



Webinar on

Trilateral Approaches to Indo-Pacific Stability

Thursday, 16 January, 2025

Virtual

1200- 1315 (IST) | 1730-1845 (AEST) | 1830-1945 (Fiji) | 1630-1745 (Papua New Guinea)

Background and Context

The evolving geopolitical landscape of the Indo-Pacific region highlights the increasing importance of regional partnerships to address shared challenges. With the recent Indian Ocean Conference in Perth and DefSat 2024 in New Delhi emphasising India-Australia collaboration, the timing is opportune to integrate the voices of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). These nations, facing existential challenges like climate change, natural disasters, and economic vulnerabilities, demand urgent attention. Most Pacific nations, including Tuvalu, Fiji, and Vanuatu, grapple with high debt-to-GDP ratios exceeding 70%, exacerbated by post-pandemic pressures. Coupled with their remoteness and fragile ecosystems, the Pacific Island Countries represent a development flashpoint that India and Australia, through trilateral partnerships, can address.

This webinar aims to explore these pressing issues, leveraging complementary capabilities to create sustainable solutions aligned with the Pacific Islands Forum's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent in areas such as **renewable energy, disaster management, climate-resilient agriculture, and maritime cooperation.**

India and Australia have made significant strides in advancing their strategic partnerships, including economic agreements and multilateral initiatives like the Quad. These partnerships align with the development objectives outlined in the Pacific Islands Forum's (PIF) *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*. Together, these nations can help PICs address their vulnerabilities while advancing sustainable and resilient economic growth in the region.

Objectives

- **Identify Priority Areas for Trilateral Cooperation:**
Discuss opportunities in renewable energy, disaster management, and agriculture, aligning with PICs' development needs.
- **Foster Maritime Collaboration:**
Explore India and Australia's capabilities in maritime trade, logistics, and infrastructure to address vulnerabilities and promote sustainable economic integration.
- **Promote Sustainable Development:**
Highlight innovative solutions that combine India's cost-effective technologies, Australia's regional expertise, and PICs' local knowledge for long-term sustainability.
- **Strengthen Indo-Pacific Regional Stability:**
Position the trilateral cooperation as a model for resilience and sustainability, reducing reliance on external powers and promoting a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific.

Expected Outcomes

- Development of a roadmap identifying specific areas of collaboration among India, Australia, and the Pacific Island Countries, focusing on renewable energy, disaster resilience, and climate-resilient agriculture
- Establishment of actionable strategies for enhancing maritime trade, infrastructure development, and sustainable fisheries, fostering greater economic connectivity and regional integration in the Indo-Pacific
- Promotion of collaborative solutions that align with the Pacific Islands Forum's 2050 Strategy, reducing reliance on external powers, addressing geopolitical sensitivities, and advancing a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific
- Identified challenges and opportunities for India, Australia and PICs in the Indo-Pacific

Discussion Topics

- **Trilateral Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific:** Explore how India, Australia, and Pacific Island Countries (PICs) can collaboratively address regional challenges such as climate change, disaster resilience, and renewable energy, leveraging respective strengths in innovation, resources, and regional expertise
- **Renewable Energy and Sustainability:** Discuss opportunities for expanding rural electrification and energy independence in PICs through solar, wind, and hydrogen energy technologies, combining India's affordability and Australia's advancements in energy storage
- **Disaster Management and Resilience:** Highlight the potential for India and Australia to assist PICs in developing early warning systems, cyclone prediction models, and disaster response training programs, ensuring enhanced local capacity and reduced dependence on external aid
- **Maritime Cooperation and Economic Connectivity:** Analyse the role of maritime trade and port development in fostering economic growth and regional integration, including India's shipbuilding ambitions and Australia's expertise in sustainable marine practices

- **Climate-Resilient Agriculture and Fisheries:** Delve into how India's drought-resistant crop technologies and Australia's water management expertise can support PICs in achieving food security and sustainable fisheries while preserving marine ecosystems
- **Challenges and Geopolitical Sensitivities:** Address the diplomatic dynamics of trilateral cooperation, emphasising respect for PIC-led regional organisations, cultural contexts, and concerns about counterbalancing external influences, particularly China's regional footprint

Flow of Session

12:00 – 12:05	-	Introduction
12:05 – 12:10	-	Moderators Note
12:10 – 13:00	-	Panel Discussion
13:00 – 13:10	-	Q&A Session
13:10 – 13:15	-	Closing Remarks