dr. Jagvinder Singh Virk, Global Affairs & Geopolitics Expert and Founding Chairman, India–Australia Strategic Alliance<br><br>Dr. S.P. Sharma, Chief Economist, Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India |
| 4:15pm – 4:45pm<br><br>***Key Discussion Areas:***<br><br>a. Consolidating recommendations<br>b. Identifying priority actions, stakeholders and timelines<br>c. Way forward | **Valedictory Session: Way Forward: An Action Plan for the Next Decade**<br><br>**Chair:**<br><br>Dr. Arvind Virmani, Chairman and Founding Director EGROW, Former Member, NITI Aayog<br><br>**Valedictory Address:**<br><br>Ambassador Manjeev Puri, Former Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister, co-led research and publication of the book titled "India Oman: 5000 years of friendship"<br><br>Dr. Waiel S.H. Awwad, Acting Secretary-General, India and Arab Countries Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture |
| 4:45pm – 4:50pm | **Vote of Thanks**<br>Dr. Shalini Singh Sharma, Head Research, EGROW Foundation |

# PROFILE OF SPEAKERS

*(In order of Participation in the Conference)*



**Dr. Arvind Virmani**

Dr. Arvind Virmani is Chairman and Founding Director of EGROW and former Member of NITI Aayog. A distinguished economist and policy expert, he has served as Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India, Principal Adviser to the Planning Commission, Executive Director at the IMF, and Director & CEO of ICRIER. He has also held leadership roles at EXIM Bank, LIC, SBI Mutual Fund, and Punjab National Bank. Widely recognized for his contributions to macroeconomic policy, trade, finance, and public policy, Dr. Virmani has played a pivotal role in shaping India's economic reforms and financial sector development.



**Dr. Charan Singh**

Dr. Charan Singh is the CEO and Founder Director of EGROW Foundation and a member of the IRDAI Insurance Advisory Committee. He has served as Non-Executive Chairman of Punjab & Sind Bank, RBI Chair Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore, Senior Economist at the IMF, Washington DC, and Research Director for Debt Management at the Reserve Bank of India. He has also been a board member of the National Housing Bank (NHB) and NABFINS, bringing extensive expertise in economics, banking, financial policy, and governance.



**Dr. Ashok Vishandass**

Dr. Ashok Vishandass is Former Chairman of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) with over four decades of experience in policy formulation across various Government of India ministries and departments, including as Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. He has also served as Chief Adviser to FAO of the United Nations. A noted expert in agriculture and food policy, he has made significant contributions to pricing and non-pricing agricultural policies. His areas of expertise include agriculture, food security, official statistics, and international trade. He holds a PhD in Economics and multiple advanced degrees in economics, statistics, finance, and development studies.



**Dr. Rattan Chand**

Dr. Rattan Chand is a founding Director of the EGROW Foundation and a former officer of the Indian Statistical Service with over 35 years of experience in public policy, health systems, and official statistics. He has contributed significantly to major national health and population initiatives, including HMIS, Annual Health Surveys, District Level Household Surveys, and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). He has collaborated with global organizations such as the World Bank, WHO, USAID, and the United Nations. Specializing in population studies, health policy, and applied statistics, Dr. Chand holds advanced degrees from IIPS Mumbai, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and Panjab University.



**Hon. Shri. Naveen Jindal**

Hon. Shri. Naveen Jindal is a prominent Indian industrialist, philanthropist and Chairman of the Jindal Group, a leading conglomerate in steel, mining and infrastructure. Under his leadership, the Group has expanded its global presence, focusing on innovation, sustainability, renewable energy and green steel. He is also a three-term Member of Parliament and President of the Indian Steel Association and the Flag Foundation of India. His decade-long campaign to democratise the display of the Indian National Flag culminated in a landmark Supreme Court judgment allowing citizens to display the Tricolour throughout the year. He is the founding Chancellor of O. P. Jindal Global University. His contributions have earned him several distinctions, including the University of Texas at Dallas Lifetime Achievement Award (2023), Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award (2010) and recognition among Fortune India's Best CEOs (2024).



