

ASEAN India Centre NEWSLETTER



RIS
Research and Information System
for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

AIC
ASEAN-India Centre at RIS

Vol.3, No.1, January-June, 2017

Major Events

Keynote Address on ASEAN-India Partnership by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Government of India, 22 June 2017, New Delhi



Keynote Address on ASEAN-India Partnership was delivered by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Government of India on 22 June 2017 at India Habitat Centre (IHC), New Delhi. (photo from the left) Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS; Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs and H.E. Ton Sinh Thanh, Ambassador of Vietnam to India.

To commemorate 25 Years of ASEAN-India Partnership, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) invited Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Government of India to deliver a Keynote Address on "ASEAN-India Partnership" on 22 June 2017 at India Habitat Centre (IHC), New Delhi. Welcome Remarks was given by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS gave Introductory Remarks.

In her Keynote Address, Smt. Sushma Swaraj discussed various aspects of India's strategic partnership with ASEAN.

India has been working with ASEAN towards evolving regional security architecture in the Asia-Pacific that hinges on emphasising the peaceful settlement of disputes, finding collaborative solutions to emerging and non-traditional challenges, and support for the centrality of ASEAN. She reminded us that, India was actively engaged in Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations involving ASEAN and its six FTA partners, which, when finalized, would be the largest regional trading arrangement, accounting for about 40 per cent of world trade. External

Affair Minister said that efforts were on to enhance connectivity by land, air and sea to transform the corridors of connectivity into corridors of economic cooperation. She highlighted that for enhancing digital connectivity, specific proposals have been put forward, involving the setting up of a regional high-capacity fibre-optic network, supplemented by national rural broadband networks works and digital villages in remote areas. Finally, Dr Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC extended the Vote of Thanks.

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Major Events

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Ambassadors and senior officials of ASEAN countries with Hon'ble EAM.

Roundtable Discussion on 25 Years of ASEAN-India Partnership, 22 June 2017, New Delhi



In picture (from right to left) Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS; H.E. Ton Sinh Thnh, Ambassador of Vietnam to India; Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS; Amb. Amar Sinha, Secretary (Economic Relations), MEA; Dr. Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC at RIS.

RIS organised a Roundtable on "25 Years of ASEAN-India Partnership" on 22 June 2017 at India Habitat Centre (IHC), New Delhi. Welcome Address was given by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. The Session was Chaired by Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS. Opening Address was given by H.E. Ton Sinh Thnh, Ambassador of

Vietnam to India. Special Remarks was given by Amb. Amar Sinha, Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Ambassadors and Senior Officials of ASEAN member countries, former Ambassadors of India, academicians and researchers attended this programme. Dr. Prabir De made a presentation on 25

Years of ASEAN-India relations covering trade, investment, connectivity and cultural linkages, followed by discussion across the table. Participants discussed the success story of ASEAN-India relations and highlighted several policy measures for the way forward. Finally, Dr Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC extended the Vote of Thanks.

Policy Dialogue on Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) “Stronger Connectivity and Enhancing Ties”, 8 April 2017, New Delhi

ASEAN India Centre (AIC) at RIS in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), organized a Policy Dialogue on Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) titled “Stronger Connectivity and Enhancing Ties” on 8 April,

2017 at India Habitat Centre (IHC), New Delhi. Welcome Address was given by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS gave the Opening Address. Dr Dinesh

ambassador of Indian Industry (CII), delivered a Special Address. Prof. Lokesh Chandra, President, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) extended a Special Address. Amb. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External



Amb. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India releasing the AIC-RIS report entitled “Mekong-Ganga Cooperation: Breaking Barriers and Seeking New Heights”. Also seen in picture (from left to right) Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. Ms. Pooja Kapur, Joint Secretary, MEA, Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, Chairman, RIS. Prof. Lokesh Chandra, President, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR); and Dr Dinesh Dua, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Affairs (MEA) delivered the Keynote Address and released the AIC-RIS Report on “Mekong-Ganga Cooperation: Breaking Barriers and Scaling New Heights”. Ms. Pooja Kapoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) extended the Vote of Thanks.

This Policy Dialogue was organised in pursuance to the announcement of Hon’ble Minister of State for External Affairs at the 7th Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Ministers Meeting, held at Vientiane on 24 July 2016. All MGC member countries have nominated partici-

pants to the Policy Dialogue, and over 100 delegates including senior officials from foreign offices attended this event.

