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BIDEN'S SOUTH ASIA POLICY: SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ENGAGEMENT



HIGHLIGHTS

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IQBAL SINGH SEVEA

Greetings from the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS)!

The approach of the United States (US) to South Asia continues to evolve in significant ways. This reflects the priorities of the Joe Biden administration and broader geopolitical imperatives. In the feature story of this issue, we analyse the recent shifts that have characterised the US' policy towards the subcontinent and discuss the opportunities and challenges these present to the bilateral relationships between the South Asian states and Washington. Notably, we highlight that US-China competition, coupled with New Delhi's willingness to shed its historic hesitation in engaging the US, has culminated in Washington pursuing an India-first policy in the region. It is also encouraging India to play a larger role in securing its neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean.

On 9 and 10 September 2023, India organised the G20 Leaders Summit in New Delhi. India assumed the presidency of the G20 at a particularly challenging time. Geopolitical tensions posed a serious hurdle to the shaping of a consensus and coordination of policies. On the economic front, countries were grappling with supply chain disruptions and recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there was an escalating climate crisis that required protracted negotiations. Despite these challenges, India succeeded in delivering a Leaders Declaration that not only kept the G20 together but also provided significant policy directions. We examine key aspects of the Leaders Declaration, especially those relating to the reform of the global financial architecture. We also contend that turbulence in the international arena, including the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and the continuing Russia-Ukraine war, as well as rifts between G20 states such as Canada and India will test the G20's ability to take forward the policy directives in a concrete manner.

As the South Asian states strive to accelerate economic development

and raise the living standards of their citizens, the region is witnessing a massive surge in demand for energy. While the South Asian states have largely relied on non-renewable energy resources, they are now taking serious steps towards developing clean energy. A number of South Asian states, including Bangladesh, India and Nepal, have made ambitious commitments to transition to net-zero emission status. To do this, they are investing in solar and wind energy, green hydrogen and hydropower. We evaluate the steps being taken by the various South Asian states to enable the green transition and examine the challenges that will confront them. It is stressed that at the regional level, overcoming issues such as the lack of adequate investment and geopolitical concerns over foreign investments will be important to ensuring a smooth energy transition.

In August 2023, the Indian parliament passed the 2023 Digital Personal Data Protection Bill. The wide-ranging implications of the bill meant that it took six years of public discussions, debates, consultations and revisions before it could be passed. We observe that this law will significantly impact facets of the Indian economy, state and society. For instance, it will have a massive impact on the digitalisation of India's economy. It will also have international implications as it opens questions over data localisation and how the government will regulate global data flows.

In the second half of 2023, we consistently brought out Briefs, Insights and Working Papers on topical issues impacting the subcontinent. Apart from this, along with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Regional Economic Programme Asia, we published a South Asia Discussion Paper series consisting of 16 distinct perspectives on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity. We also released two Special Reports – one which was written in conjunction with the ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2022, titled *75 Years of Partition: Rupture and Connectivity*, and the other focusing

on the emerging politics of the Indo-Pacific region. Concurrently, we published two South Asia Scans. The first scan provided valuable insights into the discussions and narratives within India's strategic community surrounding Huawei's involvement in India's 5G network deployment. The second scan underscored the urgency for Sri Lanka and India to find a lasting and sustainable solution through joint efforts for marine protection.

In October 2023, we organised the annual flagship ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023 on 'Everyday Experiences of the State in South Asia'. Spanning six roundtables across three days, the conference explored the themes of state governance, people's perception of the state in their daily interactions and the limits and boundaries of the modern nation-state. Bridging the worlds of policy and academia, the discussions critically assessed the institutions, political processes and socio-economic group dynamics at play.

Apart from this, we conducted five panel discussions, four seminars, three closed-door sessions and roundtables each, a discussion session and a colloquium. During this period, we also collaborated with several partner organisations, including the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi; Research and Information System for Developing Countries, New Delhi; the Sri Lankan High Commission in Singapore and the Confederation of Indian Industry.

