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Navigating Global Uncertainty: ASEAN–India Partnership and Strategic Priorities

Vo Xuan Vinh

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Navigating Global Uncertainty: ASEAN–India Partnership and Strategic Priorities

Vo Xuan Vinh*

Abstract: The elevation of ASEAN-India relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2022 marked a major development in the Indo-Pacific. Occurring at a time of profound global uncertainty—marked by power transitions, geopolitical rivalry, economic fragmentation, technological disruption, climate change, global warming, and challenges to the role of multilateral institutions—the CSP reflects a shared commitment by ASEAN and India to strengthen resilience, safeguard strategic autonomy, and support a stable, rules-based global order. This chapter analyses the ASEAN-India CSP in the context of these evolving global challenges, evaluates its achievements and limitations since 2022 across key areas of cooperation, and highlights the strategic priorities that should guide the next phase of ASEAN-India relations.

Keywords: ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Global Uncertainty, ASEAN Centrality, Act East Policy, Indo-Pacific

1. Introduction

The global economy is undergoing a period of rapid and far-reaching transformation. Intensifying geopolitical competition, economic fragmentation, technological disruption, climate change, pandemics, and mounting pressures on multilateral institutions have collectively generated a more uncertain and contested global environment. These developments have encouraged states to adopt more flexible diplomatic strategies, diversify their partnerships, strengthen resilience, safeguard strategic autonomy, and protect their national interests amid shifting distributions of power.

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Against this backdrop, ASEAN and India have developed a significant degree of strategic convergence in their respective visions of regional and global order. ASEAN has consistently sought to preserve its centrality as the primary driving force of regional cooperation through mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) (Vo, 2023). India, meanwhile, has increasingly emphasised strategic autonomy and multi-alignment, engaging simultaneously with multiple centres of power while avoiding rigid bloc politics (Hall, 2016; Kumar, 2022). Through its Look East and Act East policies, as well as the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), India has identified ASEAN as a central partner in promoting a rules-based, open, balanced, and stable Indo-Pacific order (MEA, 2018). This convergence has provided an important foundation for ASEAN-India relations since the end of the Cold War and the launch of India's Look East Policy in 1992. Over the past three decades, cooperation between the two sides has expanded across political-security, economic, connectivity, technological, and socio-cultural domains.

This chapter examines how the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) has evolved in response to contemporary global uncertainty. It analyses the strategic convergence between ASEAN centrality and India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, evaluates the principal achievements and remaining limitations of the CSP since its elevation in 2022, and identifies the priorities likely to shape future cooperation. The chapter argues that the CSP has become an increasingly important platform through which ASEAN and India seek to advance their respective interests, strengthen regional resilience, and contribute to a stable, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific order.

2. Current Global Uncertainties

China's rise has increasingly challenged the position of the United States as the established leader of world politics and has the potential to produce what Organski described as "a huge transference of power", ultimately

contributing to the emergence of a new international order (Organski, 1968). China's rapid economic and strategic ascent has progressively weakened the foundations of the US-led unipolar order and generated growing debate about the possible emergence of a bipolar system centred on the United States and China, particularly after the 2008-2009 global financial crisis (Zeng and Breslin, 2016). Although Chinese leaders have publicly rejected the notion of a Sino-American bipolar order or "G2" arrangement (China Daily, 2009), many scholars continue to regard bipolarity as a plausible trajectory for the international system. Such a development has raised concerns that Sino-American relations may become trapped in what Allison (2017) terms the "Thucydides Trap", whereby the rise of a new power generates structural tensions with the established hegemon. While Allison argues that military conflict between the United States and China is not inevitable, the relationship is likely to remain highly adversarial unless a form of "new détente" can be established, as Degterev et al. (2021) observe.

Contemporary Chinese debates on global order, especially relations among major powers, offer an important perspective on these dynamics. Although Gu Bin (2026) of Beijing Foreign Studies University explicitly argues that "China must reject Trump's 'G2' narrative", his analysis nevertheless reflects the growing strategic confidence associated with China's rise. Drawing a historical parallel with the post-Second World War transfer of power from the United Kingdom to the United States, Gu notes that Washington ultimately embraced multilateralism rather than Britain's preference for preserving imperial dominance through exclusive arrangements and privileged spheres of influence. On this basis, he contends that China should similarly prioritise multilateralism over a G2 framework, arguing that China should favour multilateralism just as the United States did eight decades earlier (Gu, 2026). While rejecting formal bipolarity, this argument implicitly acknowledges that China's relative capabilities vis-à-vis the United States increasingly resemble the changing balance of power between the United States and Britain in the mid-twentieth century. Consequently, even if China does not seek

a formal G2 arrangement, the ongoing redistribution of power between Washington and Beijing remains one of the most significant drivers of uncertainty in the contemporary international system.

Beyond China's rise, the growing influence of other emerging powers, including India, Brazil, South Africa, and Russia, has further accelerated the transformation of the international system and deepened uncertainty regarding the future of global order. Collectively, these actors challenge the dominance of the US-led order and contribute to the emergence of a more pluralistic distribution of power. In this context, Acharya (2014) argues that the contemporary international system may be witnessing not merely a relative decline in American influence, but potentially "the end of the American world order". According to Acharya, the defining feature of the emerging era is that "the world may never again see the kind of global dominance by any single power", while global governance and international order will increasingly depend on multiple actors, overlapping institutions, and diverse drivers of change (Acharya, 2014).

However, the transition currently underway is more complex than a straightforward shift from unipolarity to multipolarity. As Attinà (2011) observes, the world order is not simply moving from unipolarity to multipolarity but is undergoing a deeper struggle over political authority. Moreover, even if the international system is gradually evolving towards multipolarity, such a transition does not necessarily imply the emergence of a stable or coherent international order. As Shivshankar Menon argues, "in the multipolar world, the distribution of power in the world does not support a world order" (Menon, 2026).