The Policy Dialogue was divided into four sessions aimed at facilitating an in-depth discussion on various aspects



Senior officials of MGC with Amb. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), MEA and Prof. Lokesh Chandra of the Policy Dialogue on MGC

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relating to the experiences of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) connectivity. The themes focused on at these sessions were: Physical and Digital Connectivity; Trade, Investment, Regional Value Chains; and cultural relations and people-to-people contacts. Dr. Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC presented the Summary and extended the Vote of Thanks.

Visit of Delegation from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand to ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS, 16 May 2017

A 4-member research team from ASEAN Studies Centre of Chulalongkorn University (CU) Bangkok visited the ASEAN-India Centre at RIS on 16 May 2017. The delegation was headed by Dr. Surat Horachaikul, Director, Indian Studies Center, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University. Other members were Dr. Piti Srisangnam, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University; Dr. Anupama Devendrakumar, Researcher, ASEAN Studies Center of Chulalongkorn University; and Mr. Kittipong Boonkerd, Lecturer (Hindi Language), Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. Delegation met Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS and other faculty members, and exchanged views on India-Thailand relations.

Release of AIC-RIS Report 'India-Singapore: Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)', 27 March 2017, New Delhi



Smt. Rita Teatia, Commerce Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India and Ambassador Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India released the AIC-RIS Report entitled "India-Singapore: Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)" on 27 March 2017. Photo from (left to right) Dr. Edmund Chia, Acting High Commissioner, Singapore High Commission in New Delhi; Ambassador V.S. Seshadri, Vice Chairman, RIS; Smt. Rita Teatia, Commerce Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Ambassador Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs; Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS; Mr. Shreekanth Somany, Member, CII National Council and Chairman and Managing Director, Somany Ceramics Ltd; Mr. Gagan Sabharwal, Director, NASSCOM.

Smt. Rita Teatia, Commerce Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India and Ambassador Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India released the AIC-RIS Report entitled "India-Singapore: Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)" on 27 March 2017. This Report launch was organised by ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi. Prof. Sachin

Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS delivered the Welcome Address. Opening Remarks extended by Mr. Shreekanth Somany, Member, CII National Council and Chairman and Managing Director, Somany

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Ceramics Ltd. Smt. Rita Teaotia, Commerce Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry delivered the Special Address. Ambassador Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs gave the Special Address. Special Remarks were made by Dr. Edmund Chia,

Acting High Commissioner, Singapore High Commission in New Delhi and Mr. Gagan Sabharwal, Director, NASSCOM. Ambassador V.S. Seshadri made a presentation on the Report. The Report examines the India-Singapore bilateral economic relations in the light of India-Singapore

CECA and ASEAN-India FTA. This Report has important policy recommendation to encourage bilateral trade in both goods and services between India and Singapore. Dr Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC extended the Vote of Thanks.

2nd International Conference on “Cultural and Civilisational Links between India and Southeast Asia”, 19 January 2017, Jakarta, Indonesia



Participants of the 2nd International Conference on “Cultural and Civilisational Links between India and Southeast Asia” with General V.K.Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, GoI and Amb. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), MEA, GoI.

ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS in association with Indian Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta, ASEAN Secretariat, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Indonesian Foreign Ministry, Government of Indonesia organized the 2nd International Conference on Cultural and Civilizational Links between India and ASEAN at Jakarta on 19th January 2017. H.E. General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Rtd.), Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India extended a Keynote Address. Amb. Suresh K. Reddy, Ambassador of India to ASEAN gave the Opening Remarks. Special Address was given by H.E. Mr. A. M. Fachir, Vice Minister for Finance Affairs of Indonesia H.E. Mr.

Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN and H.E. Nguyen Quoc Dung, Dy. Foreign Minister, Vietnam made the Remarks. Amb. Preeti Saran, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India made the Valedictory Address. Finally, Dr. Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC extended the Vote of Thanks.