**Mr. Yahya Al Dughaishi**

Mr. Yahya Al Dughaishi serves as Counsellor and Head of Trade & Public Relations at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in New Delhi, a position he has held since July 2023. He has extensive experience in diplomatic, legal and trade-related affairs, having previously served in the Continental Shelf and Maritime Affairs Office and the Legal Department of Oman's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as at the Omani Embassy in Vienna. He holds a Master's degree in Commercial Law and a Bachelor's degree in Law from Sultan Qaboos University. His academic specialisation includes the legal regulation of trade in services in the Sultanate of Oman.



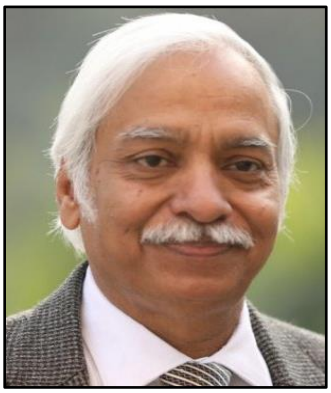
**Amb. Anil Wadhwa**

Ambassador Anil Wadhwa served in the Indian Foreign Service from 1979 to 2017, holding ambassadorial positions in Italy, Thailand, Oman and Poland. As Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, he oversaw India's relations with Southeast Asia, the Gulf, West Asia, the Pacific and Australasia. He also served as India's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to FAO, IFAD and WFP, and worked with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague, heading its Government Relations and Political Affairs, and Media and Public Affairs branches. He represented India at several multilateral forums, including the East Asia Summit, ASEAN-India, ASEM and the Arab League. His previous assignments included Geneva, Beijing and Hong Kong. He also led a CII task force preparing India's Australia Economic Strategy report. Currently, he is a Distinguished Fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi, and serves as an Independent Director and Advisor to corporate organisations in India and abroad.



**Amb. J.S. Mukul**

Ambassador J. S. Mukul is Professor Emeritus and Director of International Relations at Sushant University, where he has been associated for the past five years. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1981 after completing his postgraduate degree in Political Science, specialising in International Relations, from Bangalore University. During his 40-year diplomatic career, he served as Ambassador of India to the Netherlands and Oman, and as Consul-General in Munich, Germany. He also served as Dean of the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, India's premier institution for training Indian and foreign diplomats. His earlier diplomatic assignments included Damascus, Abu Dhabi, Kandy, Colombo, Geneva and Riyadh. His regional expertise encompasses the Arab and Gulf region and Western Europe. He also served as India's Sous-Sherpa for six G20 Summits.



**Dr. Rakesh Mohan Joshi**

Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Mohan Joshi is an eminent academician, international trade expert and management scholar. He is the former Vice-Chancellor of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi, and former Director of the Indian Institute of Plantation Management (IIPM), Bengaluru. A senior academic at IIFT since 2000, he has made significant contributions to international trade, international business and management education. He has authored several books published by Oxford University Press and served as Editor of *Foreign Trade Review*. His case studies have received international recognition from London Business School and the European Case Clearing House. He has also worked with leading multilateral organisations, including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and UNCTAD, bringing extensive international experience to research, policy and academic leadership.



**Dr. Murali Kallummal**

Prof. Murali Kallummal is a Professor at the Centre for WTO Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), and has been associated with the Centre since 2003. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University and specialises in international trade and development economics, WTO negotiations, market access, tariffs and non-tariff measures, technical barriers to trade, and free trade agreements. His research focuses on the implications of international trade policies and regulatory standards for India's trade and export competitiveness. He has contributed extensively to policy research and reports for the Government of India, particularly the Department of Commerce, and has undertaken research and training assignments relating to WTO agreements and trade policy. He has also played a significant role in developing databases on WTO-notified Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) measures.



