

MEKONG-GANGA

POLICY BRIEF



No. 15, February 2025

Special Article



The Potential of India-CLMVT Science and Technology Cooperation

Piyanat Soikham

In an era characterised by rapid technological advancements and the increasing significance of regional alliances, the collaboration between India and the CLMVT countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand) has been revealed as a promising frontier in science and technology (S&T) cooperation. This partnership is facilitated through bilateral relations and multilateral frameworks like the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), which expands its areas of cooperation to embody a strategic alignment of goals aimed at technological advancement, capacity building, and sustainable development. This commentary explores the multifaceted dimensions of this cooperation, focusing on current initiatives, future potential, and policy recommendations.

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Exploring India and Vietnam S&T Cooperation: Potential and Prospects

Sneha Sinha

The relations between India and Vietnam can be traced back to the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in 1947, or even before, dating back to more than 78 years of bilateral relations. The formal diplomatic ties were later established in 1972, which is marked by mutual respect for sovereignty and a shared vision towards regional stability. The partnership has evolved into cooperation across several sectors. However, the first agreement between India and Vietnam, signed in 1976, was inter-governmental, and focused on political and diplomatic relations. It was followed by an agreement in the cultural domain.

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Strategic and Bilateral Cooperation



India, Laos Sign Pacts on Defence, Customs, Preservation of Heritage

India and Laos signed pacts focusing on defence cooperation, customs collaboration and the preservation of cultural and religious heritage, including the centuries-old Lao version of the epic Ramayana and the restoration of a Buddhist temple.

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India and Vietnam Sign Nine Agreements

India and Vietnam signed nine agreements to deepen comprehensive strategic partnership and enhance cooperation in the fields of customs, agriculture, legal, radio and television broadcast, culture and tourism.

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India, Thailand Commit to Strengthening Ties

India and Thailand have pledged to strengthen their partnership at the 10th India-Thailand Joint Commission Meeting, which was co-chaired by India and Thailand.

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Jaishankar, Thai Counterpart Discusses Bilateral Ties, Mutual Cooperation

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Thai counterpart Maris Sangiampongsa discussed bilateral ties, multilateral cooperation and regional developments during a meeting in Delhi on Saturday.

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Official Visit of H.E. Mr Parnpree BahiddhaNukara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand to India

At the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, Dr S. Jaishankar, H.E. Mr Parnpree Bahiddha-Nukara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, is paying an official visit to India during 25-28 February 2024.

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How India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Will Bolster Economic Growth And Regional Cooperation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in Laos for the 21st ASEAN Summit, had announced a 10-point plan to strengthen India-ASEAN comprehensive partnership and asserted that the regional ties are critical for Asia's future.

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Cultural, Civilizational, P2P Engagements



Food Festival Strengthens Relationship Between India, Southeast Asian Countries

The event organised by the Embassy of India in the capital city is part of the Mekong - Ganga Cooperation (MGC), introducing the diversity and richness of Indian cuisine to the Hanoians.

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4th Mekong-Ganga Dhamma Yatra to begin in New Delhi for Promoting Peace and Cultural Ties

The 4th Mekong Ganga Dhamma Yatra, a significant pilgrimage connecting India and Southeast Asia, will begin on December 6 with a briefing at The Chaupal, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA).

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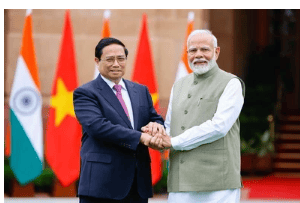
Diplomacy and Humanitarian Assistance



How India Is Aiding Typhoon-Hit Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam

India has sent a second tranche of relief supplies to Myanmar under its Operation Sadbhav, which was launched two days ago to help Southeast Asian countries deal with Typhoon Yagi.

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India sends greetings to Vietnam on 79th National Day

Indian Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar on September 2 sent greetings to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son on the occasion of the 79th National Day of Vietnam (September 2, 1945 - 2024).

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Opinions



Mekong-Ganga Food Festival held in Yangon

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Kyaw Soe Win delivered a speech at the Mekong-Ganga Food Festival, organised by the Embassy of India in Yangon in collaboration with the Indian Women's Association in Yangon.