I would like to extend the Institute's heartfelt appreciation to all its stakeholders and constituents for their sustained support. In 2024, we will celebrate ISAS' 20th anniversary and we have planned several important events and programmes to mark the momentous occasion. We will share the details of the events and programmes in due time.

I wish you a great year ahead!

BIDEN'S SOUTH ASIA POLICY:

Significant Changes in Engagement

C RAJA MOHAN



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Since Joe Biden defeated Donald Trump in the 2020 United States (US) presidential elections and took charge of the White House in January 2021, there have been significant changes in the US' engagement with South Asia. To be sure, Biden's South Asia policy

has not marked a radical break from the past, but it has accelerated the change that began to unfold under the previous administrations.

Biden's biggest move in the region has been to withdraw, unconditionally

and unilaterally, all US troops from Afghanistan, ending nearly two decades of American military occupation. Following the spectacular terror attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, the US sent its forces into Afghanistan

to oust the Taliban regime from power and hunt for the leadership of Al Qaeda that had planned the vicious attack.

The US troops stayed on to stabilise the post-Taliban Afghan state. As the challenges in Afghanistan mounted, US President Barack Obama ordered a massive surge in US troops in 2009 and began to reduce them by 2014. Trump was even more impatient to leave Afghanistan and began to negotiate with the Taliban. Biden completed that task by making a decisive break with the past Afghan policy.

Biden's decision to end the US' prolonged military involvement in Afghanistan – two decades after September 2001 and two decades before that dating back to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979 – laid the basis for fundamental change in Washington's ties with Islamabad.

For over four decades, Pakistan was the sheet anchor of the US' policy towards Afghanistan. Whether in countering the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan during 1979-88 or in facilitating the US' military presence in Afghanistan from 2001, cooperation from the Pakistan army was crucial for the US policy. The US offered substantive economic and military assistance in return for this support.

As Washington came to terms with the divergence of US and Pakistani goals in Afghanistan, it began to restrict economic and military assistance, starting with the Trump administration. Although Biden has resumed some military assistance to Pakistan and extended support to Islamabad in coping with the 2022 floods, the strategic relationship has gone cold.

Washington's recognition in 2017 that an increasingly assertive China poses the principal threat to its primacy led the US to pivot away from the extended preoccupation with fighting the so-called 'Great War on Terror' from 2001. Its current priority is to deal with the great power competition, especially China in the Indo-Pacific and Russia in Europe.

Troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the emphasis on the China challenge have seen the inevitable reduction in Pakistan's salience in the US' regional geopolitical calculus. Pakistan's

continuing relative economic decline in South Asia has meant there were few countervailing factors to sustain the relationship with the traditional intensity. This does not mean Pakistan will become irrelevant to the US. Washington will continue to seek Pakistan's support in its regional counter-terror missions. It also would like to wean Pakistan away from its long-standing China alliance.

The new priority for vigorous competition with China has seen renewed US interest in the Himalayan states like Nepal and Bhutan, which share a border with Tibet and form the soft underbelly of China. With the question of Dalai Lama's succession looming large, Tibet has returned to Washington's strategic perspective. Meanwhile, as the maritime dimension of the China challenge gains traction, the US is also reaching out to the two island states – the Maldives and Sri Lanka – that had largely fallen off the US' mental map in the first two decades of the 21st century.

The most consequential outcome of the new US focus on China is the Biden administration's decision to elevate and expand the strategic partnership with India rapidly. The US' relations with India have been on an upward trajectory since the visit of President Bill Clinton in March 2000. The strong bipartisan political support in Washington for the partnership with India has been reinforced by the deepening economic partnership between the two countries. Trade volumes grew to the level of US\$200 billion (S\$273 billion) in 2022. The simultaneous deterioration of China's relations with the US and India has provided considerable common ground for strengthening the strategic partnership. Equally important has been Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to shed India's historic hesitations in engaging the US in the name of non-alignment and strategic autonomy.

