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

RIS Diary
— Research shaping the development agenda

Maritime Landscape: Past Present and Future

CMEC Distinguished Lecture Series

(From Left) Professor Sachin Chaturvedi; Shri Rajiv Jalota; Dr Vishwapati Trivedi ; and Mr Subhomoy Bhattacharjee.

RIS hosted the inaugural Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC) Distinguished Lecture Series on the 29 of January 2024, at New Delhi. Shri Rajiv Jalota, Chairman of Mumbai Port Trust and the Indian Port Association delivered the first lecture in the series. The CMEC Distinguished Lecture Series aims to foster knowledge and discussion in the domain of maritime trade and shipping, providing a platform for industry leaders, researchers and policymakers to share their insights and expertise.

Shri Jalota, a stalwart in the field of maritime trade policy as well with vast experience as chairman of one of India's key port, deliver a most thought-provoking address on "Painting a Maritime Landscape: Past Present and Future".

He began by highlighting the expanding contours of Indian Maritime Sector and said, "India has set sail for an ambitious destination, with plans for several mega port clusters and global economic corridors in the pipeline and it is great to see how far we have come". Offering a synoptic view of the past traditions of the maritime sector going back millenniums where India had played a key global role, he connected those to the current and the future policy paradigms for the sector as set out in Maritime India Vision 2030 and Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047. Both of them he explained, seeks to establish the maritime sector as a key enabler for the vastly expanded trade potential of the economy in the ensuing decades.

Shri Jalota took the audience on a well defined tour of the projects on the anvil. He touched upon the plans to develop the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep as tourism hubs which will entail encouraging the participation of private players for faster development. A most significant initiative in this context, according to him was the plans to develop Galathea Bay in the Nicobar Islands as a transshipment hub. He explained how the Indian port infrastructure has over the past few years rapidly scaled up their performance indicators rivalling global standards and was now taking on new commercial challenges like capturing the revenue from ships anchoring beyond port limits. In this connection he pointed that 20

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Bay of Bengal and India-Japan Economic Relations

(From Left) Professor Radharaman Chakrabarti; Professor Sachin Chaturvedi ; Ambassador Krishnan Srinivasan; and Mr Ambarish Dasgupta.

A two-day International Conference in Kolkata was held on 11-12 March 2024 on the theme "Bay of Bengal and India-Japan Economic Relations" in collaboration with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), National Digital Library of India (NDLI), Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), and Kolkata Society for Asian Studies (KSAS). Over 50 speakers comprising of scholars, practitioners and industry experts from India, Japan and Bangladesh discussed the various aspects of India–Japan relations and the emerging trilateral partnership between India, Japan and Bangladesh for India's Northeast. The sessions delved into issues of trade, investment and value chains, collaboration for utilising the opportunities in new sectors and overcoming challenges to further enhance the relationship.

The Conference comprised two Special Panel sessions on Japan-India Partnership in the Changing Global Order and Accelerated Partnerships for Regional Development. Apart from two special panels, the Conference had five sessions which deliberated upon specific areas of cooperation such as Industrial Policy and Science, Technology and Innovation; Trade, Investment and Value Chains; People-to-People Contacts and Cultural Collaboration. The sessions also discussed the prospects of trilateral relationship between India, Japan and Bangladesh for development of India's Northeast and scope for greater cooperation between Japan and India in the Bay of Bengal region.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, in his welcome remarks provided key areas of cooperation between India, Japan and Bangladesh and presented the objectives of the Conference. The inaugural session of the Conference was chaired by Ambassador Sujan Chinoy, Director General, MP-IDSA who shared the historical perspectives on India-Japan relations, particularly Bengal. Further, Special Remarks were extended by Mr Koichi Nakagawa, Consul-General, Consulate General of Japan in Kolkata and Mr Gaurangalal Das, Joint Secretary, East Asia Division, MEA, New Delhi. Mr Nakagawa highlighted the geostrategic importance of Kolkata and Japan's ambitious plans to forge industrial value chains linking Eastern India, Northeast, and Bangladesh, thereby deepening economic integration. Mr Das highlighted the potential for Japanese investment and infrastructure development, extending the focus to establish industrial townships and strengthening economic ties, including collaboration with Bangladesh, defence, technology, and resilient supply chains,

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India-Indonesia Partnership and A Renewed Understanding, New Opportunities

RIS organised a panel discussion on India-Indonesia Partnership: A Renewed Understanding, New Opportunities and Critical Steps Ahead on 17 January 2024 in hybrid mode. Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS; Ambassador Preeti Saran, former Secretary (East), MEA; Dr Satish Chandra Mishra, Habibie Centre, Indonesia; Professor Shankari Sundararaman, Professor, Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, SIS, JNU; and Dr Pankaj Vashisht, Associate Professor, RIS were the main speakers. Members of the think tank community, researchers, businessmen and policymakers from both countries took part.

(From Left) Dr Satish Chandra Mishra; Ambassador Preeti Saran; Professor Sundararaman; and Dr Pankaj Vashisht.

In his welcome address by Professor Chaturvedi, highlighted that India and Indonesia have made remarkable economic progress and both countries have also emerged as important development partners. He suggested that India and Indonesia can do a lot by working together.

Ambassador Preeti Saran acknowledged the importance of Indonesia for India and emphasised the importance of strengthening bilateral relations. Ambassador Saran pointed out that though cooperation in strategic and other areas is important, trade and investment are key for cementing bilateral relations. She urged panelists to suggest ways for stimulating trade and investment between India and Indonesia

Dr Satish Chandra Mishra talked about the transformative journey of Indonesia since 2000, describing it as a "caterpillar to butterfly" systemic transition. He underscored the need for closer structured cooperation between India and Indonesia to reshape the geopolitics of Asia. Talking about the "China Factor", he pointed out that China has a presence in Indonesia, but the situation is more complex than it appears. Indonesia could be an attractive destination for Indian firms. Indian firms need to learn the art of working in a public-private partnership framework to penetrate the Indonesian market, especially in sectors like health, education, etc, which have high potential.

Professor Sundararaman's spoke on the role of socio-religious organisations; the leadership of Sukarno, Suharto and Megawati Sukarnoputri; the role of influential families in Indonesia's economy; the Global Maritime Fulcrum initiative; and Indonesia-China relations within the context of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to paint a nuanced picture of Indonesia's multifaceted political and economic landscape. Indonesia's political and economic landscape reflects a complex interplay of historical legacies, diverse influences, and strategic initiatives that shape its position in the global arena. Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum initiative underscores Indonesia's strategic vision to leverage its maritime geography for economic development, security, and geopolitical influence.

Dr Pankaj Vashisht spoke about the economic relation between India and Indonesia. Despite the recent spurt, the volume of bilateral trade between India and Indonesia has remained less than the potential mainly due to prevailing high non-tariff barriers, long exclusion lists and low utilisation of FTA. The removal of these constraints can lead to a more than a 33 per cent increase in existing trade volume. Digital technology offers interesting opportunities and advocated that both countries should work together to harmonise regulatory frameworks to facilitate cross-border e-commerce and digital payment transactions to maximise gain from ongoing digitalisation.