Whether the emerging international system ultimately assumes a bipolar or multipolar configuration, a significant redistribution of international power has clearly taken place since the end of the Cold War. The global order has gradually moved away from the unipolar structure dominated by the United States towards either a bipolar or a multipolar arrangement. If bipolarity historically generated considerable

tension, as illustrated by the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, contemporary bipolarity could similarly produce strategic confrontation and, potentially, armed conflict. By contrast, a multipolar order presents a different set of challenges. The governance of international affairs becomes more complex and uncertain as multiple centres of power pursue distinct, and at times competing, interests. Consequently, the coexistence of several major powers may complicate efforts to build consensus, coordinate collective action, and maintain a stable and predictable international order.

Great-power competition has therefore become one of the defining features of contemporary international order, as well as a major source of global instability. As Menon further observes, "the main competition is between the United States and China (with Russia as a lesser partner of China), involving diplomatic, military, and economic manoeuvring"; moreover, as great-power rivalry intensifies, it is accompanied by a corresponding rise in nationalism among both major and middle powers (Menon, 2026).

Alongside this redistribution of power, the United States has sought to preserve its dominant position within the international system. However, particularly during President Donald Trump's administrations, US foreign policy became an important source of uncertainty in world politics. The unpredictability associated with Trump's foreign policy approach contributed to heightened uncertainty within the international order (Japan Institute of International Affairs, 2019, 13). President Trump's "reciprocal tariff" system, employed both to protect domestic industries and reduce trade imbalances and to compel trading partners to follow what the United States considered fair and reciprocal trade practices, further contributed to global economic uncertainty. The policy, which came into effect on 5 April 2025, had significant implications for the global trading system, a crucial determinant of international economic stability (Purba, 2025). These tariff measures represented an additional blow to global economic stability at a time when the world economy was still recovering from successive crises. The COVID-19 pandemic

had already "triggered the sharpest downturn in the world economy since the Great Depression", with global GDP contracting by 3.0 per cent in 2020 (Gagnon et al., 2023). Even before the pandemic, however, uncertainty had become a persistent feature of the global economy. As Ozturk and Sheng note, "heightened economic uncertainty, at both national and global levels, greatly contributed to the 2007-09 recession and shaped the speed of the subsequent recovery; years after the end of the recession, there is still no sign of a complete global recovery" (Ozturk and Sheng, 2017).

Compounding these economic pressures, escalating geopolitical conflicts have introduced additional sources of uncertainty into the global economy. The military strikes conducted by the United States and Israel against Iran, together with disruptions to oil supplies from the Middle East and North Africa, have heightened concerns over global energy security. In particular, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran, a critical maritime chokepoint through which a substantial share of the world's oil exports passes, threatened to disrupt global energy markets and further undermine economic stability. Given the strategic importance of the Strait for international energy flows, any prolonged disruption would likely raise transportation costs, increase energy prices, and heighten uncertainty across global markets. As a consequence, global oil and gas prices rose significantly, generating inflationary pressures across the world economy (Brooks et al., 2026).

Growing competition for influence among major powers is also contributing to the erosion of the rules-based international order. Recent geopolitical crises have raised increasing concerns about the effectiveness of international law and multilateral institutions in regulating state behaviour. The military strikes conducted by the United States and Israel against Iran, together with Russia's war against Ukraine, have intensified regional instability and heightened questions regarding the management of international conflicts. These developments pose significant challenges to the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the prohibition of the use of force that have underpinned the international legal order

since the adoption of the United Nations Charter in 1945. This trend lends renewed relevance to the realist conception of an anarchic international system, in which no central authority exists above sovereign states to enforce rules or guarantee security (Mearsheimer, 2001).

Alongside the uncertainties generated by great-power competition and the redistribution of power, another significant source of global instability is the growing risk of transnational pandemics. In an era characterised by unprecedented levels of globalisation and interconnectedness, infectious diseases can spread rapidly across borders and produce far-reaching political, economic, and social consequences. The most recent example is the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged when global integration reached historically high levels. As noted above, the pandemic contributed to a severe contraction of the global economy, disrupted international trade and supply chains, and placed immense pressure on public health systems worldwide. Beyond its economic consequences, the COVID-19 also produced a profound human tragedy. According to Jha et al. (2022), approximately 15 million excess deaths associated with COVID-19 occurred globally during 2020-2021. Moreover, the impact of the pandemic has not entirely disappeared, as COVID-19-related deaths continue to be reported in various parts of the world (WHO, 2026). The financial costs of responding to the pandemic were unprecedented, placing enormous strain on national healthcare systems and public finances. Governments were compelled to mobilise substantial resources to strengthen healthcare capacity, procure medical equipment and vaccines, support public health measures, and mitigate the wider social and economic consequences of the crisis at a time of slowing growth, rising debt-service costs, and competing fiscal priorities (WHO, 2024).

3. How ASEAN and India Position Themselves in an Uncertain World Order

ASEAN centrality can be understood as ASEAN's capacity to occupy and sustain a leading position in shaping the norms, institutions, and

agendas of the evolving Indo-Pacific regional order. While ASEAN has never issued a single official definition of the concept, its foundational documents, including the ASEAN Charter, the Bali Concord II (2003), and the ASEAN Community Roadmap (2009-2015), consistently emphasise ASEAN's "centrality", "central role", "central pillar", and status as the "primary driving force" in regional cooperation (Vo, 2023). In this sense, ASEAN centrality embodies both an institutional arrangement and a strategic aspiration to preserve ASEAN's relevance, influence, and leadership in an increasingly complex regional environment.