**Shri. Ritesh Sinha**

Shri. Ritesh Sinha is General Manager and Head of the Financial Institutions Group (FIG) under the International Banking Group (IBG) at State Bank of India (SBI). He oversees SBI's correspondent banking relationships with 223 banks across 55 countries and approximately 4,300 RMA relationships across 116 countries. His responsibilities include institutional sales, trade finance, treasury and payment products. He also manages the Treasury Management Group, overseeing investments and fundraising, and the Global Payment & Services department, which handles inward rupee remittances, Vostro accounts and foreign currency cheque collections. A career banker, Mr. Sinha joined SBI as a Probationary Officer in 1998 and has over two decades of experience across retail banking, foreign exchange, investments and digital banking, in India and overseas. Previously, he served as Chief Financial Officer of SBI Payments. He holds an MBA specialising in Finance, FRM certification from GARP, USA, and a Certificate in Commercial Credit from Moody's Analytics.



**Shri. Tilak Pati**

Shri Tilak Pati is Vice President at Invest India with the Countries Team. He spearheads investor outreach initiatives within the wider Asia and Oceania region with special focus on the GCC region. He supports Invest India in developing investor engagement strategies and fostering international partnerships. He is a seasoned strategic leader with nearly 20 years of global experience in corporate strategy, stakeholder engagement, and investment promotion, specialising in the energy sector and market expansion. He has prior experience at Arthur D. Little and IBM, where he has advised corporations and governments on a wide range of strategic, operational and organization development topics.



**Dr. Geethanjali Nataraj**

Dr. Geethanjali Nataraj is currently working as Principal – International (Trade Policy and EXIM), CII (Confederation of Indian Industry, New Delhi). Prior to that she worked as Director (Policy and Research) at the Services Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Commerce and Industry undertaking, Government of India. Geethanjali Nataraj is an Economist with nearly 30 years of research and teaching experience on Indian economy, international trade policy issues especially on issues related to WTO, regional trading agreements, FDI and trade policies of developing countries, South Asia and economies of Japan and China and the Services Sector. She has publications in varied national and international refereed journals. She has also been a faculty with premier think tanks and business schools in India including Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), National council of Applied Economics Research (NCAER), ORF, Brookings India, FICCI, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), IPE Global and British High Commission, all in New Delhi.



**Dr. Arpita Mukherjee**

Dr. Arpita Mukherjee Dr. Arpita Mukherjee is a Professor at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) with over 30 years of experience in policy-oriented research. She has worked extensively with the Government of India, international organisations and policymakers across the European Union, the US, ASEAN and East Asia, completing over 60 sector-specific studies. Her expertise includes international trade, investment, services, agriculture, manufacturing supply chains, economic corridors, market trends and entry strategies. Holding a PhD in Economics from the University of Portsmouth, she has authored over 80 publications, serves on government committees, policy panels and ten editorial boards, and regularly writes for print media.



**Dr. Pankhuri Gaur**

Dr Gaur is an Assistant Professor at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). Her areas of interest are international trade, including multilateralism and regionalism. Recent work covers different forms of trade agreements— bilateral, regional, trans-regional agreements or Mega-Regional trade agreements. She is also working on the Blue Economy, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Maritime Issues. She has also participated as a member of the Indian team for the India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) Joint Study Group (JSG) Report Meeting, 2017-18. She has published in various international journals. She has been writing on issues related to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean, BIMSTEC, South Asia, etc. She has also contributed to preliminary studies for the National Maritime Policy and Blue Economy Policy of India.



**Shri. D.P. Singh**

Shri D. P. Singh is a seasoned banking and financial services professional with over three decades of experience in the industry. He is the former Deputy Managing Director and Joint Chief Executive Officer of SBI Funds Management Limited (SBI Mutual Fund), where he served from 1998 until his retirement in August 2026. During his distinguished tenure, he played a pivotal role in the organisation's growth, strengthening its market leadership, expanding its assets under management and extending its reach across urban and rural India. He led key business functions, including sales, marketing, product development and customer service. Prior to joining SBI Mutual Fund, he held several responsibilities at the State Bank of India across retail banking, corporate credit and information technology. He holds a Master's degree in Commerce, a postgraduate diploma in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, and the CAIIB qualification.



**Shri Gaurav Pundir**

Shri Gaurav Pundir is an officer of the 2010-batch Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax). He is currently serving as Director in the Department of Commerce, Government of India, where his responsibilities include matters relating to India's trade with the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region and Gulf countries. He has also been associated with India's G20 trade and investment agenda, contributing to discussions on paperless trade, MSME integration into global value chains and international investment cooperation. Earlier, he served in the Income Tax Department in various capacities, including investigations and international taxation. He holds a B.Tech. (Hons.) in Electrical Engineering from IIT-BHU and a Master of Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.