The panel discussion concluded with a vibrant Q&A session, showcasing the engagement and interest of the audience in the economic prospects and challenges discussed during the session. A strategic and collaborative approach between India and Indonesia is essential to unlock the full potential of their economic partnership. ■

Strengthening ASEAN-India Partnership

Distinguished participants at the session.

The ASEAN-India Centre at Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) organised a brainstorming session on "Strengthening ASEAN-India Partnership" at RIS on 17 January 2024. Leading scholars, academicians, and former diplomats, along with Ambassador Jayanta Khobragade, Indian Ambassador to ASEAN, participated in the ideation session.

The session commenced with the introductory remarks by Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS. He pointed out that the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement has played an important role in strengthening ASEAN-India economic ties and suggested that an ongoing review of ASEAN-India FTA should be completed with the objective to make it more effective. He also advocated that ASEAN and India should make efforts to increase cooperation in the fields of FinTech and Digitalization, which are going to define the future.

Making his initial remarks, Ambassador Khobragade argued that India has accorded the highest priority to its relation with ASEAN. He pointed out that deeper diplomatic engagement with ASEAN has not only cemented economic ties but has also strengthened ASEAN-India cooperation in several other areas, including maritime safety and security, people-to-people connectivity, capacity building, clean energy, etc. Ambassador Khobragade concluded his remarks by pointing out that there is a need to strengthen the ASEAN-India Network of Universities to improve academic collaboration.

Ambassador Khobragade's remarks were followed by an intense discussion on strengthening the ASEAN-India Partnership. Several important suggestions emerged from the discussion. India has been implementing quick-impact projects in CLMV countries. They suggested that an audit of these projects should be commissioned to examine the efficiency, efficacy and usefulness of these projects for host countries as well as for India. There is improving India's connectivity with ASEAN and the larger Indo-Pacific.

Participants argued that around US$80 billion is required to materialize the proposed connectivity projects India has been talking about. However, only US$ 8 billion has been secured for the proposed connectivity projects. Indian government should work with other like-minded countries to bridge this funding gap. Importance of digital infrastructure and startups for inclusive development and advocated for deeper cooperation between India and ASEAN in these areas.

Discussing the cooperation in the maritime sector, participants argued that though there is a convergence of views between ASEAN and India on important maritime issues, including UNCLOS, there are certain points which could lead to diversion. Unlike ASEAN, India has not signed the 'High Sea Treaty', which in the long run could lead to diversion. The government should keep this potential point of diversion in mind while working with ASEAN. Efforts should aslo be made to optimize the cultural overlap to strengthen the relations.

Participants deliberated on the evolution of India's policy approach, suggesting a shift from the Look East Policy to a more comprehensive Indo-Pacific Policy. They also acknowledged the changing geopolitical landscape and advocated for aligning policies with evolving regional dynamics.

In conclusion, the session provided a platform for insightful discussions, resulting in key recommendations for strengthening the ASEAN-India partnership. The multifaceted dialogue encompassed economic, academic, and cultural dimensions, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to address challenges and optimize opportunities in the evolving Indo-Pacific context. ■

20th ASEAN-India Summit: From Outcomes to Implementation

Distinguished speakers at the seminar.

The International Seminar on "20th ASEAN-India Summit: From Outcomes to Implementation" was held on 8 February 2024 at RIS. Delegates, policymakers and subject experts to deliberate on a wide range of crucial topics for ASEAN-India partnership.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS made his welcome remarks. Ambassador Jayant N. Khobragade, India's Ambassador to the ASEAN delivered a keynote address, H. E. Ms Ina H. Krisnamurthi, Ambassador of Indonesia to India and Bhutan, was the Guest of Honour. Speakers suggested that continued dialogue and concerted action are essential to strengthen the ASEAN-India relationship for peace, security and prosperity in the region.

Amb Rajiv Bhatia, Distinguished Fellow at Gateway House, chaired a session on the significance and implementation of the 12-Point Proposal. Amb Ong Keng Yong and Dr Venkatachalam Anbumozhi, provided valuable insights, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The speakers emphasized the need for practical implementation of proposed measures and collaborative efforts to tackle both traditional and non-traditional security issues. The imperative to strengthen food security was another focal point of discussion. Dr Joanna Kane-Potaka, Deputy Director General of the International Rice Research Institute, chaired the session, with insights from esteemed speakers such as Dr Fatimah Mohamed Arshad and Dr Kalpana Sastry R. Participants highlighted the importance of ASEAN-India Millet Festival, ASEAN-India Green Fund and ASEAN-India S&T cooperation in enhancing food security. Discussions revolved around utilizing technology, start-ups, and investments to address agricultural challenges and foster sustainable development.

Addressing non-traditional maritime security threats was also a crucial agenda item. Chaired by Professor Chintamani Mahapatra, the session featured perspectives from experts including Capt. Sarabjit Parmar and Dr Arie Afriansyah. Speakers discussed the impact of geopolitical issues including developments in the South China Sea on the maritime security. Collaborative efforts to ensure sustainable maritime resources and address geopolitical concerns were proposed. The diverse range of topics covered the multifaceted nature of ASEAN-India cooperation and the collective effort required to address regional challenges effectively.

The seminar served as a platform for robust deliberations, fostering a deeper understanding of the intricate aspects of the ASEAN-India partnership. The insights gained are expected to contribute significantly to the formulation of policies and strategies for the mutual benefit of the participating nations. ■

DAKSHIN Virtual Workshop on Agriculture

The 1st Dakshin Conference, scheduled for February 2024, focusing on the theme "Global South for Global Prosperity: Leveraging Collective Efforts for Inclusive Growth", is a significant event anticipated to bring together think tanks from across the Global South. To pave the way for the momentous gathering, DAKSHIN organised a virtual workshop on 17 January 2024, centered around various issues related to agriculture. This workshop served as a platform for brainstorming the issues and challenges of the agriculture sector in the Global South and moves DAKSHIN one step ahead in compiling a compendium of possible solutions to the challenges in this sector.

The virtual workshop aimed at: discussing innovative solutions, best practices, successful flagship schemes of India and other countries of the Global South in the agriculture sector; to promote development solutions advocated by these countries for their possible replication and adoption among peer countries of the developing world. Purpose was also involve think tanks/universities/research institutions in promoting mutual learning, exchange of experiences and good practices among countries of the Global South; and identify areas of common interests and institutional collaboration.

Panelists, subject experts, and over 200 participants joined this virtual workshop from across the Global South, ranging from Fiji to Chile, and all the other countries of the Global South in between. The workshop started with a presentation of Indian schemes and programmes, followed by insights from other countries of the Global South in the following areas of cooperation: Food security and nutrition ; Sustainable, inclusive and climate-resilient agriculture ; Funding agriculture infrastructure and Digitization of agricultural markets

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, DG RIS, stressed that DAKSHIN, the Global South Centre for Excellence, is India's commitment to bring out development across various sectors with an emphasis on solutions. He called upon stakeholders to engage in shared solutions and shared experiences for coping up with climate change and recommended to bring out a Handbook of best practices in the agriculture sector in the Global South.