To realise one of the key objectives stipulated in the ASEAN Charter—"to maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners" (ASEAN, 2018)—ASEAN has actively established and strengthened a network of regional forums and cooperative mechanisms centred on ASEAN. Consequently, ASEAN centrality has become institutionally embedded in a range of ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ARF, EAS, ADMM-Plus, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), ASEAN+1 dialogues, and the ASEAN+3 framework, through which ASEAN plays a central role in shaping regional cooperation and governance. Through these institutions, ASEAN occupies the central position around which major powers and middle powers—including China, the United States, Japan, India, Russia, Australia, and South Korea—engage with one another (Vo, 2023).

ASEAN centrality is effective for several reasons. First, ASEAN is widely viewed as a neutral and acceptable platform by competing major powers. Second, enduring distrust among major powers—particularly the United States, China, Japan, and India—creates a need for a forum in which dialogue and cooperation can continue. By convening these actors and shaping regional agendas, ASEAN exercises diplomatic influence that exceeds its material capabilities. Ultimately, ASEAN centrality enables ASEAN to use its geography, institutional leadership, and political neutrality to engage major powers, sustain regional balance, and promote an open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific order.

According to Indian diplomats, the bipolar order of the Cold War gave way to a unipolar system after the collapse of the Soviet Union (MEA, 2021b). India's engagement with multilateralism deepened after 1991, gradually evolving into a strategy of 'multi-alignment' (Kumar, 2022). As India views the post-Cold War 'unipolar moment' as giving way to a more multipolar and rebalanced global order, a multipolar focus has become one of the five pillars of its diplomacy (MEA, 2021b). This vision was reiterated by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during his meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister on 8 November 2022, when he noted that "India and Russia engage each other in an increasingly multi-polar and re-balanced world" (MEA, 2022b).

More specifically, India has articulated the need for "a dynamic and proactive global strategy in a multipolar world" that can adapt to "fluid and issue-based" alliances and convergences, while engaging simultaneously with multiple centres of gravity in a complex and rapidly changing international environment (MEA, 2021a). In this context, India has argued that "human-centric globalisation must underlie the reformed multilateralism" likely to emerge in the post-pandemic world (MEA, 2021b).

To advance its foreign policy objectives, India participates actively in a diverse range of cooperative mechanisms and organisations with different, and at times competing, purposes and orientations, including the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and BRICS. India has also engaged regularly with the G7 as a guest participant, attending five consecutive G7 Summits between 2019 and 2023. In addition, it is a key member of the G20, which brings together the world's major advanced and emerging economies. This approach to multilateral diplomacy has been described by some Indian scholars as *multi-alignment* (Kumar, 2022; Mishra, 2023), a policy India has developed since the mid-2000s to pursue its core interests and ideals in international relations (Hall, 2016).

Alongside this, India's rise over the past two decades has fostered greater confidence and a stronger aspiration to assume a larger role in

global affairs, particularly as a leader of developing countries in the Global South. This aspiration was reflected when Papua New Guinea (PNG) Prime Minister James Marape described Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to PNG in May 2023 as "the leader of the Global South" (Palit, 2023). In his address at Session 6 of the G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan, in 2023, Prime Minister Modi explicitly stated his expectation that the discussions of the G7 would help build an important link between the G20 and G7 agendas while giving priority to the hopes and expectations of the Global South (MEA, 2023b). Subsequently, at Session 9 of the same Summit, Indian Prime Minister further emphasised the need to reform international institutions, particularly the United Nations, so that the Global South could have a stronger voice in global governance. He argued that the United Nations was no longer in line with the system of the twenty-first century and stressed the need to reform the UN so that it could effectively represent the voice of the Global South (MEA, 2023c).

Consistent with its commitment to *providing stronger voice to the issues of interest of the Global South*, India has stated that its *endeavour is to build consensus within the G20, champion causes especially of the Global South, and shape the setting of the agenda* (MEA, 2022a). Institutionally, India convened the *Voice of Global South Summit* in early 2023 as an effort to provide a common platform for developing countries to discuss issues, interests, and priorities affecting them, as well as to exchange ideas and solutions. More importantly, the Summit sought to forge a common voice and shared purpose in addressing these concerns and priorities, which India intended to incorporate into the agenda of the G20 Summit in September 2023. The Summit attracted participation from 125 countries, including 29 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 47 from Africa, 7 from Europe, 31 from Asia, and 11 from Oceania, demonstrating broad support for India's initiative to amplify the concerns of the Global South in global governance (MEA, 2023a).

In practice, through its *Vaccine Maitri* (Vaccine Friendship) initiative (MEA, 2022a), India ensured the supply of medical assistance

to more than 123 partner countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, including 59 member states of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Beyond these efforts directed towards developing countries, India has also launched major global initiatives aimed at addressing emerging non-traditional security challenges. These include the *International Solar Alliance* and the *Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.* While the *International Solar Alliance* has grown to include 112 member countries, among them the United States, Japan, and several Western European nations (International Solar Alliance), the *Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure* has expanded to encompass 57 member countries and 12 partner organizations, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank Group (WBG), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the European Union (EU), and the European Investment Bank (EIB), among others (Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure).

Therefore, in an era of growing global uncertainty, ASEAN and India have increasingly converged in their understanding of regional and global order. While ASEAN seeks to preserve its centrality within the evolving Indo-Pacific architecture, India advocates a multipolar and rebalanced international system. Despite their different institutional positions, both share a commitment to strategic autonomy, inclusiveness, openness, and rules-based multilateralism, viewing these principles as essential for maintaining stability and cooperation in a rapidly changing world.

For ASEAN, its centrality serves to preserve regional autonomy by ensuring that regional institutions remain open, inclusive, and free from domination by any single major power. Similarly, India's policy of *multi-alignment* reflects its preference for a multipolar order in which states maintain flexible partnerships while avoiding rigid bloc politics. This shared commitment enables both sides to navigate intensifying strategic competition while safeguarding their strategic independence.

