

Fourth Bay of Bengal Economic Dialogue (BoBED)

Towards a Prosperous Bay of Bengal amidst Global Uncertainties

16-17 January 2026

Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

Agenda

16 January 2026 (Friday)

0900-1000 hrs **Registration**

1000-1100 hrs **Inaugural Session**

- Welcome Remarks by **Prof. Sachin Kumar Sharma**, Director General (DG), RIS
- Remarks by **Amb. Sumith Nakandala**, Chairperson, Bay of Bengal Economic Dialogue (BoBED)
- Remarks by **Ms. Mikiko Tanaka**, Head, UNESCAP Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia (UNESCAP-SSWA, New Delhi)
- Special Address by **H.E. Indra Mani Pandey**, Secretary General, BIMSTEC, Dhaka
- Keynote Address by **Amb. Periasamy Kumaran**, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi

1100-1130 hrs **Group Photo and Tea/coffee**

1130-1300 hrs **Session I: Reimagining Global South and the Role of the Bay of Bengal**

Chair: **Mr. Jayant Dasgupta**, Former Indian Ambassador to WTO, and Member, RIS Governing Board, New Delhi

Special Remarks by **Prof. Ram Singh**, Director, Delhi School of Economics (DSE), Delhi University, Delhi

Speakers

- **Dr. Wimon Punkong**, Dy. Executive Director, International Institute for Trade and Development (ITD), Bangkok
- **Dr. Mustafizur Rahman**, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dhaka (online)

- **Dr. Dayaratna Silva**, Former Ambassador of Sri Lanka to WTO, and Executive Director, Pathfinder Foundation, Colombo
- **Mr. Atul Kaushik**, GDC Fellow, RIS, New Delhi

Q&A

1300-1400 hrs

Lunch

1400-1530 hrs

Session II: Trade, Investment, and Regional Value Chains: Deepening Regional Integration amidst Global Uncertainties

Chair: **Dr. Rajan Sudesh Ratna**, Dy. Head and Senior Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP-SSWA, New Delhi

Special Remarks by **Dr. Rupa Chanda**, Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, UNESCAP, Bangkok

Speakers

- **Dr. Selim Raihan**, Executive Director, South Asia Network of Economic Modeling (SANEM) and Professor, Dhaka University, Dhaka (online)
- **Dr. Paras Kharel**, Executive Director, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu
- **Prof. Amita Batra**, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi
- **Prof. Shahid Ahmed**, Professor, Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI), New Delhi

Q&A

1530-1600 hrs

Tea/coffee

1600-1730 hrs

Session III: Economic Corridors and Multi-modal Connectivity: Integrating the Bay and Beyond

Chair: **Amb. Rajiv Bhatia**, Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, Mumbai

Special Remarks by **Dr. Sanjeev Ranjan**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), New Delhi

Speakers

- **Dr. Mahfuz Kabir**, Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka
- **Dr. Thiam Hee Ng**, Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, South Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB), New Delhi
- **Mr. Joseph George**, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP-SSWA, New Delhi
- **Dr. Prabir De**, Professor, RIS, New Delhi

Q&A

1830 hrs Reception and Dinner

17 January 2026 (Saturday)

1000-1130 hrs Session IV: Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Blue Economy: Towards a Resilient Bay of Bengal

Chair: **Cmde. Sujeet Samaddar**, Visiting Fellow, RIS, New Delhi

Special Remarks by **Dr. J R Bhat**, Member, Central Empowered Committee (Constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India), and Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), New Delhi

Speakers

- **Dr. Shailly Kedia**, Senior Fellow and Director, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi
- **Dr. Om Katel**, Lecturer, College of Natural Resources, Royal University of Bhutan, Thimphu
- **Mr. Rajdeep Mukherjee**, Policy Analyst, BOBP-IGO, and BIMSTEC-India Marine Research Network (BIMReN), Chennai
- **Prof. S K Mohanty**, Distinguished Fellow, RIS, New Delhi

Q&A

1130–1200 hrs Tea/Coffee

1200 – 1330 hrs Session V: AI Governance and Digital Integration: Enabling Integration, Key Challenges and Solutions

Chair: **Dr. Arabinda Mitra**, Distinguished Fellow and Former Scientific Secretary, Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India, New Delhi

Special Remarks by

Prof. Rajat Kathuria, Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Shiv Nadar University, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Delhi NCR

Mr. Vinayak Godse, CEO, Data Security Council of India, and Head, National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for Cybersecurity Technology and Entrepreneurship, New Delhi

Speakers

- **Dr. Sineenat Sermcheep**, Director, ASEAN Studies Centre, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok (online)
- **Prof. Arpita Mukherjee**, Professor, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi
- **Mr. Vivek Rana**, Consultant, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kathmandu
- **Dr. Amit Kumar**, Assistant Professor, RIS, New Delhi

Q&A

1330-1430 hrs

Lunch

1430-1600 hrs

Session VI: Accelerating Regional Integration in the Bay of Bengal: Role of the People-to-People Contacts

Chair: **Amb. Sumith Nakandala**, Former Secretary General, BIMSTEC, and Chairperson, BoBED, Colombo

Special Remarks by **Prof. Amitabh Mattoo**, Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Speakers

- **Mr. Uttam Kumar Shahi**, Director, BIMSTEC, Dhaka
- **Amb. Lahpai Zau Goone**, Senior Adviser, Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS), Yangon
- **Dr. Constantino Xavier**, Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), New Delhi
- **Prof. Surat Horachaikul**, Director, Indian Studies Centre, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok
- **Mr. Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury**, Diplomatic Editor, The Economic Times, New Delhi

Q&A

1600 – 1630 hrs

Tea/Coffee Break

1630 - 1700 hrs

Session VII: Valedictory Session: Towards a Resilient, Equitable and Inclusive Bay of Bengal

Chair: **Dr. Seshadri Chari**, Member, Governing Board, RIS

- Valedictory Address by **Mr. C S R Ram**, Joint Secretary (SAARC and BIMSTEC), MEA, New Delhi
- Closing Remarks by **Prof. Sachin Kumar Sharma**, DG, RIS
- Release of *Delhi Declaration*

- Vote of Thanks by **Dr. Priyadarshi Dash**, Associate Professor, RIS, New Delhi

1700 – 1730 hrs. High Tea and End of the 4th BoBED