



Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh inaugurates the BRICS Civil Forum 2021

Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs inaugurated the BRICS Civil Forum 2021 being organised by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) on July 28 in the virtual format. The two-day event is being organised by India, as BRICS Chair, with an apt focus on 'technology' and 'sustainability' in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic that has necessitated faster integration of these two dimensions in policies and their implementation to ensure an inclusive and equitable recovery. BRICS Civil Forum is a recognised and influential People-to-People platform under BRICS cooperation framework.

MOS in his remarks mentioned that India as the Chair of BRICS for 2021 has been working for further strengthening the intra-BRICS cooperation under the theme of Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus and the four broad priority areas: (i) Reform of the Multilateral System (ii) Counter Terrorism Cooperation (iii) Using Digital and Technological Solutions for the achievement of SDGs and (iv) Enhancing People to People exchanges. He shared that BRICS Foreign Ministers came out with a joint statement calling for strengthening and reforming the multilateral system in June. He also indicated that Action Plan for implementation of BRICS Counter Terrorism Strategy is also likely to be finalised soon.

MOS also mentioned that as BRICS completed 15 years this year, India, as Chair, undertook a comprehensive Stock-Taking and Streamlining exercise to examine BRICS institutions and mechanisms. As part of this exercise, BRICS countries have agreed to the revised Terms of Reference for BRICS engagements.

He expressed satisfaction on the dialogues being convened under Civil Forum 2021 on ‘reformed multilateralism’; ‘development finance and global public goods’; ‘pandemic response, partnership and role of civil society’; ‘wellness, health and traditional systems of medicines in BRICS’; ‘BRICS economies and women’s participation’; ‘quality of economic growth and inclusion’; ‘future of education and skills’; ‘role of technology in promoting inclusive development and entrepreneurship in BRICS’; ‘people’s participation in sustainability’, etc. He appreciated the strong calls for reforming various multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council, WTO, WHO, IMF etc, to make the global governance architecture more representative, inclusive and participatory. He also noted that the CSOs have also called upon BRICS countries to collaborate to create and nurture Global Public Goods and digital solutions for the welfare of their citizens and humanity at large, for the achievement of SDGs.

The inaugural session also witnessed comments from leading Civil Society Organisations (CSO) from BRICS countries. This was followed by two plenary sessions – on ‘Inclusive Development and Promotion of Entrepreneurship in BRICS: Role of Technology’, and ‘People’s Participation on Sustainability: The BRICS Experience’.

He also noted that as part of ‘consolidation of the BRICS Civil Forum process’ for firming up a roadmap to ensure an effective, meaningful, and enduring outreach, learning, and partnership between BRICS countries, the BRICS Civil Forum website was launched by the host institution, the RIS. The website aims to be a permanent repository and knowledge platform for all BRICS Civil Forum activities. The institutionalised platform will be a BRICS ‘ideas bank’ that can offer critical inputs on international issues and suggest concrete policy measures.

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