ASEAN occupies a pivotal position in India's Look East Policy and, subsequently, its Act East Policy. Through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the EAS, the ARF, and the ADMM-Plus, ASEAN provides India with important institutional platforms for advancing its engagement in the Indo-Pacific. At the same time, India is widely regarded by ASEAN as a key partner that contributes to the development of a balanced, inclusive, and multipolar regional architecture.

This convergence of interests has been reflected in the steady upgrading of bilateral relations, from a Strategic Partnership in 2012 to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2022. These developments underscore the shared commitment of ASEAN and India to strengthening multilateralism, amplifying the voice of the Global South, and promoting an open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific order. As Joanne Lin, Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the ASEAN Studies Centre at the ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, observes:

> 'For ASEAN, India offers a hedge and a partner in diversification. For India, ASEAN is both a conduit into East Asia's tightly integrated supply chains and a platform from which to project leadership of the Global South. The next phase of ASEAN-India relations will be judged not by rhetoric or perception, but by the tangible outcomes both sides can deliver' (Lin, 2025).

4. ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2022-2025): Major Achievements and Emerging Challenges in an Era of Global Uncertainty

The elevation of ASEAN-India relations to a CSP in November 2022 marked a significant milestone in the evolution of one of the Indo-Pacific's most important strategic relationships. Since then, ASEAN and India have expanded cooperation across political-security, economic, connectivity, technological, and socio-cultural domains. The CSP has also become a key platform through which both sides advance their shared commitment to multipolarity, strategic autonomy, inclusiveness, and rules-based multilateralism.

4.1. Political and Security Cooperation

The CSP has significantly strengthened strategic convergence between ASEAN's commitment to ASEAN centrality and India's Act East Policy as well as its Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). Since the elevation of relations in 2022, both sides have progressively institutionalised their partnership through a series of key documents, including the *Joint Statement on ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership* (2022), the *Annex to the ASEAN-India Plan of Action* (2023), the *Joint Statement on Maritime Cooperation* (2023), and the *Joint Statement on Strengthening the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the Context of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)* (2024). Collectively, these documents have provided a stronger framework for advancing cooperation across political, security, and maritime domains.

A central feature of the CSP has been the reaffirmation of shared support for ASEAN centrality, an open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific order, and the continued importance of ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN-India Summit, the EAS, the ARF, and the ADMM-Plus. Both sides have consistently emphasized the promotion of peace, stability, maritime security, freedom of navigation and overflight, and the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They have also strengthened cooperation in addressing terrorism, transnational crime, cybersecurity threats, and health security challenges, while enhancing regional resilience through collaboration in military medicine and disaster response (ASEAN, 2022b).

Maritime cooperation has emerged as one of the most dynamic pillars of the CSP. ASEAN and India have expanded practical cooperation in maritime safety, search and rescue, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, anti-piracy efforts, and the implementation of synergies between AOIP and IPOI. These efforts reflect the shared interest of both sides in preserving freedom of navigation, maritime security, and regional stability amid intensifying strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific. India has further strengthened its regional security profile through enhanced

counter-terrorism cooperation and its co-chairmanship of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counter-Terrorism for the 2024-2027 cycle.

Beyond the CSP framework, ASEAN and India continue to engage actively through a wide range of ASEAN-led and sub-regional mechanisms, including the EAS, ARF, ADMM-Plus, ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) with India, the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). These mechanisms contribute to confidence-building, policy coordination, and regional integration across the broader Indo-Pacific.

The partnership has also entered a new phase of institutional development. In July 2025, ASEAN and India adopted the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Plan of Action (2026-2030), providing a strategic roadmap for future cooperation while supporting the implementation of ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future. Building on this momentum, the 22nd ASEAN-India Summit in October 2025 declared 2026 as the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation. Proposed initiatives, including an ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise and an ASEAN-India Defence Ministers' Informal Meeting, underscore the growing operational dimension of maritime cooperation and highlight the increasing strategic significance of the partnership in regional security affairs (ASEAN, 2026a).

4.2. Economic and Connectivity Cooperation

Economic cooperation remains one of the strongest pillars of the ASEAN-India CSP. Bilateral trade increased from US$ 101.9 billion in 2023 to US$ 106.9 billion in 2024, consolidating India's position as one of ASEAN's major trading partners (ASEAN, 2025a). At the same time, both sides continued negotiations on the review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) with the aim of making it more business-friendly, reducing trade barriers, and enhancing its responsiveness to evolving supply-chain challenges. Beyond trade, India

remained ASEAN's sixth-largest trading partner among ASEAN Dialogue Partners and the tenth-largest source of foreign direct investment in 2024, accounting for approximately 1.41 per cent of ASEAN's total inward FDI. Institutional mechanisms such as the ASEAN-India Business Council (AIBC), the ASEAN-India Business Summit, and the ASEAN-India Expo have further strengthened business-to-business engagement and facilitated discussions on trade, investment, and supply-chain cooperation (ASEAN, 2026a).

Connectivity has emerged as another major area of cooperation under the CSP. ASEAN and India have continued to advance physical connectivity through projects such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and its proposed extension to Lao PDR and Cambodia, which is expected to enhance linkages between the ASEAN Highway Network (AHN) and India's eastern transport corridors. These efforts complement broader ASEAN connectivity initiatives and contribute to strengthening regional economic integration. Connectivity cooperation has also been institutionalised through regular engagement between India and the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC). Since the adoption of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, connectivity has become a regular component of ASEAN-India cooperation and is expected to remain a priority under the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) adopted in 2025. In addition, India has supported connectivity projects through lines of credit and financing mechanisms aimed at developing sustainable physical and digital infrastructure across Southeast Asia (ASEAN, 2026a).