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India, ASEAN Collaboration can be Crucial in Tackling Contemporary Issues: EAM Jaishankar

India and ASEAN are major demographics and their collaboration can be crucial in tackling contemporary issues, ensuring food and health security and addressing political challenges in the shared regions like Myanmar, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Friday (November 8, 2024).

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Keynote Address

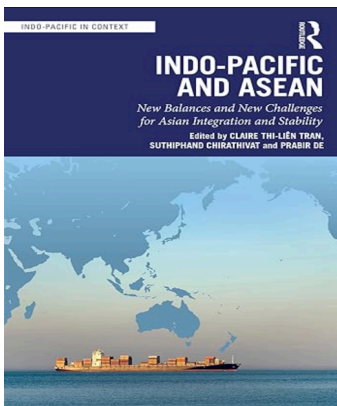


From the Keynote address by External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar at the 8th Roundtable of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks, Singapore

“The India-ASEAN partnership, now in its fourth decade, holds immense possibilities. We have been an enthusiastic participant in all ASEAN-led forums. Additionally, our bilateral and trilateral engagements have contributed to our closeness.

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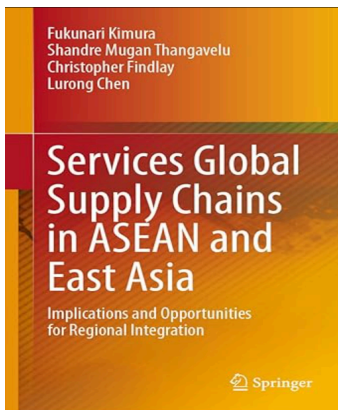
Important Readings



Indo-Pacific and ASEAN: New Balances and New Challenges for Asian Integration and Stability (Indo-Pacific in Context)

(1st Edition | 3 December 2024)
by Claire Thi-Liên Tran (Editor), Suthiphand Chirathivat (Editor), Prabir De (Editor) ISBN-10 : 103290688X | ISBN-13: 978-1032906881

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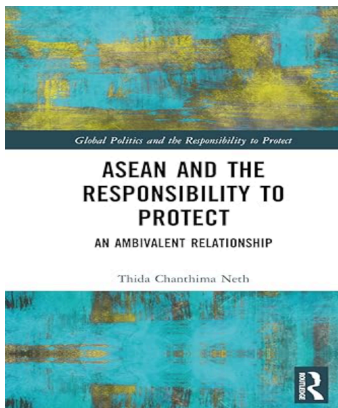


Services Global Supply Chains in ASEAN and East Asia: Implications and Opportunities for Regional Integration

21 October 2024

by Fukunari Kimura (Editor), Shandre Mugan Thangavelu (Editor), Christopher Findlay (Editor), Lurong Chen (Editor)
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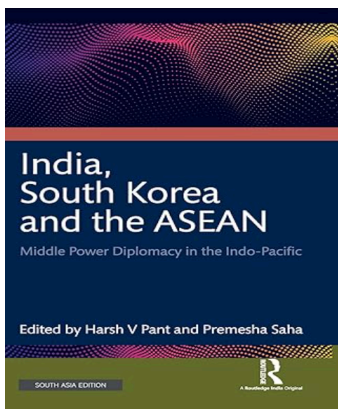


Asean and the Responsibility to Protect: An Ambivalent Relationship

13 November 2024

by Thida Chanthima Neth (Author) ISBN-10: 1032566930 | ISBN-13: 978-1032566931

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India, South Korea and the ASEAN: Middle Power Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific

22 September 2024

by Premesha Saha Harsh V Pant (Author) ISBN-10: 1041027494 | ISBN-13: 978-1041027492

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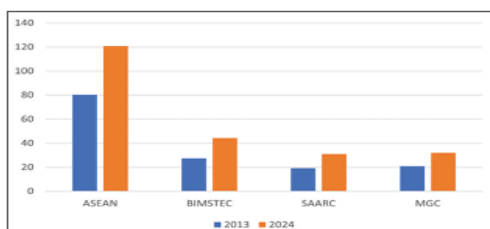
Statistical Indicators