**Amb. Mahesh Sachdev**

Ambassador Mahesh Sachdev retired from the Indian Foreign Service in October 2013 after a distinguished 35-year diplomatic career, including ambassadorial assignments to Algeria, Norway and Nigeria. His expertise spans the Middle East, Africa, hydrocarbon diplomacy, international trade and economic relations. He is fluent in Arabic and has studied French. Currently, he is President of Eco-Diplomacy and Strategies, India President of the Asian-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Distinguished Fellow at Ananta Centre. He previously served as Founder-President of the UAE-India Business Council. During his diplomatic assignments, he contributed significantly to strengthening India's economic and trade relations, particularly with Nigeria, Algeria and Norway. He has authored business manuals on Nigeria and the UAE and regularly comments on strategic, economic and cross-cultural issues. An economic strategist and consultant, he also contributes to training civil service aspirants and diplomats. He holds postgraduate degrees from IIT Kanpur in Nuclear Physics.



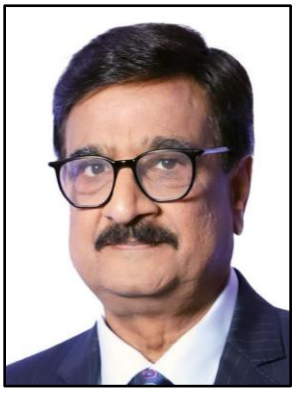
**Comde. Sujeet Samaddar**

Commodore Sujeet Samaddar, NM (Retd.), is a Visiting Fellow at RIS, New Delhi, and Founder-Secretary of the Society for Aerospace, Maritime and Defence Studies (SAMDeS). A graduate of IIT Roorkee, he was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1980 and retired in 2009 as Principal Director, Naval Plans after distinguished service, including four command appointments. He was awarded the Nao Sena Medal in 2008. His expertise spans maritime policy, shipbuilding, sustainability, green hydrogen, circular economy, and space technology. He has held senior industry roles, served as Senior Consultant at NITI Aayog, and contributed to major national policies in maritime, defence, and industrial sectors.



**Shri. Anil Bhardwaj**

Shri Anil Bhardawaj, *Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME)*, is an expert in MSME development, private sector growth, and trade policy with over 30 years of experience. He has led major MSME initiatives supported by organizations such as the World Bank, UNDP, UNIDO, UNCTAD, ADB, and ILO. He has contributed extensively to industrial policy, entrepreneurship development, and SME promotion, while authoring several publications on MSME issues. Mr. Bhardawaj serves on various advisory committees linked to NITI Aayog and the Ministries of MSME and Commerce & Industry, and has also held leadership roles with institutions such as EDII, BIS, and QCI.



**Shri Mukesh Mohan Gupta**

Shri Mukesh Mohan Gupta is President of the Chamber of Indian Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (CIMSME), bringing over 30 years of experience in Banking, Finance, MSMEs, Economy, and Law. He has served as an Independent Director on the Board of Dena Bank, a Tata Group company, and other Public Sector Undertakings. Recognized for his expertise, he was invited by the Prime Minister to discuss economic strategies for MSMEs. An author and media host, he launched the book "MSMEs Of Developed India", hosted Zee Business's "Positive Talk", and runs the "MSME HELPLINE" YouTube channel with over 1 million subscribers.



**Shri. Anuj Jain**

Shri. Anuj Jain is Director (Finance) & CFO at Indian Oil Corpo- ration Ltd. (IOCL), with over three decades of experience in fi-nance, international trade, supply chain management, treasury, and corporate affairs. He has played a key role in driving IOCL's financial strategy, energy transition initiatives, and global partner- ships. Previously, he served as CFO of Lanka IOC PLC and has held several senior leadership positions within IOCL. He cur- rently serves on the boards of multiple Indian Oil subsidiaries and joint ventures. A Chartered Accountant and Company Secretary, Mr. Jain is widely recognized for his contributions to financial management, strategic planning, and India's energy sector.