Dr Smita Sirohi, Principal Scientist, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), in her Keynote Address, highlighted the shared goals for ensuring food security for all, making agricultural livelihoods inclusive and economically viable and promoting resilient and sustainable food systems. She shared India's initiatives towards sustainability, risk management, promotion of millets, and development of climate-resilient crops leading to remunerative farming. Key Indian programmes covered were the National Agriculture Development Programme (NADP)/ Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Crop Insurance Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana - PMFBY), Soil Health Card, Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs), National Agricultural Markets (eNAM), the Agri-Stack, and Mobile Telephony for Farmers. She endorsed the need to learn from each other to solve the common challenges in the agriculture sector across the Global South.

Dr S. R. Rao, Vice President, Balaji Vidyapeeth, highlighted the need for equity in the transfer of technologies, especially related to climate change. He underscored the need for deeper collaborations across relevant actors and stakeholders across the countries of the Global South. ■

Dr Kalpana Sastry, Managing Director, Aghub, highlighted the momentum attained to evolve agri-start-ups over the recent years. She added that there is a need for enabling agencies to work closely with emerging agriculture start-ups and incubate innovations. Her discussion also covered realising bio-economy, regenerative agriculture and the use of digital technologies.

Think tanks from across the Global South shared their experiences in a dedicated session. Dr Lual A. Deng, Managing Director, Ebony Centre for Strategic Studies (ECSS), shared experiences of South Sudan- the extreme weather events amidst low utilisation of land, lack of agricultural education and investments including in AI for better land utilisation leading to food security. He suggested a better focus on infrastructure development and financial transformation through digital technologies.

Dr Herrick Mpuku, Executive Director, Zambia Institute for Policy Analyses and Research (ZIPAR), Zambia, highlighted challenges faced by the agriculture sector, such as low productivity mainly due to over-reliance on rainfall and lack of irrigation facilities, poor infrastructure and lack of market information, finance and insurance. Requirements of infrastructure in irrigation systems, roads and the need to supply quality inputs, including seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc and access to markets were suggested as solutions. He highlighted the role of the private sector in agricultural markets and the need to revamp and rethink extension services. He also stressed the importance of interaction platforms like DAKSHIN to exchange information on technologies and experiences and learning from each other.

Mr Gregg C. E Rawlins, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) Representative in the Eastern Caribbean States (ECS), highlighted their work related to school meals programmes and school gardens for nutrition, underscored the need to keep the solutions farmer-centric, and appreciated the role of knowledge sharing that DAKSHIN will play for Global South.

Lady Fane Fakafanua, Chief Operations Officer, Royal Oceania Institute (ROI), Kingdom of Tonga, highlighted issues such as small farm holdings, far-off markets and lack of irrigation systems in the Kingdom of Tonga. She also highlighted the large costs involved in desalination and other projects and informed that multi-cropping systems are practised in the country to address the challenges of trading agricultural items with other regional countries.

Discussions from the floor were very engaging and informative. Dr Karim M. Maredia, Director, WorldTAP, MSU, USA, highlighted that agriculture is moving from production to agricultural marketing and advocated an increased role of outreach and extension services for agricultural development. He focused on the need to conserve water and its judicious use and added that youth is moving out of agriculture and there is a need to create opportunities to retain it in agriculture. He praised the initiative to develop global knowledge partnerships and collaborations like several others who spoke in the open discussion session.

The workshop ended on a positive note, with stakeholders and participants expressing renewed commitment to contribute to DAKSHIN endeavors in the coming days. The insights gained will serve as a valuable foundation for the upcoming 1st Dakshin Conference in February 2024, promoting collective efforts for inclusive growth in the Global South. ■

Advancing Global Health

The second online workshop on the health sector was organised on February 2, 2024. The e-workshop was attended by participants from several countries of Global South.

Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Chairperson, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) chaired the workshop and provided a brief overview of the health sector in India and in the Global South in general, and the challenges faced in the backdrop of Covid pandem. Dr Basant Garg, Addl. CEO, National Health Authority (NHA), delivered the Keynote Address and provided an overview of successful and innovative Indian health schemes and programmes which are replicable and scalable in other countries of the Global South. Ms Archana Vyas, Director, Programme Advocacy and Communications, Bill & Melinda

Gates Foundation informed that Health Diplomacy and cooperation across countries in the health sector are extremely important and spoke positively about India's digital public infrastructure and the lessons that are being shared with other countries. Dr Preeti Kumar, Vice President, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) mentioned that transitioning from Universal Health Coverage to Public Health Care is the required clarion call, especially for the countries of the Global South. She emphasised that a shift from health to wellness can only occur when Public Health professionals are embedded in the Health and Wellness Centres by providing them education with the right amount of knowledge and skills to serve the communities well. Ramón Villalta, Executive Director of the Social Initiative for Democracy, El Salvador emphasised that Universal Health Care is fundamental. During the pandemic, El Salvador used a model to prevent vaccine hesitancy, especially in the indigenous communities of the country. Majority of the people who were living in the rural area were the ones who were adversely affected. Ms Carolina Casullo from the Public Policy Implementation Center for Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), Argentina stated that the best practice in digital health in Argentina was the creation of a National Department of Health Information supported by external financing. However, the challenge within Argentina is the lack of equitable distribution of health services. The workshop ended on a positive note with a resolve pursue these issues at the forthcoming in-person DAKSHIN Conference.

Workshop on Digital Solutions

DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence organized its third online workshop on digital solutions on February 28, 2024. It was attended by participants from several countries of the Global South. Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS in his welcome remarks introduced the DAKSHIN Vision and its Mission.

Mr Rohit Rathish, Joint Secretary, DPA-III Division, Ministry of External Affairs, while chairing the proceedings, provided an overview of the role of digital tools in India's socio-economic development. He discussed India's collaborations with nations of the Global South through the signing of MOUs, providing them with the India Stack and digital public infrastructure (DPI) at no expense and with open-source accessibility. Indian experts, including Mr Saurabh Kumar Tiwari, Joint Secretary, DBT Mission, Col Nikhil Sinha, Director (Enforcement), UIDAI, Mr Nitin Mishra, CTO ONDC, Mr Ajay Kumar Choudhary, Non-Executive Chairman and Independent Director, NPCI, and Prof S. Rajagopalan, Hon. Visiting Faculty, IIIT Bangalore shared insights into India's experiences with digital solutions.

Professor John Huston Stanfield, the Founding Director of ASARPI in Mauritius, Dr Aleksandra Tosovic-Stevanovic, a Research Fellow at IIPE in Serbia, Mr. Yorokee Kapimbua, the Founder of the Centre for Policy Research AFRICA in Botswana, and Mr José Ramón Villalta, the Director of ISD in El Salvador, all expressed their appreciation for the thorough presentations by Indian agencies engaged in digital solutions. They also discussed the challenges and opportunities their respective countries encounter, highlighting the potential usefulness of digital solutions. Professor John Huston Stanfield and Mr Yorokee Kapimbua emphasized the practical implications and deployment costs of digital solutions in their presentations, whereas Dr Aleksandra Tosovic-Stevanovic and Mr José Ramón Villalta discussed the application of digital technologies in the agriculture sector. ■

Exploring Global Collaborations

Ms Lara Setrakian, President, Mr Benyamin Poghosyan, Senior Research Fellow, and Mr Davit Antonyan, Associate Fellow from APRI, Armenia, visited RIS on 22 February, 2024 and discussed the potential for collaboration with DAKSHIN. The delegation expressed interest in connecting experts from APRI with their Indian counterparts under the India Stack initiative, facilitated by an MoU signed with MEITY. They also wish to work with DAKSHIN on issues such as transit and transport, clean energy and climate finance, anti-microbial resistance, agri-tech etc.

