

Webinar Report- Final Presentations by Students from a Liberal Arts Background

Held on August 7, 2026

Overview:

The Maritime Research Center, in collaboration with Nirdhwani Technology Private Limited (NDT), organised a webinar on “Final Internship Presentations by UDA Summer Interns from the Liberal Arts Background” on 07 August 2026, marking the culmination of its internship programme for students from St. Stephen’s College, Delhi. The webinar provided a platform to present the outcomes of their research undertaken during the internship and engage with an expert panel comprising practitioners, scholars, policy experts, diplomats, media professionals, and representatives from academia and industry. The event provided an opportunity for participants to receive expert feedback, engage in meaningful discussions, and reflect on the broader policy and societal implications of their work.

The final presentations webinar brought together research themes spanning Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), the global relevance of UDA, Blue Economy Assessment, social impact and the application of contemporary strategic and societal challenges.

What were the main objectives of the webinar?

- To provide interns with a professional platform to present their research findings and demonstrate their analytical capabilities.
- To facilitate interaction among young researchers, experienced practitioners, scholars, policymakers, and industry experts.
- To obtain expert feedback that could help interns further refine their research and explore opportunities for publication and future research.
- To promote interdisciplinary thinking and demonstrate the applicability of the UDA Framework across diverse domains.

Webinar Proceedings:

The webinar commenced with welcome remarks by Dr (Cdr) Arnab Das, Founder and Director, MRC, who set the context for the final internship presentations. He highlighted the importance of providing young researchers with opportunities to engage with real-world challenges through an interdisciplinary lens. The internship programme was positioned as an important avenue for introducing students to the UDA Framework and enabling them to examine contemporary issues beyond conventional disciplinary boundaries.

Later, as part of the main programme, the first segment featured presentations by MRC researchers and interns, conveying a diverse range of research themes. Vaibhav Sachan from St. Stephen’s College kickstarted this segment with his presentation on “Modelling and Simulation-Driven Marine Spatial Planning for India’s Exclusive Economic Zone.” His presentation explored how modelling and simulation approaches can contribute to improved planning and management of India’s maritime spaces. This was followed by a research presentation by his mentor, Shridhar Prabhuraman, Deputy Director at MRC, who elaborated on

MSP Digital Platforms, highlighting the role of digital tools and technologies in supporting informed and integrated marine spatial planning.

Later, Callistine Lewis, Research Fellow and Head of Publication at the MRC, presented on “UDA in the Global Order,” examining the broader strategic and international relevance of UDA. His presentation was followed by a research presentation by Ekta Sareen from St. Stephen’s College, who explored “The Global Relevance of UDA.” Her research examined the wider applicability of UDA and its significance in addressing emerging challenges across the global maritime domain. The next segment featured presentations on topics related to the Blue Accounting Framework by Cathrine J, Head of Research at MRC, and Peter Biju from St. Stephen’s College, who has been mentored by Cathrine on the same topic. These presentations highlighted the importance of developing systematic approaches to assess and account for activities and value creation within the Blue Economy. Their work also examined sector-specific dimensions relevant to assessing the Blue Economy.

The next presentation was delivered by Mrs Nishtha Vishwakarma, Head of Communication and Outreach, MRC, on “Implementing 100 Warriors Initiative through the UDA Framework.” The presentation examined the potential of the UDA Framework as an enabling approach for connecting research, capacity building, youth engagement, and broader societal objectives. Her presentation brought a societal perspective to the UDA discourse, examining its potential social implications and broader relevance.

Expert Interventions:

The research presentations were followed by an extensive expert intervention session featuring distinguished professionals from diplomacy, strategic affairs, international studies, industry, academia, media, and public policy.

The expert panel comprised:

- Ms Jenna Lindeke Heavenrich, Lead Analyst and Director, Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies (YCAPS), Tokyo
- Mr Niraj Khinvasara, Executive Director, World Trade Center, Pune
- Mr Amitabh Sinha, Deputy Editor, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi
- Dr Ajit Ranade, Dean, Research, Pune International Centre (PIC), India
- Mr Anup K. Mudgal, IFS (Retd.) Former Diplomat, Government of India

The expert interventions provided an important external perspective on the research presented by the interns. The panel highlighted the importance of moving beyond conventional disciplinary silos and encouraged the interns to consider the policy, technological, economic, geopolitical, and societal dimensions of their respective research areas. The discussion also reinforced the relevance of interdisciplinary frameworks, such as UDA, for understanding complex maritime challenges. The interaction enabled interns to receive constructive feedback on their research approaches while gaining exposure to practitioners' perspectives across different sectors.

Video Presentations

View all the presentations and keynote addresses below:

Speaker	Image	Video Link
Dr (Cdr) Arnab Das, Founder and Director, MRC Opening Remarks		Link Here
Shridhar Prabhuraman (Deputy Director, MRC) Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Digital Platform		Link Here
Vaibhav Sachan (MRC Intern; St. Stephen's College) Modelling and Simulation-Driven Marine Spatial Planning for India's Exclusive Economic Zone		Link Here
Callistine Lewis (Research Fellow and Head of Publication, MRC) UDA in the Global Order		Link Here

Speaker	Image	Video Link
Ekta (MRC Intern; St. Stephen's College) The Global Relevance of UDA		Link Here
J. Cathrine (Head of Research, MRC) Blue Economy Accounting Framework		Link Here
Peter Baiju (MRC Intern; St. Stephen's College) Sector-Specific Analysis for the Blue Economy Assessment (BEA)		Link Here
Nishtha Vishwakarma (Head of Communication and Outreach) Implementing 100 Warriors Initiative through the UDA Framework		Link Here
Experts' Interventions		

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Ms Jenna Lindeke Heavenrich, Lead Analyst, Director, Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies (YCAPS), Tokyo		Link Here
Mr Niraj Khinvasara, Executive Director, World Trade Center, Pune.		Link Here
Dr Ajit Ranade, Dean, Research, Pune International Centre (PIC), India		Link Here
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Key Takeaways:

1. Interdisciplinary research is critical to addressing complex maritime challenges
2. UDA has relevance beyond traditional security discourse
3. Digital and analytical tools can strengthen maritime governance
4. Young researchers can contribute meaningfully to emerging policy conversations
5. Expert mentorship strengthens research outcomes

Image Gallery