Digital connectivity has gained increasing importance as both sides seek to improve links among communities, businesses, institutions, and governments across geographical boundaries. In an era of economic uncertainty and supply-chain disruptions, digital connectivity is increasingly viewed as a strategic instrument for enhancing regional resilience, facilitating economic diversification, and supporting inclusive growth.

Tourism and people-to-people exchanges have also recovered strongly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitor arrivals from India to ASEAN increased from 4.29 million in 2023 to 5.88 million in 2024 (ASEAN, 2025a). Recognising tourism's growing contribution to economic recovery and regional connectivity, ASEAN and India designated 2025 as the *ASEAN-India Year of Tourism* and launched a range of new initiatives to promote tourism cooperation. Guided by the *ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan 2023-2027*, which encompasses seventeen activities covering sustainable tourism, tourism education and training, and tourism quality standards, both sides have expanded cooperation through initiatives such as the ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue, tourism professional exchange programmes, and joint marketing campaigns. Prime Minister Narendra Modi further supported these efforts through the announcement of a dedicated US$5 million fund for tourism cooperation. In October 2025, ASEAN and India adopted the *ASEAN-India Joint Leaders' Statement on Sustainable Tourism*, underscoring their shared commitment to promoting sustainable and resilient tourism development while strengthening people-to-people connectivity across the region (ASEAN, 2026a).

4.3. Emerging Areas: Digital, Technology, Climate, and Food Security

One of the most significant developments since the establishment of the CSP has been the expansion of ASEAN-India cooperation into emerging sectors that are increasingly important for sustainable development and regional resilience. In 2024, ASEAN and India adopted the *Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation* and launched the *ASEAN-India Fund for Digital Future (AIFDF)* to support cooperation in digital public infrastructure (DPI), financial technology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence (AI), capacity building, knowledge sharing, and sustainable digital investment. Both sides have also explored collaborative initiatives in the internet of things (IoT), telecommunications security management, and the application of information and communication technologies

(ICT) in areas such as digital health, reflecting their shared interest in promoting an inclusive and secure digital ecosystem.

Cooperation in science, technology, and innovation has likewise expanded significantly. The ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund (AISTDF), strengthened by an additional Indian contribution of US$ 5 million in 2022, has supported a wide range of initiatives aimed at enhancing research collaboration, technological innovation, and human resource development. Key programmes include the ASEAN-India Collaborative Research and Development Scheme, the ASEAN-India Research Training Fellowship, the ASEAN-India Grassroots Innovation Forum, the ASEAN-India Startup Festival, the ASEAN-India Scale Hub, and the ASEAN-India Space Programme. Cooperation has also extended to research fellowships, innovation networks, startup ecosystems, women scientists' initiatives, and space-related activities, contributing to the development of innovation-driven economies across the region.

Climate change, sustainable agriculture, food security, and disaster resilience have emerged as additional priority areas under the CSP. Through initiatives such as the ASEAN-India Green Fund, agricultural cooperation programmes, climate-resilient farming projects, and the ASEAN-India Millet Festival, both sides have sought to address common challenges arising from climate change, environmental degradation, and food insecurity. These initiatives reflect a growing recognition that sustainable development, environmental resilience, and food security are integral components of regional stability and long-term prosperity.

4.4. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

Socio-cultural cooperation has remained an important pillar of the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, encompassing human resource development, education, cultural exchanges, public health, biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation, and disaster management. India has continued to support ASEAN community-

building efforts through its active contribution to the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plans, particularly in the areas of capacity building and human resource development.

People-to-People connectivity has been further strengthened through a broad range of educational, cultural, youth, and professional exchange programmes. Key initiatives include the ASEAN-India Students Exchange Programme, Delhi Dialogue, ASEAN-India Media Exchange Programme, ASEAN-India Young Farmers Exchange Programme, ASEAN-India Youth Summit, ASEAN-India Music Festival, and the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT). These programmes have contributed to fostering mutual understanding, strengthening societal linkages, and promoting greater awareness of shared interests and cultural affinities between ASEAN and India. Recent activities included the ASEAN-India Music Festival held in New Delhi in 2024, the 8th ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks Roundtable in Singapore in 2024, and the 5th ASEAN-India Youth Summit in Goa in 2025 (ASEAN, 2026a).

The intellectual dimension of the partnership has also continued to expand through policy dialogues, academic exchanges, and think-tank cooperation. In particular, the AINTT has served as an important platform for generating policy recommendations and facilitating dialogue on regional and global issues relevant to ASEAN-India relations.

Health cooperation has emerged as another growing area of collaboration in the post-pandemic period. ASEAN and India have strengthened cooperation in traditional medicine, cancer research, and public health resilience (ASEAN, October 2025). Notable initiatives include the ASEAN-India Conference on Traditional Medicine held in New Delhi in 2023, which explored the role of traditional medicine in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19, as well as collaboration under the National Cancer Grid Vishwam Global Cancer Project. India has also continued to facilitate ASEAN participation in the annual National Cancer Grid meetings, contributing to knowledge sharing and capacity building in cancer prevention, treatment, and research (ASEAN, 2026a).

4.5. Limitations and Challenges

Despite these significant achievements, the ASEAN-India CSP continues to face several structural and operational challenges. First, economic cooperation has yet to match the strategic ambitions of the partnership. Although bilateral trade exceeded US$ 106 billion in 2024, economic exchanges remain modest relative to the size and growth potential of the ASEAN and Indian economies. Investment ties are particularly underdeveloped. Indian foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into ASEAN declined from US$ 5.09 billion in 2023 to US$ 3.31 billion in 2024 (ASEAN, 2025a), while India accounted for only 1.41 per cent of ASEAN's total inward FDI in 2024 (ASEAN, 2026a). In addition, ASEAN-India investment flows remain heavily concentrated in Singapore, indicating limited economic penetration across the broader Southeast Asian region (MEA, 2025). These trends highlight the continued gap between the strategic ambitions of the partnership and its actual economic footprint in Southeast Asia.