Prof Zhidas Daskalovski, President and Dr Marija Risteska, Executive Director, CRPM visited DAKSHIN at RIS on 23 February 2024 and discussed the potential for collaboration between the two institutions with Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, DG, RIS and others. Various suggestions were explored such as setting up an ERASMUS-type academic exchange programme and exploring joint research in the DAKSHIN priority areas.

Amb Dr Farid Shafiyev, Chairman and Vasif Huseynov, Branch Manager at AIR Center, Azerbaijan, along with Amb Mr Elchin Huseynli of Azerbaijan visited DAKSHIN at RIS on 23 February and discussed the potential for joint collaboration. They expressed interest in working together with India on UNFCCC COP 29 issues and undertaking joint work with DAKSHIN on urban development, agriculture and water stress. Dr Abla Abdel Latif, Executive Director, and Director of Research at ECES, Egypt, engaged in discussions with Mr Atul Kaushik, GDC Fellow at RIS, DAKSHIN about potential collaboration with DAKSHIN. Dr Latif proposed a workshop on the role of digital technologies in agriculture for small farmers, aiming to identify specific research areas for joint efforts and securing funding together.

Amb Vijay Kant Karna, Executive Chairperson of CESIF, Nepal visited DAKSHIN at RIS on 29 February and expressed interest in learning about the Indian experience in using digital technology in providing welfare services to citizens and plugging delays and leakages. ■

51st STIP Forum Public Lecture

CRISPR for Developing Future Crops

The 51st STIP Forum Public Lecture was delivered by Professor K. C. Bansal, Former Director, ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources and Member, Board of Trustees, MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, on 24 January 2024 at New Delhi. The topic of the lecture was "CRISPR for Developing Future Crops". Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI, chaired the event. Welcome remarks were delivered by Mr Sunit Tandon, Director, India Habitat Centre.

In his very informative and insightful lecture, Professor Bansal covered a wide canvas of issues related to the scope, potential and prospects of using modern biotechnologies such as CRISPR for ensuring food and nutrition security.

He began his lecture by highlighting the future requirement of food amidst challenges such as increasing population, dwindling resources, climate change and global warming. He stated that, by 2050, 50 per cent more food will be needed, due to the rapid population growth and dietary changes associated with economic growth. In this context, genome editing can be used for increasing crop production with desired traits. The desired traits could be agronomic (such as insect resistance, herbicide tolerance, drought resistance, salinity tolerance, high yielding etc) as well as nutritional quality traits such as bio-fortified crops etc.

Professor Bansal alluded to the regulatory landscape on genome editing and the current state of genome-edited crop production across the world and hailed the

Professor K. C. Bansal delivering the lecture.

two landmark policy decisions by the Indian government viz. 'Exemption of Genome Edited Crops (SDN1 and SDN2) from Bio-safety Assessment (March 2022)' and 'Environmental Release of GM Mustard Hybrid (October, 2022)'. He argued that these policy

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Visit of Mr Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC to RIS

Mr Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General of BIMSTEC, visited RIS on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, for an interactive session aimed at promoting collaboration between BIMSTEC and RIS and providing inputs on the working structure and potential of BIMSTEC.

The session primarily focused on strengthening cooperation between the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka and RIS along with the representatives from Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), India; Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Bangladesh and other BIMSTEC member countries. Cooperation with Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand were highlighted. The meeting underscored the importance of regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal region. It also highlighted the importance of multilateral engagement in advancing shared interests within the Bay of Bengal region. The interactive session witnessed active participation from RIS faculty members and researchers, facilitating fruitful exchanges of ideas and insights. ■

Exploring the Nexus of Technology and Society

Around 130 students of Rishihood University, accompanied by Vice Chancellor Professor Shobhit Mathur, visited RIS on 2 February 2024 to interact with the faculty members on various issues related to 'Technology and Society'. Professor Chaturvedi, Director General of RIS, delivered the welcome remarks, providing an overview of RIS's work program as a prominent think tank on international economic relations. He also shed light on India's evolving development paradigm, especially in terms of technology leadership. Several Faculty members of RIS introduced the students to critical areas of interface between technology and society. Dr P. Dash, Associate Professor presented the key trends in the global fintech sector with specific focus on India. He shared some of the key innovative customised services that fintech provides to the people and helps achieve financial inclusion. Dr P K Anand, Visiting Fellow, emphasised

The session in progress.

the pivotal role of technology as a powerful tool for accelerating socio-economic development and systemic transformations. He also underscored the role of Science and Technology in attaining SDGs. Dr J.R. Bhatt, Distinguished Fellow, deliberated upon Climate Change and Biodiversity. He also spoke on the concept of LiFE i.e. Lifestyle for Environment in promoting sustainable coexistence of both living and non-living entities of the planet. Dr R. Srinivas, Consultant, spoke about emerging technologies and shed light on their impact and potential implications for society. Dr Namrata Pathak, Consultant, brought forth the topic of Traditional Medicine in the context of global health governance, trade and investment, sustainable development goals and other rights-based socio-economic frameworks. Dr Sneha. Sinha, Consultant, unfolded the topic of Science Diplomacy emphasising how scientific collaborations between countries can tackle shared challenges confronting humanity in the 21st century and foster international alliances. ■

MoU between Ministry of Ayush and RIS to Advance Indian Traditional Medicine

The Ministry of Ayush and RIS, formalized their collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on February 27, 2024,. This agreement aims to enhance academic cooperation, and facilitate research, policy dialogue, and publications in the field of Indian Traditional Medicine. Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha signed the MoU on behalf of the Ministry of Ayush, whereas Director General Professor Sachin Chaturvedi was the signatory on behalf of RIS.

(From left): Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha and Professor Sachin Chaturvedi.

The MoU focuses on strengthening academic collaboration for research, policy development, and capacity building in the Ayush Service sector. It includes the continuation of the Forum on Indian Traditional Medicine (FITM). Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha acknowledged the longstanding collaboration between the Ministry of Ayush and RIS, emphasizing the valuable contributions of FITM. He highlighted the growth of the Ayush manufacturing sector and expressed optimism about a similar report on the Ayush Service Sector. Professor Sachin Chaturvedi emphasised the need for a broad overview of market estimates, product standardization, and regulations in international trade. He highlighted the potential of the Ayush sector to become a hub for Medical Tourism, emphasizing RIS's active role in developing a roadmap. He advocated for innovative considerations regarding the Biodiversity Act of 2002, emphasizing the dual role of utilizing and safeguarding biodiversity. The MoU signing between the Ministry of Ayush and RIS marks a significant step towards strengthening academic cooperation and promoting research in the Ayush sector. ■

RIS CEO Speaks Series

RIS launched the "CEO Speaks" series as an exciting opportunity for collaboration and knowledge exchange among various research institutions and think tanks. In the 'CEO Speaks' series, the heads of different organizations will share their insights to promote synergy and enhance contributions to policy-making processes.