**Dr. Ram Singh**

Prof. Ram Singh is a Professor at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi, with over two decades of experience in teaching, research and professional training. His areas of specialisation include international business, international trade, export-import management, trade logistics and international marketing. He has authored several books, including Export and Import Management, International Business and International Trade Logistics. His research and policy work covers trade facilitation, export competitiveness, trade infrastructure and international economic cooperation. He has undertaken research assignments for various government ministries and industry bodies and regularly contributes to leading publications on trade and economic policy.



**Dr. Jagvinder Singh Virk**

Dr. Virk is the Founding Chairman of the India–Australia Strategic Alliance and has been actively engaged in strengthening bilateral relations and promoting international cooperation between India and Australia. His areas of engagement include trade and investment, education, infrastructure, technology and institutional partnerships. He has participated in India–Australia delegations and discussions covering a broad range of areas, including defence, trade, education, rural development, technology and investment. His academic and professional experience in Ukraine, Australia and India has provided him with a valuable cross-cultural perspective on international affairs and global developments. Through his efforts to strengthen bilateral relations and foster institutional and community-level partnerships, he brings practical insights into the strategic and economic dimensions of international cooperation.



**Dr. S.P. Sharma**

Dr. S. P. Sharma is a distinguished economist, policy strategist and thought leader with nearly three decades of experience in government and leading industry institutions. He began his career with the Government of Punjab and the Government of India, subsequently holding key positions at prominent industry bodies. He served as Chief Economist and Deputy Secretary General at PHDCCI from 2010 to March 2025 and currently heads the ASSOCHAM Global Research & Strategy Centre as Chief Economist. His work focuses on economic research, policy advocacy, corporate engagement and industry-academia collaboration. He has led several policy studies for government ministries, regulatory bodies and international institutions. In 2025, he authored *India @ 2047: Leading the Global Economic Order*, outlining a roadmap for India's emergence as a global economic power. He is a regular commentator on economic, industrial and trade issues across television, All India Radio and academic forums. He holds an M.Phil. in Industrial Economics and a PhD in International Business from Panjab University, Chandigarh.



**Shri Manjeev Puri**

Shri. Manjeev Singh Puri is the Former Ambassador of India to the European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Nepal, as well as the former Ambassador/Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations. He also headed the UN-Economic & Social Affairs Division at the Ministry of External Affairs of India from 2005 to 2009. During this time, he led the Indian delegation to the inaugural meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Brussels in July 2007 and presented various reports on India's behalf at the Human Rights Council. From 2011 to 2012, when India served on the UN Security Council, Mr. Puri was a senior member of its delegation.



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Dr. Waiel S. H. Awwad is an internationally recognised expert in economic diplomacy, strategic affairs and international business, with over four decades of experience in international relations, trade and investment promotion. He serves as Secretary General (In-Charge) of the India & Arab Countries Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (IACCIA), where he leads initiatives to strengthen economic and commercial relations between India and the 22 member states of the League of Arab States. His work focuses on promoting bilateral trade, investment, strategic partnerships and business cooperation across sectors including energy, infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing and technology. He also advises businesses and institutional stakeholders on geopolitical developments, investment opportunities and international market expansion, contributing to stronger India–Arab economic ties.



**Prof. Shalini Sharma**

Prof. Shalini Singh Sharma is a distinguished economist, academic leader and public policy expert with nearly 30 years of experience in institutional leadership, higher education, research and policy advisory. A double University Gold Medallist from Punjabi University and Ph.D. from Aligarh Muslim University, she has authored over 50 research papers and presented more than 75 papers at national and international forums. As Head of Training and Research at EGROW Foundation, she provides strategic direction to research, policy engagement and capacity-building initiatives, fostering collaboration with government, industry and academia. Her expertise spans institution building, academic governance, strategic planning, research leadership, macroeconomic policy, financial sector development and MSME growth. Having held senior leadership positions at MIT World Peace University, Amity University, Galgotias University and Sharda University, she brings a strong record of academic leadership, organisational development and advancing institutional excellence.