One of the first moves of the Biden administration in early 2021 was to elevate the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad) – that brings together Australia, India, Japan and the US – to the summit level. Since then, the Quad leaders have met frequently to develop an expansive agenda of providing public goods across the Indo-Pacific.

Unlike the Trump administration, Biden was happy to go along with the Indian proposition not to make the Quad a military alliance. However, the Quad has taken up soft security issues like maritime domain awareness as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Beyond the minilateralism with India under the Quad, Biden has intensified bilateral defence cooperation with India and liberalised the domestic regime to transfer advanced technologies.

Biden was unwilling to let the differences with Modi over the Russian invasion of Ukraine, New Delhi's continuing purchase of weapons from Moscow and growing concerns about India's democratic backsliding under the National Democratic Alliance government come in the way of deepening ties with India.

Although Biden has held his peace on human rights issues, when it comes to engaging Pakistan and India, he has put them at the centre of the relations with Bangladesh. Unlike Trump, who had initiated an outreach to Dhaka to build an Indo-Pacific partnership, Biden has taken a non-strategic view of the relationship with Bangladesh. Consistency, of course, has never been a defining obligation for the US, or any other great power.

In conclusion, New Delhi's long-standing ideological distance from Washington meant that the US' policy in South Asia was Pakistan-centric until the early 21st century. With a willing partner in New Delhi to balance China in the Indo-Pacific, Washington has not only adopted an India-first policy in the South Asian subcontinent but has also encouraged New Delhi to take larger responsibilities for securing its neighbourhood in South Asia and the Indian Ocean.

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ENERGY TRANSITION IN SOUTH ASIA:

Commitments, Plans and Challenges

PUSPA SHARMA



Photo courtesy of Search / X (twitter.com)

South Asia is a dynamic region. India is currently the fifth largest economy in the world with a gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$3.7 trillion (\$5.1 trillion) and is projected to become the third largest economy, with a GDP crossing US\$5 trillion (\$6.8 trillion) before 2030. Several other South Asian countries have had impressive economic growth rates over the past several years. Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal are graduating from the group of least-developed countries to become developing countries by 2026. South

Asia's growth momentum is going to accelerate further in the days to come.

In an effort to accelerate economic activities and cater to the rising living standards of the people in the region, South Asia is witnessing a massive surge in demand for energy. The South Asian countries' major sources of energy have been non-renewable resources such as fossil fuels, and renewable but environment-unfriendly resources such as traditional biomass. The energy sector contributes the highest to South Asia's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Historically, South Asia has not been a major contributor to climate change but, given the devastating impacts of climate change globally and the fact that South Asia is one of the most affected regions, it has its share of responsibility to fight this dreadful truth of our time. The South Asian countries have taken various initiatives in this regard, including gradually reducing the share of dirty energy resources in their total energy mix, and promoting the development and use of renewable and clean energy resources.

India has pledged that it will achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2070. It has set an intermediate target of reducing GHG emissions by one billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, compared to its current level of emissions, by 2030, and thus reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent by that year. To achieve these targets, India has taken several measures in green energy transition. It aims to produce about 50 per cent of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030, for which both the public and private sectors in the country have ramped up their investments in the renewable energy sector. According to a 2021 report by the Centre for Financial Accountability and Climate Trends, 74 per cent of the total loans in the energy sector in India have gone to renewable energy projects and the remaining 26 per cent to non-renewable energy projects.

Significant growth in solar and wind energy has been high on India's energy sector development agenda. It is also one of the largest producers of modern bioenergy in the world. Together with France, India launched the International Solar Alliance in November 2015, and on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in September this year, India launched the Global Biofuel Alliance, together with Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Italy, Mauritius, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. India's resolve in transitioning to clean energy is also partly reflected in its removal of subsidies on petrol and diesel in 2010 and 2014 respectively, and the introduction of subsidies on electric vehicles (EVs) in 2019.