The first talk in the series was delivered by Dr Deepak Mishra, Director and Chief Executive, ICRIER on Friday, 9 February 2024 at RIS. Dr Mishra proposed a collaborative approach between ICRIER and RIS, along with other think tanks, to address interdisciplinary research topics. This event was attended by RIS researchers and faculty members.

Dr Mishra suggested that ICRIER and RIS, along with other think tanks, can work together on joint research proposals addressing interdisciplinary topics such as agriculture policy, sustainability, digital economy, climate change, urbanization, and innovation. Organizing joint conferences, workshops, and seminars was highlighted as a means to facilitate the exchange of ideas, best practices, and research findings among experts from diverse organizations. The idea of establishing collaborative research groups or task forces focusing on multidisciplinary areas, such as the intersection of agriculture policy with the digital economy and innovation, or the linkage between climate change, urbanization, and sustainability was put forth.

Dr Mishra emphasized the importance of bringing together experts from different backgrounds to form multidisciplinary teams. These teams can generate holistic insights and recommendations that address complex challenges effectively. A noteworthy suggestion included the formation of a cross-think tank community involving institutions such as G20 institutions, Brookings, ICRIER, RIS, and like-minded entities. ■

Advancing Human Development in the Global South

RIS, in collaboration with the Institute for Human Development (IHD) and NITI Aayog, organised a major international conference on "Global Conclave 2024: Advancing Human Development in Global South" from 11-13 January 2024 at New Delhi. About 350 national and international scholars, experts, policymakers, development practitioners and other stakeholders participated in this major conference. RIS participated in and organised various sessions during the entire conference.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi speaking at the Global Conclave 2024.

At the pre-conclave event on 10 January 2024, RIS, in collaboration with United Nations India and IHD, organised a roundtable on Strengthening South-South Cooperation for Global Prosperity. The session was chaired by Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, who highlighted how the Global South is emerging based on its strong macroeconomic fundaments in the world and the increasing role of the Global South and how they are going to bring in dimensions that are important for the transition. Various other subject experts like Mr Shombi Sharp, Dr Abhilasha Joshi, Amb Shyam Saran, Dr Anu Peltola, Dr Christian Cuevas, Dr Rajesh Tandon, Dr Ibrahim Awad, Dr Azita Berar, Dr Imraan Valodia and Professor Alakh Sharma has an in-depth discussion where the importance of South-South Cooperation was recognised. It was discussed that the role of the South is often not adequately voiced and, hence, not adequately addressed at the global forums. The panel highlighted India's role as a leader in voicing the Global South through its recent G20 Presidency and putting SDGs at the core of the international forum. Ambassador Saran emphasized the economic profile of developing countries, covering 47 per cent of global exports and it is expected that growth impulse would come from the South soon. The panelists further highlighted the need for South-South cooperation for sustainable development alongside other development support. In pushing the mandate of South-South Cooperation, the role of civil society has been instrumental in many ways. The session also discussed specific challenges and the need for South-South collaborations in areas like climate change, industrialization, labour force and migration. The significance of data collection was also emphasized for knowledge sharing and strategic decision-making, as in the case of Mexico.

During the main event, RIS organised three sessions, one on Lifestyle for Environment: Towards an Alternative Development Paradigm, which was chaired by Professor Sachin Chaturvedi and experts like Professor Seeta Prabhu, Professor Thomas Pogge, Professor Danang Parikesit, Professor Pami Dua and Dr Shailly Kedia were invited as panelists. Professor Chaturvedi traced the journey of LiFE from its launch in CoP 26 to a comprehensive development model, highlighting the adoption of HLPs during India's G20 Presidency. The session also delved into the role of the Global South in reshaping development paradigms since the 1970s. Professor Thomas Pogge, Director of the Global Justice Programme and Leitner Professor of Philosophy and Political Science, Yale University, USA, linked ethics with economics, advocating for a new paradigm through a 4-dimensional approach: legal structure, infrastructure, choices and beliefs, and natural environment. Emphasising the role of innovation, he proposed moving beyond traditional IPR regimes to impact funds that operate on benefits rather than monopoly markups. Professor Seeta Prabhu, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi and Former Head, Human Development Resource Centre, UNDP, New Delhi, drew parallels between the LiFE paradigm and the human development paradigm, focusing on the 3 Es: environment, employment, and economy and 3 Cs: culture, community, and choices.

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Science Diplomacy: Issues, Policy Choices, and Southern Perspectives

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, DG RIS delivered a lecture entitled 'Science Diplomacy: Issues, Policy Choices, and Southern Perspectives' on 6 March 2024 organised by the Capacity Building Commission. In his lecture, he emphasized the principles and modalities of India's Development Cooperation.

He underlined that one of the most essential principles of India's Development Cooperation was to create cooperation programmes without conditionality, making partnerships that are governed by mutual respect, diversity, care for the future, and sustainable development. He highlighted India's extensive development assistance of US $107 billion during 1947-2022 and its role in establishing bilateral, multilateral and regional linkages. In addition, he discussed the importance of India's participation in mega-science projects like CERN, ITER, FAIR, etc. and also the recent inclusion of the Square kilometre Array.

Professor Chaturvedi also outlined some of the major India-led Science Diplomacy initiatives like the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), established in 1983, the International Solar Alliance (ISA), launched in 2015 and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), established in 2019. He also highlighted India's multilateral cooperation in S&T through platforms like BRICS, BIMSTEC, ASEAN, etc. and bilateral scientific collaborations with more than 80 countries. He also cited examples of the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), CEFIPRA, and Indo-German Science and Technology Centre. Among the several initiatives undertaken by India, Professor Chaturvedi stressed that India has placed Science Counsellors in four countries namely Russia, Japan, USA and Germany to facilitate closer STI cooperation with select countries.

He discussed the contours of the existing Science Diplomacy Framework and highlighted its limitations as it was based on the experiences in the Global North and has an element of 'soft power'. He underlined the need for a new lexicon for science diplomacy that considers the needs and demands of the Global South. He further stressed the role of science diplomacy and the significance of Southern perspectives in his lecture. ■

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crucial for both nations' economic resurgence. Dr Prabir De, Professor, RIS discussed the motivation for organizing the Conference and extended the Vote of Thanks.