Second, connectivity remains one of the weakest links in ASEAN-India cooperation. While both sides have consistently identified connectivity as a strategic priority, progress in major infrastructure projects has been slower than expected. The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, often regarded as the flagship project of ASEAN-India connectivity cooperation, has faced repeated delays due to technical, financial, political, and security challenges, particularly in Myanmar. These obstacles have limited progress toward deeper physical integration, cross-border trade facilitation, and regional supply-chain connectivity.

Third, the increasingly uncertain global environment presents additional challenges for partnership. Intensifying US-China strategic rivalry, geopolitical polarization, the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, disruptions to global energy and maritime trade routes, economic protectionism, and growing pressures on multilateral institutions have all contributed to a more complex strategic landscape. Although ASEAN and India share a commitment to multipolarity, strategic autonomy, and rules-based multilateralism, differences in national priorities, threat

perceptions, and external relationships may at times constrain deeper strategic coordination on sensitive regional and global issues.

Finally, the growing prominence of non-traditional security challenges requires stronger institutional mechanisms and greater resource commitments than currently exist. Issues such as pandemics, climate change, cybersecurity threats, food insecurity, disaster risks, and supply-chain disruptions increasingly transcend national boundaries and demand coordinated regional responses. While ASEAN and India have expanded cooperation in many of these areas, existing initiatives remain fragmented and often lack sufficient funding, institutional capacity, and implementation mechanisms to generate transformative outcomes.

Overall, the ASEAN-India CSP has made substantial progress since its establishment in 2022 and has become an increasingly important framework for managing contemporary global uncertainties. Nevertheless, a persistent gap remains between the strategic convergence of ASEAN and India and the practical implementation of their cooperation agenda. Bridging this gap will require deeper economic integration, accelerated connectivity projects, greater investment in digital and technological cooperation, and stronger coordination in addressing both traditional and non-traditional security challenges. The effectiveness of the CSP in the coming years will ultimately be measured not only by shared strategic visions, but also by the ability of both sides to translate those visions into concrete and mutually beneficial outcomes.

5. Strategic Priorities of the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in Coming Years

The future trajectory of the ASEAN-India CSP will be determined not only by the achievements attained since its establishment in 2022 but, more importantly, by the ability of both sides to respond to an increasingly uncertain international environment. As discussed in the previous sections, contemporary global uncertainty is characterised by

the simultaneous interaction of structural and functional challenges, including power transition, intensifying great-power competition, economic fragmentation, technological disruption, climate insecurity, and the erosion of multilateral governance mechanisms. These developments are reshaping strategic calculations across the Indo-Pacific and creating new incentives for ASEAN and India to deepen cooperation. In this context, the ASEAN-India CSP is likely to evolve beyond a conventional dialogue partnership into a strategic mechanism for managing uncertainty, strengthening resilience, and contributing to a stable and inclusive regional order. The priorities identified in the 2022 Joint Statement on the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and further elaborated in the ASEAN-India Plan of Action (POA) 2026-2030 provide important indications of the direction that this evolution is likely to take (ASEAN, 2022a; ASEAN, 2025b).

5.1. Preserving ASEAN Centrality and Strengthening Strategic Autonomy

One of the most important priorities of the ASEAN-India CSP in the coming decade will be the preservation of ASEAN centrality and the strengthening of strategic autonomy in an increasingly contested Indo-Pacific. The intensifying strategic rivalry between the United States and China has transformed Southeast Asia into a critical arena of geopolitical competition. Simultaneously, the emergence of a more multipolar international system, marked by the growing influence of India, Japan, the European Union, and other middle powers, has made regional governance both more complex and more uncertain. In such an environment, ASEAN faces the challenge of maintaining its relevance as the principal convenor of regional institutions, while India seeks to expand its regional role without becoming constrained by alliance politics or bloc confrontation.

Against this backdrop, ASEAN and India share a strong interest in preserving an open, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture.

The CSP therefore serves not merely as a bilateral framework but as a strategic instrument through which both sides can reinforce ASEAN-led institutions and mitigate the destabilising effects of geopolitical polarisation. The POA 2026-2030 places considerable emphasis on strengthening cooperation through mechanisms such as the EAS, ARF, ADMM+, and EAMF, all of which remain central to ASEAN's institutional leadership in the Indo-Pacific.

Over the next five to ten years, ASEAN-India cooperation is likely to evolve from symbolic support for ASEAN centrality towards more substantive coordination on regional governance, crisis management, preventive diplomacy, and multilateral reform. Such cooperation would reinforce ASEAN's role as the primary driver of regional dialogue while providing India with an institutional platform through which to advance its Act East Policy. More broadly, it would contribute to the emergence of a more balanced Indo-Pacific order in which regional institutions, rather than great-power rivalries alone, continue to shape the rules and norms of interstate interaction.

5.2. Transforming Maritime Cooperation into Comprehensive Maritime Governance

Maritime cooperation is likely to become the most strategically significant pillar of the ASEAN-India CSP. This reflects the reality that the Indo-Pacific is fundamentally a maritime region whose economic prosperity, strategic stability, and geopolitical dynamics are deeply dependent on the security and governance of the seas. The growing salience of maritime issues stems not only from traditional security concerns, such as territorial disputes and freedom of navigation, but also from the increasing importance of non-traditional challenges, including illegal fishing, maritime crime, environmental degradation, and climate-related risks.

The ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Maritime Cooperation adopted in 2023 and the designation of 2026 as the ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation signal a growing recognition that maritime

affairs will remain central to the future of the partnership (MEA, 2024; Modi, 2025). In the coming decade, cooperation is likely to broaden considerably from traditional naval and security interactions to encompass a more comprehensive approach to maritime governance. This may include collaboration on maritime domain awareness, search and rescue operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), blue economy initiatives, sustainable fisheries management, marine environmental protection, and maritime cybersecurity. The POA explicitly identifies many of these areas as priorities for future cooperation (ASEAN, 2025b).

The strategic significance of this evolution extends beyond functional cooperation. By strengthening maritime governance, ASEAN and India can contribute to the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and facilitate greater convergence with India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). Such convergence would reinforce ASEAN centrality by ensuring that Indo-Pacific cooperation remains inclusive and non-exclusive while simultaneously advancing India's objective of becoming a leading stakeholder in regional maritime affairs. In the broader Indo-Pacific context, enhanced maritime cooperation would support a rules-based maritime order anchored in the principles of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and contribute to regional stability amidst increasing strategic competition (MEA, 2024).

5.3. Building Economic Resilience and Supply Chain Security

Economic cooperation will remain an essential pillar of the ASEAN-India CSP, but its focus is likely to shift significantly from trade expansion towards economic resilience. The disruptions generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical conflicts, sanctions regimes, protectionist measures, and supply-chain fragmentation have exposed the vulnerabilities of the contemporary global economy. Economic interdependence, once regarded primarily as a source of prosperity,

is increasingly viewed through the lens of strategic risk and national security.

For both ASEAN and India, enhancing resilience against external shocks has therefore become a strategic imperative. This explains why the review and upgrading of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) has become a central priority. Both sides have repeatedly emphasised the need to make the agreement more effective, user-friendly, and responsive to changing global economic conditions (ASEAN, 2025b). Yet the significance of economic cooperation extends far beyond trade liberalisation.

In the coming years, ASEAN and India are likely to prioritise the development of secure and diversified supply chains in critical sectors such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing, critical minerals, food security, and emerging technologies. The POA's emphasis on promoting 'diverse, secure, transparent and resilient supply chains' reflects a broader shift in strategic thinking that increasingly links economic resilience with national and regional security (ASEAN, 2025b).

This evolution has important implications for regional order. Greater ASEAN-India economic integration would strengthen ASEAN's position as a central node in Indo-Pacific production networks while enabling India to deepen its economic engagement with Southeast Asia beyond traditional market-access considerations. More broadly, it would contribute to the development of a more diversified and resilient regional economic architecture capable of mitigating the risks associated with excessive dependence on any single market or supply source.

5.4. Advancing Connectivity as Strategic Infrastructure

Connectivity has long occupied a central place in ASEAN-India relations, yet its strategic significance is likely to increase considerably in the coming decade. In an era of heightened geopolitical competition, infrastructure and connectivity are no longer viewed solely as instruments

of economic development; they have become important sources of strategic influence and regional integration.

The continued prioritisation of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and its proposed extension to Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam reflects this understanding (ASEAN, 2025b). Successful completion of this project would create one of the most important physical links between South Asia and Southeast Asia, facilitating trade, investment, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges.

However, the future connectivity agenda is likely to extend well beyond transport infrastructure. Increasingly, ASEAN and India are expected to focus on digital connectivity, logistics integration, regulatory harmonisation, and smart infrastructure. The "Connecting the Connectivities" approach, which seeks to align ASEAN's connectivity agenda with India's Act East Policy, offers a useful framework for such efforts (ASEAN, 2026b).

By strengthening connectivity across multiple dimensions, ASEAN and India can reduce the fragmenting effects of geopolitical competition while enhancing regional integration. For ASEAN, this reinforces its role as a hub linking the major economies of the Indo-Pacific. For India, it supports the transformation of the Act East Policy from a primarily diplomatic initiative into a comprehensive strategy of economic and strategic engagement. At the regional level, enhanced connectivity contributes to a more integrated and interconnected Indo-Pacific order.

5.5. Advancing Digital Transformation and Technological Security

Technological disruption has emerged as one of the defining characteristics of contemporary global uncertainty. Competition over digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data governance, and emerging technologies increasingly shapes economic competitiveness and national power. As a result, technology cooperation is likely to become one of the most transformative dimensions of the ASEAN-India CSP.

Both ASEAN and India recognise that digital transformation is essential for sustaining long-term economic growth and competitiveness. At the same time, they face the challenge of reducing technological vulnerabilities and avoiding excessive dependence on external technological ecosystems. Consequently, cooperation is expected to expand in areas such as digital public infrastructure, digital payments, financial technology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence governance, smart cities, and digital skills development (ASEAN, 2025b; ASEAN, 2026b).

India's internationally recognised achievements in digital public infrastructure provide particularly promising opportunities for collaboration. Over the next decade, India's experience in digital identity systems, digital payment platforms, and e-governance could significantly support ASEAN's digital transformation agenda.

The broader strategic implications are considerable. Digital cooperation strengthens ASEAN's efforts to build a more integrated regional digital economy while providing India with an additional avenue for advancing its Act East Policy. More importantly, it contributes to the emergence of a more open, inclusive, and resilient digital order in the Indo-Pacific at a time when technological competition is becoming increasingly intertwined with geopolitical rivalry.

5.6. Accelerating Green Transition and Climate Resilience

Climate change represents perhaps the most universal and long-term form of uncertainty confronting both ASEAN and India. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, and energy disruptions increasingly threaten economic development and social stability across the region. Consequently, climate change is no longer viewed merely as an environmental challenge but as a strategic issue with profound implications for security and development.