A recent and important Indian initiative on energy transition is the National Hydrogen Mission, launched in August 2021. Through this mission, India aims to become a global hub for hydrogen production and fuel cell technologies, with an emphasis on green hydrogen. It has a target to produce around one million tonnes of green hydrogen per year by 2030.

Bangladesh currently has an installed power generation capacity of more than 22,000 megawatts (MW). The share of fossil fuels in Bangladesh's power generation is more than 90 per cent, with the share of natural gas alone at more than 50 per cent, followed by oil and coal. As a result,

Bangladesh's energy sector accounts for 55 per cent of its GHG emissions, and this is expected to rise to 76 per cent by 2030. Therefore, to meet its international pledge of reducing 22 per cent of its total carbon emissions by 2030, for which more than 96 per cent of the reduction has to come from the energy sector, Bangladesh has taken some initiatives in transitioning to clean energy.

Bangladesh has made a global pledge to produce 40 per cent of its electricity from renewable resources by 2041. In 2021, the Bangladesh government withdrew its earlier plans of establishing 10 coal-fired power plants with a combined capacity of more than 8,000 MW. It has installed six million solar-home systems and distributed more than 4.5 million improved cookstoves in the rural parts of the country. In making its transition to clean energy, Bangladesh also plans to produce around 10 per cent of its total electricity from nuclear power plants by 2030. It has received Russia's technical and financial support in this regard. However, due to the Russia-Ukraine war and the ensuing geopolitical tensions, Bangladesh's nuclear energy projects have been in limbo. Dhaka has not made much progress in transitioning to EVs, but with guidelines and policies related to EVs (some in place and some in the making), it plans to ensure that 30 per cent of the registered vehicles in the country will be EVs by 2030.

Nepal has made an ambitious global pledge to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. As a result of limited hydropower generation, compared to its potential, Nepal relies on imported fossil fuel to power its factories, run vehicles and meet residential energy needs such as for cooking. However, in recent years, there has been significant progress in hydropower generation, with total hydropower production exceeding 2,700 MW, which is more than three times the production a decade ago. Yet, Nepal's current hydropower generation is only about six per cent of the country's potential. Further progress in hydropower generation and the availability of necessary infrastructure for its transmission and distribution could help replace traditional and fossil-fuel-based energy significantly. With the progress made in ensuring

the availability of hydropower-generated electricity, Nepal has been promoting EVs and induction cooking stoves through measures such as lower tariffs on their imports and setting up EV charging stations in various parts of the country.

Sub-regional cooperation on energy in South Asia can contribute to the region's transition towards clean energy. Bhutan and Nepal have been exporting hydroelectricity to India, which is expected to rise in the years to come. Nepal and India recently signed an agreement on long-term bilateral power trade. Based on a tripartite agreement between Bangladesh, India and Nepal, Nepal is expected to start exporting hydroelectricity to Bangladesh through India soon. These sub-regional cooperation efforts need to be strengthened.

A major reason for South Asia's slower pace towards green energy transition is the lack of adequate investments. For example, it is estimated that Bangladesh needs US\$80-100 billion (S\$109-136 billion) to meet its renewable energy pledge, and India needs US\$160 billion (S\$218 billion) per year until 2030, which is three times the current level of its investment, to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070. Moreover, renewable energy is intermittent and relatively unreliable. Huge investments are, therefore, needed in infrastructure such as power grids and energy storage. There are also geo-political issues such as India's concerns regarding foreign investments in Nepal's hydropower sector. Overcoming these challenges is crucial for South Asia's rapid transition to green energy.

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INDIA'S DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT:

Domestic and International Implications

KARTHIK NACHIAPPAN



Photo courtesy of Search / X (twitter.com)

In August 2023, India's Lok Sabha passed the Narendra Modi government's 2023 Digital Personal Data Protection Bill. The long-standing bill is now law. The passage marks the culmination of six years of lawmaking, characterised by fierce lobbying, consultations, revisions, public discussions, withdrawals and resubmissions. The law has immense implications, both domestically for the Indian state, economy and the population, and internationally, given

India's growing significance as a digital economic heavyweight.