Various eminent speakers put forward their key ideas and policies for strengthening the relations between India and Japan. Ambassador Sibi George, Ambassador of India to Japan, highlighted key areas for strengthening Indo-Japan relations such as semiconductor manufacturing framework, human resource management, green economy, maritime trade and transport and development of eco-friendly technologies. Ambassador Krishna Srinivasan, Former Foreign Secretary of India also highlighted potential cooperation in the areas of Tourism, Trade, Infrastructure and Cultural. In his special remarks, Mr Nikhilesh Giri, Consul General of India in Osaka stressed on the need to look beyond the main cities like Tokyo and New Delhi for deeper ties between the two nations with more investments in the people-to-people relations. Dr Ashok Chawla, Advisor, MEA delivered the Valedictory Address emphasising on the need for special attention on greater People-to-People and Business-to-Business relations between the two countries. Dr Chawla said that the trilateral cooperation has huge potential for improvement, and the India-Japan Act East Forum could play a lead role in facilitating comprehensive engagement between India and Japan. Besides, several eminent scholars and experts of Indian, Japan and Bangladesh took part in the conference including Professor Radharaman Chakraborty, Professor Takenori Horimoto, Mr Ambarish Dasgupta, Professor Milan Kumar Sanyal, Mr Takuma Otaki, Professor Ajitava Raychaudhuri, Professor Makoto Kojima, Mr Siddharth Deshmukh, Mr Koji Sato, Professor Gita A. Keeni, Mr Hajime Taniguchi, Professor S. K. Mohanty, Mr Rathendra Raman, Mr So Umezaki, Professor Lau Sim-Yee, Mr Takashi Suzuki, Dr Rajeev Singh, Ambassador Shahidul Haque, Mr Subhodip Ghosh. The Conference was attended by over 100 people in both the days, and it was part of the various activities planned to commemorate the 40 years of RIS. ■

BRICS Civil Forum
Strengthening People-to-People Cooperation

A prominent Academic/ Civil Society delegation from the Russian Federation, headed by Dr. Victoria Panova, the Head of BRICS Expert Council – Russia and Vice Rector of HSE University, W20 Russian Sherpa and members of HSE University, visited RIS on February 21, 2024. The Ministry of External Affairs has designated RIS as the central institution for the BRICS Civil Forum in 2024. On this occasion, RIS, Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC), and HSE University, Russia jointly organised the Special BRICS Civil Forum Roundtable in which the following Russian delegates took part: Dr Victoria Panova, Head of BRICS Expert Council – Russia, Vice Rector, HSE University; W20 Russian Sherpa; Mr Danil Shcherban, Advisor to Vice Rector, HSE University ; Professor Artyom Lukin, Deputy Director for Research at the School of Regional and International Studies, Far Eastern Federal University; Ms Kseniia Shevtsova, Head of International Partnerships Office, HSE University ; and Ms Valeriia Gorbacheva, Head of Multilateral Strategic Projects Office, HSE University

The delegation at the interactive session.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS delivered the welcome remarks underscoring BRICS' rising global prominence, with the addition of five new members, bringing the total to ten. He also mentioned that the RIS has been nominated by the Indian government to represent in the BRICS Think Tank Network on Finance, focusing on common currency mechanisms, fintech, just transition financing, and cyber security. Dr Victoria Panova, she outlined the structure and modality of the BRICS Think Tank Network (BTTC) and BRICS Civil Forum during Russian Presidency. Professor Anuradha M. Chenoy, Formerly Professor JNU and Member FIDC, reflected on the growing importance of BRICS, particularly in the context of multilateralism.

Amb Pankaj Saran, former Ambassador to Russia, Convenor, NatStrat, emphasised the urgent need to address climate change, stressing the requirement for both financial resources and advanced technology. Amb Ashok K. Kantha, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies, highlighted the quantum jump made at the last summit, particularly with the inclusion of five new members. Professor Gulshan Sachdeva, Centre for European Studies at JNU and Member FIDC expressed concerns about the weaponization of the global economic system and advised caution regarding further BRICS expansion. Professor Artyom Lukin, Deputy Director for Research at the School of Regional and International Studies, Far Eastern Federal University emphasized the foundational role of cooperation among India, Russia, and China for the success of BRICS. Dr S. K. Varshney, Former Adviser & Head of International Cooperation, DST urged the Civil Forum to focus on assessing the social implications of technology, fostering entrepreneurship, and considering technology ethics.

In his concluding remarks Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, highlighted the importance of environmentally conscious lifestyles and the need for ethical considerations in technology, especially in AI. He stressed the necessity of defining a coherent narrative for BRICS and exploring collaboration through triangular cooperation with India, Russia, Africa, and Central Asia. ■

RIS-IFPRI Capacity Building

BIMSTEC Regional Agriculture Trade Analysis

(From Left) Professor Sachin Chaturvedi; Professor Suresh Babu; and Professor S. K. Mohanty.

RIS, in collaboration with Dr B R Ambedkar School of Economics (BASE) University, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) Washington and Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI) organised a two-day capacity-building programme from 19-20 February 2024 in BASE University, Bengaluru to acquaint young researchers and policy analysts in the areas of agricultural trade. It was attended by 30 scholars from India, Nepal and Sri Lanka, representing the BIMSTEC region. The programme highlighted contemporary challenges in the global, regional and local agriculture sectors.

In the inaugural session Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS highlighted the importance of the agriculture sector in the BIMSTEC region and emphasised the need for ensuring food and nutritional security for agro-industrial development for which regional cooperation is very important. He further emphasised the importance of developing new methodologies for analysing the agri-value chains from the trade perspective. Professor N. R. Bhanumurthy, Vice Chancellor, Dr B R Ambedkar School of Economics University discussed the need to analyse the impact of agriculture trade on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the regional, national and sun-national levels. Professor Suresh Babu, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI discussed the objective of the capacity-building programme and emphasised harmonising intra-regional agriculture trade in BIMSTEC while focusing on export-promoted agriculture. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General, BIMSTEC, provided insights through a recorded message, emphasizing the region's rich natural resources, agricultural traditions, and sustainable practices for resilient food systems.

Dr C.V. Ratnavathi, Principal Scientist, IIMR, Hyderabad discussed the implications of food safety standards in the cereal exports of India. She highlighted the nutritional quality of grains, value-added products of millets, and the role of apex authorities like APEDA and FSSAI in determining export safety standards of food products. Professor Parthapratim Pal, IIM Calcutta deliberated on the coverage of agriculture products as well as the multi-functionality of agriculture and the debate on the Agreement on Agriculture in the WTO. Professor Ganesh Kumar, IGIDR, discussed trade trends in BIMSTEC countries, highlighting challenges such as connectivity issues, trade barriers, and safety standards while proposing regional cooperation to overcome these challenges. Professor V Praveen Rao, Founding Vice Chancellor, PJTSAU, Hyderabad, in his deliberations, discussed the role of climate change and emerging technologies in the agriculture sector. Digital agriculture is a central component of this change, aimed at transforming agri-food value chains through 4IR technologies and is also breaking down longstanding barriers to knowledge and resources.

In a separate session, the students were exposed to regional agriculture trade data where Professor S. K. Mohanty and Dr Pankhuri Gaur, RIS, discussed the trade trends in different agriculture sectors in the region.

In the valedictory session, Ambassador CSR Ram, Joint Secretary, BIMSTEC and SAARC, Ministry of External Affairs emphasised on importance of connectivity, specifically infrastructure and people-to-people connect through civil society, businesses and youth to facilitate the process of regional integration. Professor S. K. Mohanty, Professor Bhanumurthy, Professor Gopal Naik, IIM Bangalore and Dr Pankhuri Gaur interacted with participants and shared their insights on the state of agriculture in the region. ■

Capacity Building Programme on Triangular Cooperation

RIS organized a capacity development programme on Triangular Cooperation from 12 to 14 February 2024. It was an integral component of the ongoing broader RIS-GIZ study recognizing the emerging significance of this modality within the framework of International Cooperation.

Participants at the Capacity Building Programme.