All the ASEAN countries nominated their officials and experts to the Conference, and overall 100 participants including senior officials attended this one-day event. This Conference was the fol-

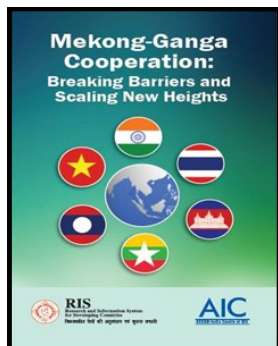
low up of the 1st International Conference on “ASEAN-India Cultural Links: Historical and Contemporary Dimensions”, held at New Delhi on 23-24 July 2015. The 2nd Conference was also the first event to commemorate the celebration of 25 years of Dialogue Partnership between ASEAN and India. The Conference was divided into four sessions to identify emerging challenges to ASEAN-India strategic partnership through people-to-people connectivity and cultural relations, and to identify the feasible policy options to

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overcome the challenges from perspective of ASEAN community blueprints. The Conference discussed, analysed and had put together the various components that would help understanding cultural links between ASEAN and India relations.

Publications

Mekong-Ganga Cooperation: Breaking Barriers and Scaling New Heights, AIC - RIS, 2017



AIC - RIS published a Report titled “Mekong-Ganga Cooperation: Breaking Barriers and Seeking New Heights”. The Report reviews the India’s relation with Mekong countries in context of economic integration, connectivity and cultural relation, and draws some policy measures towards future prospects of Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC). The Report covers trade, regional value chains, foreign direct investment, physical and digital connectivity, border connectivity and cultural relationship. The Report is a valuable reference for policymakers, academics and practitioners.

Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief, No. 7, RIS, 2016



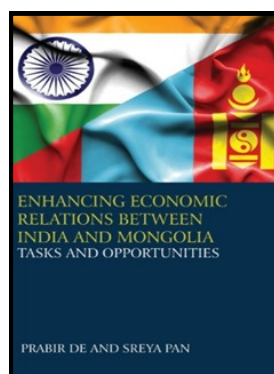
Mekong-Ganga Policy Brief (MGPB) seeks to disseminate the policy-related research, news, viewpoints, and information about resources to promote the cause of deeper cooperation between India and Mekong countries. Focus of this issue is on cultural relations between India and Mekong countries. Besides, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation activities, news on MGC, statistics, etc. were also carried out.

India-Singapore CECA an Appraisal of Progress, AIC - RIS, 2017



AIC - RIS published a Report titled “India-Singapore CECA an Appraisal of Progress” authored by Dr. V.S. Seshadri, Vice Chairman, RIS. This Report aims to study the India-Singapore bilateral economic relations in a comprehensive and objective manner by discussing various aspects of trade and investment in the light of CECA and India-ASEAN FTA. The Report also identify the areas where India could bring fresh initiatives for promoting trade with Singapore. This Report will provide some insights and useful policy suggestions to Indian negotiators and policy makers.

Enhancing Economic Relations Between India and Mongolia: Tasks and Opportunities, Knowledge World, 2016



The visit of Indian Prime Minister to Mongolia in May 2015 has opened new opportunities to take bilateral relations between the two countries to higher levels. Given the thrust of the Act East Policy (AEP), this book authored by Prabir De and Sreya Pan, analyses the scope and opportunities in interdependence in economic areas between India and Mongolia, presents an assessment of economic cooperation, identifies the challenges and highlights policy issues to be sorted out to foster bilateral relations. This book is the first attempt to analyse the potential economic relations between India and Mongolia. This book discusses the importance of both economic and diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia, accompanied by strategic engagement on security and foreign policy fronts.

ASEAN-India Eminent Person Lecture by Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray in Vietnam, 13-27 February 2017

ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at the RIS with support of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India and ASEAN Secretariat has been organizing the ASEAN-India Eminent Person Lecture Series (AIEPLS). The objective of the AIEPLS is to facilitate people-to-people contact between India and ASEAN through exchange of eminent scholars and policy makers. Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray, who was formerly with the Jawaharlal Nehru University and Chairperson, National Monuments Authority, Ministry of Culture, visited Vietnam under the AIEPLS and delivered two lectures. Her first lecture was on “Writing, Power And Identity: The Literate Tradition across The Bay of Bengal” at Ho Chi Minh City on 13 February 2017, organised by the Center of Archaeology, Southern Institute of Social Sciences, Vietnam. Her second lecture was on “Shared Maritime Heritage: Towards a Sustainable Future”, which was delivered on 27 February 2017 at Hanoi.

