



**Institute of National Security Studies
Webinar on**

“SOUTH ASIAN GEOPOLITICS IN 2024: LESSONS FOR SRI LANKA”

Post -event Press Release

The Institute of National Security Studies (INSS), the Ministry of Defence’s premier think tank on national security, hosted a close door webinar on “South Asian Geopolitics in 2024: Lessons for Sri Lanka” on Thursday, February 15, 2024, from 1000hrs to 1200hrs (IST) via Zoom. The Guest Speaker for the event was, Lieutenant General Vinod G. Khandare PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd.), Principal Adviser, Ministry of Defence, India. Colonel Nalin Herath RSP, Overlooking Director General, and Acting Director (Research) of INSS was the moderator of the event. The audience consisted of ministry officials, academics, researchers, policymakers, representatives from Sri Lanka Armed Forces and Coast Guard. The moderator commenced the proceedings by explaining on the need of Sri Lanka to lead the way in working with South Asian Region.

Subsequent to the introduction given, the speaker, Lt. Gen. Vinod G. Khandare commenced his vocal presentation with the motion “Avoid conflict and grow together” by outlining the geopolitical aspect of economics and trade. With examples from history, he emphasized on the impact on the dynamics of trade and economy that has been influenced on the region by other states. In addition, he brought into account the impact of radicalization that leads to terrorism and separatism caused, and on anticipated disruptions to the global context. Moreover, he stated that India is concerned about maritime activity that occurs in a Sri Lankan context. Thereafter, he expressed the importance of emphasizing acting together as a “close-knit” region to face challenges posed by misinformation and disinformation because “these things are here to stay”. Threats by Artificial Intelligence and communication on governance, banking and health were also pointed out, that should be focused in the current situation.

Following up, several timely questions under the discussed topic of concern were posed by the audience in the Q and A segment, which were directed at the guest speaker, which showed much enthusiasm. The speaker responded constructively along with adequate facts as well as realistic concerns of the current context, in which he clearly mentioned that India doesn't believe in dominating any other state. He further added insight on cognitive warfare and its implications, and the importance of focusing on safeguarding digital realms and facing issues relating to the quest for power on economics and human capital in the region.