It was attended by 11 participants from 9 diverse institutions, encompassing academia, development cooperation practitioners, civil society, and other stakeholders. The programme was designed to orient the participants towards an integrated and multi-dimensional understanding of Triangular cooperation and covered modules: Global Architecture of International development cooperation, including Triangular and South-South cooperation, India's development cooperation and key features of Triangular cooperation. Besides, eminent Indian experts provided nuanced insights into various facets of Triangular Cooperation, the Global Architecture for International Development Cooperation, and India's distinct contributions in the arena of development cooperation. ■

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percent of the revenue of Mumbai Port Authority is from alighting cargo from ships stationed in the deep sea but within 12 nautical miles of the port.

Turning to the challenges, he said, despite the progress made so far, the current state of Indian ports infrastructure limits major increases in throughput required, to realize the Government's vision. This was a challenge but also an opportunity to make significant technological and managerial progress in this line of business. He welcomed the CMEC initiative of hosting the Distinguished Lecture as a step in the right direction to address all the issues in the fast developing maritime landscape.

In his Chairman's speech, Dr Vishwapati Trivedi, former Union Secretary in the Ministry of Shipping and the Ministry of Mines brought his wealth of knowledge of the sector to provide a comprehensive perspective for the audience. He said "the maritime sector encompasses numerous elements of history, geography, biology, botany and technology, as well as innovation, statistics and security in it". Dr Trivedi highlighted the functioning of the PPP model in the port sector to emphasise that 95 percent of the investments in the port sector are going to come through this model. He said renegotiations of contracts should not be eschewed. He further elaborated on the difference in the PPP model of ports as distinct from other sectors since ports are intertwined with the sovereign authority as they are the gatekeepers to the nation.

In his welcome address, Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, highlighted the key issues of the Red Sea crisis. He pointed out that the crisis has posed several challenges not only in terms of disruption of Indian trade but is also likely to bring in much higher inflation in several economies. He noted that there has been a deep deceleration happening in the trade volumes in whose wake the cost of insurance and reinsurance have gone up and quoted a Wall Street Journal report that noted cost for reinsurance has almost doubled.

Mr Subhomoy Bhattacharjee, Coordinator, CMEC pointed out that the lecture series will now be a regular event and offered his vote of thanks to the speakers and to the audience.

The Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity (CMEC), launched in January 2022, is a joint initiative of RIS and IPA. It has been launched with the objective to advance India's maritime vision and act as policy advisory arm to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Govt. of India. CMEC comes out regularly with newsletters, commentaries on major contemporary issues and contributes to policy discourse in form of policy briefs, research articles amongst others. ■

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decisions are crucial for promoting the use of modern biotechnologies in the Indian agricultural sector. He went on to state that currently, various genome-edited cereals, pulses, oil seeds and fruit varieties with desired traits are under development. This pipeline of crops includes rice, mustard, pigeon pea, soybean, groundnut, green gram, wheat, sugarcane, mango, banana and tomato. He also highlighted the relevance of CRISPR, a highly efficient genome-editing technique, for climate-smart agriculture. At the end, Professor Bansal exhorted that science-based innovations like genome editing will empower farmers to better deal with climate change and biodiversity loss while reducing the use of harmful chemicals that impact our health and the environment. ■

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Highlighting flaws in the current economic model, she explored the demand-side challenges addressed by the HLP on LiFE and underscored the interlinkages between Human Development, which is based on 4 pillars of Sustainability, Equity, Empowerment, and Productivity (SEEP), and the LiFE Paradigm. Professor Pami Dua, Professor and Director, Delhi School of Economics University of Delhi, discussed holistic sustainability, considering both external dimensions (environment, social, and economic) and internal dimensions (values, beliefs, and attitudes), emphasising the interlinkages of holistic sustainability with community engagement. Professor Danang Parikesit, Professor, Engineering Economics and Transport Policy; Founder and Senior Researcher, The Centre of Transportation and Logistics Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, advocated for green bonds to finance infrastructure projects, promoting inclusive finance for the Global South, with a particular focus put forward by Indonesia's G20 efforts.

RIS also organised a plenary session on Global Value Chains: Fostering Inclusive Economic Development in Global South where imminent speakers like Professor Fukunari Kimura, Professor Mustafizur Rehman, Dr Nihal Pitigala, Dr Ganeshan Wignaraja, and Professor S K Mohanty participated and the session was chaired by Dr Rajat Nag. It was discussed that Global Value Chains (GVCs) have played an important role in the resurgence of the South. However, maintaining competitiveness in GVCs has been challenging in the case of developing countries, where the majority of the benefits are captured by the developed nations through MNCs. This has brought up the critical issue of equitable gain distribution among different stakeholders of the value chains. Therefore, governance of GVCs is vital in maintaining just distributions of gains from trade and ensuring sustainable and inclusive economic growth through GVCs. It has also been discussed that the growing spectrum of GVCs in the Global South requires a renewed focus on regional and sub-regional cooperation. In this context, access to technology and trade finance, services trade, logistics and infrastructure are critical factors in strengthening regional value chains. The South-South Cooperation may provide the necessary stimulus to enhance the efficiency in production and trade through GVCs.

Professor Fukunari Kimura, in his special address during the dinner talk on Day 2 on Globalisation for Development, highlighted that globalisation is not dead. He further added that many countries from the Global South have taken advantage of the 1st (industry-by-industry division of labour) and 2nd (task-by-task division of labour) unbundling of Global Value Chains. Many developing countries can still participate and engage themselves in the 3rd unbundling (person-by-person division of labour) of Value Chains while leveraging trends of globalization and advancements in technology. RIS also organised a roundtable on Regional and Sectoral Value Chains in South Asia on the last day of the Global Conclave. The session was chaired by Professor Nagesh Kumar, with Professor S K Mohanty as co-chair. Experts like Dr Posh Raj Pandey, Dr Alexey Kravchenko, Dr Upalat Korwatanasakul, Dr Manoj Thibbotuwawa, Dr Loday Phuntsho and Professor Prabir De discussed the issues relating to manufacturing value chains, agriculture value chains and the role of ICT in deepening the value chains in South Asia. The participants recognised that South Asia has been a latecomer in the global value chain process and its economic potential has been underutilized. Presently, the regional value chains in South Asia are visible in the primary and low-technology manufacturing sectors. These are also subject to high tariff and non-tariff barriers with strict rules of origin measures, which act as hindrances in cultivating deeper regional supply chains. However, the region is catching up through the regional value chain process with an increasing trend of alignment with global standards. This is indicative of the pivotal shift the region is going through, which could catalyse deeper economic integration within the region. Underlining the post-COVID-19 global re-orientation of production networks away from China, the session explored the potential of South Asia to evolve into a new supply chain hub. Sectors like agriculture, garments, premium trade, manufacturing sector, and services, especially ICT, related to value chains should be prioritised in the region to develop robust and resilient regional value chains. ■

