



**ADMIRAL (RETD) SUREESH MEHTA, PVSM, AVSM
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA TO NEW ZEALAND**

Born on 18 August 1947, Admiral Sureesh Mehta, rose to become the first post-independence born Chief of an Indian Armed Force when he took over as the Chief of the Naval Staff in November 2006. He is an alumnus of the prestigious National Defence Academy and was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1967. He is a qualified fighter pilot and served the Naval Air Arm holding numerous appointments in the frontline fighter Squadrons in the Indian Navy. He obtained his Master's degree in Defence Studies from the Defence Service Staff College in 1979, and later graduated from the National Defence College, New Delhi in 1994.

During his 42 years of distinguished service in the Indian Navy, he held various command appointments, including command of the Western Fleet of the Indian Navy, a coveted operational appointment, and several other staff appointments. He also held senior staff appointments at Naval Headquarters, including Chief of Personnel and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff. He headed the Indian Coast Guard. As Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command of the Indian Navy, he visited New Zealand in June 2006 coinciding with an Indian Naval ship's visit.

Shortly after relinquishing the command of the Indian Navy and the post of Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CDF), Admiral Sureesh Mehta assumed the office of the Indian High Commissioner to New Zealand in December 2009, and is now avidly involved in promoting the India-New Zealand relationship at both commercial and strategic levels.