The ASEAN-India POA 2026-2030 reflects this growing recognition through its emphasis on renewable energy, green financing, hydrogen technologies, bioenergy, sustainable agriculture, and regional energy connectivity (ASEAN, 2025b). Future cooperation is likely to focus on accelerating the energy transition while simultaneously enhancing climate adaptation and resilience.

Particularly significant is the growing emphasis on the ASEAN Power Grid and broader regional energy integration initiatives. These efforts have the potential to strengthen energy security, facilitate the deployment of renewable energy, and support regional decarbonisation objectives. At the same time, cooperation on climate-smart agriculture and resilient infrastructure could help both sides address the growing risks associated with climate-related disruptions.

From a strategic perspective, climate cooperation expands the scope of ASEAN centrality into the domain of sustainable development while providing India with a constructive and non-contentious avenue for regional engagement. More broadly, it contributes to the development of a more sustainable Indo-Pacific order capable of addressing one of the most significant long-term challenges facing the international community.

5.7. Strengthening Human Security and Societal Connectivity

Finally, the future sustainability of the ASEAN-India CSP will depend on the extent to which it can strengthen people-to-people linkages and address emerging human security challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that non-traditional threats could have consequences comparable to, or even greater than, traditional geopolitical conflicts. Public health crises, natural disasters, demographic transitions, and social vulnerabilities increasingly shape regional stability and development.

In response, ASEAN and India are likely to deepen cooperation in public health, higher education, scientific research, disaster management,

tourism, youth exchanges, and cultural preservation. Existing initiatives such as the ASEAN-India Network of Universities and various scholarship and cultural programmes provide important foundations for this process. Furthermore, establishing an ASEAN-India public health framework could be considered to harness the complementary advantages of India and ASEAN nations in traditional medicine.

The significance of these initiatives extends beyond their immediate practical benefits. Stronger societal connectivity reinforces the social foundations of ASEAN-India relations and helps cultivate a shared sense of regional community. In strategic terms, people-centred cooperation strengthens ASEAN Community-building efforts, reinforces the civilisational dimension of India's Act East Policy, and provides the social legitimacy necessary for sustaining long-term regional cooperation (ASEAN, 2022a).

In an increasingly uncertain world, human security and societal resilience are likely to become indispensable complements to traditional forms of political, economic, and security cooperation. Together, they will help ensure that the ASEAN-India CSP remains not only strategically relevant but also socially sustainable in the decades ahead.

6. Conclusion

The ASEAN-India CSP has emerged as one of the most significant strategic relationships in the Indo-Pacific at a time when the international system is undergoing profound transformation. The contemporary global environment is increasingly characterised by overlapping uncertainties arising from power transition, intensifying great-power competition, economic fragmentation, technological disruption, climate change, pandemics, and the growing limitations of multilateral governance mechanisms. These developments have fundamentally reshaped the strategic calculations of both ASEAN and India, creating new incentives for cooperation while simultaneously exposing vulnerabilities that neither side can effectively address alone.

Within this context, the strategic convergence between ASEAN centrality and India's Act East Policy has provided a strong foundation for the development of the CSP. ASEAN's commitment to maintaining an open, inclusive, and ASEAN-led regional architecture complements India's emphasis on strategic autonomy, multi-alignment, and support for a multipolar world order. The establishment of the CSP in 2022 therefore represented more than a symbolic elevation of relations; it reflected a shared recognition that deeper cooperation is necessary to navigate growing uncertainties and preserve stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Since 2022, ASEAN and India have achieved notable progress across multiple domains. Political-security cooperation has expanded through ASEAN-led mechanisms and growing coordination on maritime security, counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, and regional governance. Economic relations have continued to deepen, while cooperation in connectivity, digital transformation, science and technology, climate resilience, food security, public health, and people-to-people exchanges have broadened considerably. The adoption of the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Maritime Cooperation, the strengthening of AOIP-Act East Policy synergies, and the ASEAN-India Plan of Action 2026-2030 demonstrate an increasingly comprehensive and forward-looking partnership.

Nevertheless, important challenges remain. Trade and investment relations continue to underperform relative to the size and potential of the two economies. Key connectivity projects, particularly the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, face persistent implementation challenges. Geopolitical tensions, divergent threat perceptions, and the increasingly complex strategic environment may also constrain deeper coordination. Furthermore, emerging non-traditional security challenges—including climate change, cybersecurity threats, pandemics, and supply-chain disruptions—require stronger institutional mechanisms and greater resource commitments than currently exist.

Looking ahead, the future relevance of the ASEAN-India CSP will depend on its capacity to move beyond traditional forms of cooperation and evolve into a more resilient and adaptive strategic partnership. The analysis in this chapter suggests that seven priorities are likely to shape the next phase of cooperation: preserving ASEAN centrality and strategic autonomy; strengthening maritime governance; building resilient supply chains and economic security; enhancing physical and digital connectivity; advancing digital transformation and technological cooperation; accelerating green transition and climate resilience; and deepening human security and societal connectivity.

Taken together, these priorities indicate that the ASEAN-India CSP is increasingly becoming more than a bilateral or regional partnership. It is evolving into an important mechanism through which ASEAN and India seek to manage uncertainty, strengthen resilience, and contribute to the construction of a stable, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific order. In an era marked by profound global uncertainty, the success of the ASEAN-India CSP will not be measured solely by trade volumes, investment flows, or institutional meetings, but by its ability to provide strategic stability, foster regional resilience, and generate practical solutions to the complex challenges confronting the Indo-Pacific region in the decades ahead.

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FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India's development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.

Forum for Indian Science Diplomacy

FISD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India's development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India's engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.

As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.

Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on SSC approaches for international development.

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The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is engaged across inter-governmental processes of several regional economic cooperation initiatives. Through its intensive network of think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues and the development partnership canvas.

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