Socio and Macro Indicators of MGC Countries, 2024						
Series Name	India	Cambodia	Lao PDR	Myanmar	Thailand	Viet Nam
Population (billion)	1.438	0.017	0.008	0.054	0.072	0.100
GDP (current US\$)	3567.55	42.34	15.84	66.76	514.97	429.72
GDP, PPP (current international \$)	14619.77	129.38	71.22	322.28	1682.50	1502.66
GDP per capita (current US\$)	2480.79	2429.75	2066.95	1233.20	7182.03	4282.09
GDP growth (annual %)	8.15	4.96	3.75	0.96	1.89	5.05
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing, value added (% of GDP)	16.00	17.08	16.14	22.72	8.58	11.96
Industry (including construction), value added (% of GDP)	25.03	40.52	30.53	37.59	32.89	37.12
Services, value added (% of GDP)	49.58	36.15	44.00	39.68	58.54	42.54
Trade (% of GDP)	45.92	134.21	–	–	129.14	166.32
Gross fixed capital formation (% of GDP)	30.83	32.68	–	–	22.97	30.41
Gross savings (% of GDP)	30.66	38.84	–	–	25.35	34.37
Inflation, consumer prices (annual %)	5.65	2.13	31.23	–	1.23	3.25
Annual freshwater withdrawals, total (billion cubic meters)#	647.5	2.184	7.35	33.231	57.307	81.862
Water productivity, total (constant 2015 US\$ GDP per cubic meter of total freshwater withdrawal)	4.29	15.07	2.59	1.83	7.66	4.06
Renewable internal freshwater resources, total (billion cubic meters)	1446	120.6	190.4	1002.8	224.51	359.42
Total natural resources rents (% of GDP)	3.16	0.84	5.38	8.68	1.82	2.55

Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

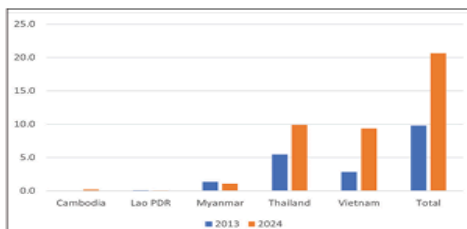
Note: # Date for year 2020, * data for year 2021

India's Trade with Regional Block



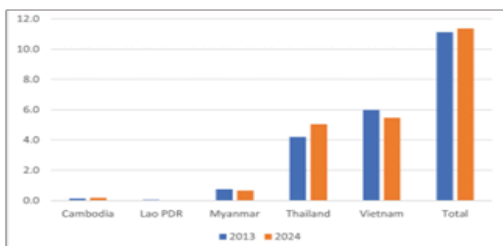
Source: UNCOMTRADE.

India's Imports from MGC



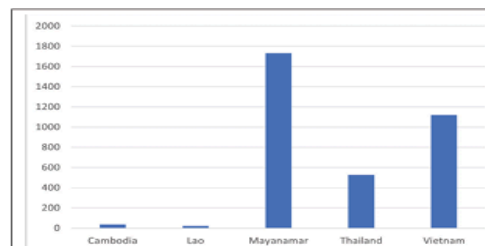
Source: UNCOMTRADE.

India's Exports to MGC



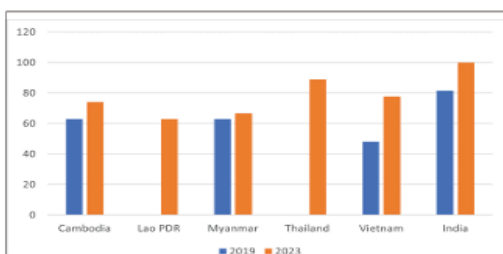
Source: UNCOMTRADE.

Indian Investment in MGC Countries
(April 2000 to November 2024)



Source: Ministry of Finance, GoI.

Paperless Trade in MGC Countries



Source: Compiled from UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.

Trade-Facilitation for SMEs in MGC Countries



Source: Compiled from UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.

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