Research Projects: Ongoing

Assessing Impacts of Economic Corridors	The study develops an economic geography model to be tested with sub-national data, and assesses the impact of economic (transport) corridors in India with special reference to Indian states in terms of growth. Four important corridors, connecting India with eastern neighbours, have been selected, namely, (i) BCIM-Economic Corridor, (ii) East-West Corridor (part of Golden Quadrilateral project), (iii) Trilateral Highway, and (iv) Kalandan multimodal transit transport project.
Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) in ASEAN-India Trade	The study analyses the NTMs faced by India in ASEAN and ASEAN in India in select products. Out of 16 NTMs, it considers the major ones, namely, SPS and TBT. The study is based on both primary and secondary data.
Emerging Production Networks between India and ASEAN	This study explores the possibilities to build cross-border networks within those industries on which the India has manufacturing capacities and complementarities that match with the demand or supply capacity of ASEAN and vice versa. Besides, this study also makes an attempt to identify the challenges in building the production networks. In particular, the study identifies the gaps in connectivity and trade facilitation in promoting the production networks between ASEAN and India, and provides the possible remedies.

Forthcoming Major Events (July to December 2017) – *Dates for Your Diary*

- ◆ Delhi Dialogue IX, 4 – 5 July 2017, New Delhi
- ◆ Conference on 25 years of ASEAN-India Partnership, September 2017, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- ◆ Conference on 25 years of ASEAN-India Partnership, September 2017, Manila, The Philippines
- ◆ Fifth Roundtable of ASEAN-India Network of Think-Tanks (AINTT), October 2017, Indonesia

Research Publications (January – December 2017)

- ◆Agrawal, Pradeep and Kumarasamy, Durairaj (2017), "Impact of Foreign Capital Flows in Emerging Asia", in Pradeep Agrawal (ed.) *Reviving Economic Growth in India*, Cambridge University Press, India, pp. 209-229.
- ◆De, Prabir (2017) "Look East to Act East: India's Economic Engagements with ASEAN" in C. J Thomas and K Sarda (eds.) *Act East and India's North-East*, Pentagon Press, New Delhi.
- ◆De, Prabir (2017) "Contemporary Contours of ASEAN-India Relations", in World Trade Centre (ed.) *Handbook: International Trade*, Mumbai.
- ◆De, Prabir (2017) "South Asian Countries Building Connections", East Asia Forum, 24 June 2017.
- ◆De, Prabir (2017) "BBIN: From Transit to Economic Corridors", *Trade Insight*, Vol. 12, No. 3.
- ◆De, Prabir (2017) "Ways to Strengthen Cooperation between BIMSTEC and IORA", in Yogendra Kumar (ed.) *Whither Indian Ocean Maritime Order? Contributions to a Seminar on Narendra Modi's SAGAR Speech*, Knowledge World, New Delhi.
- ◆De, Prabir and Sreya Pan (2017) *Enhancing Economic Relations between India and Mongolia: Tasks and Opportunities*. Knowledge World, New Delhi.

About RIS

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a New Delhi based autonomous think-tank under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, is an organization that specializes in policy research on international economic issues and development cooperation. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on international economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and assist developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged in the Track II process of several regional initiatives. RIS is providing analytical support to the Government of India in the negotiations for concluding comprehensive economic cooperation agreements with partner countries. Through its intensive network of policy think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues. For more information please visit www.ris.org.in

About AIC

Considering the work of the ASEAN-India Eminent Persons Group (AIEPG), and its Report with recommendations for forging a closer partnership for peace, progress and shared prosperity, the Heads of the State/Government of ASEAN and India at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit 2012, held at New Delhi on 19-20 December 2012, recommended the establishment of ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) using existing resources at New Delhi. AIC was formally inaugurated by the Honourable External Affairs Minister of the Government of India on 21 June 2013. AIC serves as a resource centre for ASEAN Member States and India to fill the knowledge gaps that currently limit the opportunities for cooperation. The AIC is closely working with both the ASEAN Divisions of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to undertake and disseminate policy research and provide analytical policy recommendations. For more information please visit <http://aic.ris.org.in>



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