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi

Director General

- Panelist in the session on G20, India and The Global South at the Seminar- G20 Presidency and India Global Leadership Role organised jointly by the Centre for Studies in International Relations (CSIR) and the Discipline of Political Science, SOSS - Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) on 10 January 2024, New Delhi.
- Moderated two sessions on "Agenda of Global South: Future of Multilateral Development Banks" and "Hot Debate: Case for DeGovernmentalisation of Banks, or not" and panelist in the session on "Bharat First: India and Global Financial Architecture" at the India Banking Conclave 2024 organised by Council for International Economic Understanding (CIEU) on 12-13 January 2024, New Delhi.
- Made a presentation on LiFE Economy and the GALERI Initiative chaired by G20 Sherpa organised by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on 17 January 2024, New Delhi.
- Delivered the Keynote Address at the International Education Day on the theme of Bridging Minds, Shaping Futures organised by the Blitz India on 24 January 2024.
- Made a presentation on Socio-economic Environment & Development Imperatives at the Young Scientists Induction Programme organised jointly by the IIM Visakhapatnam, the Capacity Building Commission and the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Govt. of India on 29 January 2024.
- Made a presentation on 'Economic Security' at the Higher Air Command Course (HACC) on a Capsule on Instrument of National Security other than Military organised by College of Air Warfare (CAW), Secunderabad on 2 February 2024.
- Made a presentation on "STI and Socio-Economic Development: Indian Experience" at the Global Forum on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence: Changing the Landscape of AI Governance organised jointly by UNESCO and Ministry of Digital Transformation, Slovenia on 5 - 6 February 2024 at Slovenia. Also delivered the Keynote Address on "India and the STI cooperation with Slovenia" at the First Slovenian-Indian Day of Science and Innovations organised by Jozef Stefan Institute on 6 February 2024 at Slovenia.
- Panelist in the Governors' Panel Discussion on The Drivers and Road to Achieving Inflation Targets - Challenges Ahead" at the 59th SEACEN Governors Conference on Navigating Economic Headwinds and Advancing Financial Inclusion: Perspectives and Challenges organised by The South East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN) Research and Training Centre on 15 February 2024 at Mumbai.
- Moderated a session on Ethics of AI in Education: Balancing Innovation and Privacy Concerns at the National Conclave on AI and Ethics: Perspectives from Industry and Academia organised by the India International Centre on 20 February 2024 at New Delhi.
- Panelist in the Plenary Talk on Sustainable Utilisation of Oceans in Blue Economy at the 3rd World Ocean Science Congress organised jointly by National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), IIT, Madras and Vigyan Bharti on 29 February 2024, Chennai.
- Delivered the Foundation Day Lecture on Equitable Development Transformation with Technology: Relevance of the Indian Experience for Global South organised by the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) on 1 March 2024 at Hyderabad.
- Made a presentation on Science Diplomacy: Issues, Policy Choices and Southern Perspectives organised by Capacity Building Commission on 6 March 2024.
- Panellist in the Roundtable on Role of the Indian and Japanese Presidencies in bringing G20 & G7 Closer organised by ICRIER on 26 March 2023 at New Delhi.

Professor S K Mohanty

- Participated in the Discussion Meeting regarding Study on Agricultural Products organised by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi on 6 October 2023

- Guest of Honor at the 2nd International Conference on "Geo-strategic, Geo-economic and Geo-political Developments in Indo-Pacific Region organised by The International Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies (ICIPS), Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana on 18 October 2023
- Participated as a panelist in the 1st Asian Conference on Triangular Cooperation (ACTrC) organised in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Partnership Initiative on Effective Triangular Cooperation (GPI) and made a discussion on Triangular Cooperation – A Partnership Approach on Global Goals at New Delhi on 2 November 2023
- Participated in the G20 Think Tank Workshop on 'Inclusive Trade for Growth and Prosperity' organised by NITI Aayog and made a presentation on Dynamics of GVC in Global Trade Discussion on GVC in G20 Presidencies at New Delhi on 6 November 2023
- Participated in the discussion meeting with Secretary, MoCI on India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement organised by Ministry of Commerce and Industries at New Delhi on 13 November 2023
- Participated as speaker in the India Foundation-Fudan University Bilateral Conference organised by India Foundation and made the presentation on India China trade Relations in the session – Managing Trade Imbalance and Enhancing People-to-People Connect at New Delhi on 18 November 2023
- Participated as a speaker in the 15th South Asia Conference 2023 - Achieving Regional Economic Integration in South Asia" and made a presentation on Exploring the Quest for Regional Identity in South Asia in Session - Achieving Regional Economic Integration in South Asia organised by Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi on 14 December 2023-12-15
- Participated in the discussion meeting on India's Free Trade Agreement and Totalization Agreement organised by Prime Minister Office at New Delhi on 20 December 2023
- Speaker in the Indian Economic Association 106th Annual Conference-2023 and made a presentation in the Special Panel on India's Issues in Free Trade Agreements on India and its Experiment with New Regionalism organised by School of Open Learning, Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute, University of Delhi at New Delhi on 22 December 2023
- Participated in the first Meeting of the Expert Committee on Red Sanders as Special invitee organised by National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and made a presentation on ITC HS Code and trade of Red Sanders and its impacts on the export in India at Chennai on 5 January 2024
- Participated in the Board of Trade (BoT) meeting under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution and Textiles organised by Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry at 'Bharat Mandapam', New Delhi on 16 January 2024
- Participated in the -Indian Ocean Regional Decade Conference 2024: Bridging Billions to Barcelona and made a presentation on Vision 2030: White Paper of the Challenge, jointly organised by Ocean Modelling, Applied Research & Services (O-MARS), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Ministry of Earth Science at Hyderabad on 2 February 2024
- Participated as a panelist in the closing panel at the 2nd PRCI Conference in Washington DC USA organised by the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy Research, Capacity, and Influence (PRCI), Michigan State University, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the IFPRI PRCI Project on 6-8 March 2024

Our heartfelt tribute to Dr Bhaskar Balakrishnan and Dr Ram Upendra Das

Dr Bhaskar Balakrishnan
(25 September 1947-21 January 2024)

Dr Ram Upendra Das
(18 November 1967- 25 February 2024)

BOOKS/REPORTS

Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Roadmaps for India, RIS, New Delhi 2024

Exploring Cooperation in Sustainable Agriculture and Value Addition in BIMSTEC Region, RIS-IFPRI, New Delhi, 2024

RIS DISCUSSION PAPERS

##292: **Trade and Environment: Tracking Environmental Provisions in Regional Trading Agreements (RTAs) to Make Appropriate Indian Stance** *by Anshuman Gupta*

#291: **India's G20 Presidency as a Voice of Global South** *by Sushil Kumar*

#290: **Analyzing India-Nepal Economic Integration: Status, Challenges and Way Forward** *by Pankaj Vashisht*

#289: **SDG Gaps and Technology Needs in Developing Countries: Scope for Locally Agile Technology Ecosystems** *by Sabyasachi Saha*

#288: **Strengthening Regional Integration in South Asia: A Strategy Paper on Regional Connectivity and Trade Facilitation** *by Prabir De*

AIC COMMENTARIES

- **No. 48: India-ASEAN Relations: Need for Deeper Engagement** *by Chintamani Mahapatra*
- **No. 47: Addressing Non-Traditional Maritime Threats - Options for India and ASEAN** *by Captain Sarabjeet S Parmar*
- **No. 46: Fostering Future ASEAN-India Collaboration: A Strategic Five-Pronged Agenda** *by Piyanat Soikham*

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