Domestically, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023) will serve as the overarching privacy and digital framework, alongside other technology regulations that the government is drafting like the Digital India Bill – successor to the Information Technology Act's (2000). The revised 2022 bill, which is now this law, limits the framework to personal data in India and processing of personal

data of Indian citizens abroad. It also mandates data fiduciaries – entities that collect personal data – to protect and secure data, maintain its accuracy and follow strict guidelines for its deletion and removal. The law will be governed by a small Data Protection Board (DPB) that will ensure compliance and review cases when fiduciaries violate the law. The board can levy fines and penalties, given the nature and size of the transgression. Now officially law, citizens can also question fiduciaries over how the data



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they collect is being treated, stored and processed.

Problematically, however, the law gives considerable exemptions given to the Indian state. The law justifies the government's exemptions on the grounds of national security and public order. However, this sweeping claim fails to account that the government also functions as a data fiduciary, collecting and processing data. Additionally, the law still has not clarified whether the board will include representatives from non-governmental organisations or will be entirely staffed and managed by bureaucrats. That said, it is expected that the board will include industry and government representatives but speculation remains over what methodologies or approaches they will use to identify breaches and sanction violators to eliminate arbitrary use of this power. Finally, concerns exist over the law's congruence with the Right to Information Act which functions as a torch pushing government officials to disclose information but this data protection law gives the government the ability to conceal information as they see fit. With enormous power to draft subordinate legislations, grant exemptions, decide how transfers occur and control the functioning of the DPB, the government has placed itself at the apex of India's digital order.

What are the international implications of the law? Importantly, the

government will have to clarify how it wants to deal with cross-border data flows and whether it will move from a whitelisting approach which allows global data flows to a blacklisting approach that identifies countries where data transfers from India will be prohibited. The previous version of the legislation mentioned that the government would only whitelist jurisdictions or identify countries where the personal data of Indian citizens will be transferred. Whitelisting will involve negotiating agreements with countries on how they will manage and protect the personal data of Indian citizens, a judgement that will ostensibly have to be made by assessing that country's data protection laws and its relationship with India. The government will have to reveal how this process will unfold, given India's dramatic digital transformation and its importance to other countries and their tech firms.

Importantly, India's new law dovetails with the global push to place the state at the centre of data regulation. Globally, governments now seek more control over data through new legislations and rules, as evidenced by the policy shift globally towards data localisation and increasing barriers covering data flows. It appears as though a genuine desire to 'protect' data or the privacy of users online has passed; the policy focus now, for most governments, is to create data enclaves where domestically

harvested data can be leveraged for economic benefit. Notwithstanding India, which proclaimed a clear preference to localise data, other key 'data' markets like the European Union (EU), South Korea and China are now deploying forms of localisation to govern their digital economies and are relatively less concerned with privacy or user rights.

Data localisation manifests in various forms – mandating firms to locally manage and store data while prohibiting transfers (China and Russia); expecting firms to retain a copy of data locally (India); permitting data transfers provided both countries have adequate safeguards (the EU and Brazil). Countries that were not regulating or were using less onerous measures to manage data flows to ensure some protections exist, given privacy concerns, now appear eager to craft robust rules that direct and redirect data flows internally. The implications of this trend, including India's new data protection law, for global governance, international trade and internet governance are not entirely positive. Should this trend persist, it will make it difficult for countries and prevailing multilateral frameworks to craft global norms and rules covering data as countries prioritise the extraction of data over its protection and transfer through safe and accessible pathways.

India's new data protection law marks an important moment in the country's digital economy and governance. Undoubtedly, this law will have a massive impact on India's economy as sectors digitalise rapidly; the Indian state as it digitalises its architecture and functioning; and India's politics as citizens use digital technologies for various purposes and the Indian society as internet users negotiate how to best protect themselves online. It will also affect and accelerate the ongoing trend where countries worldwide choose to regulate data to advance national interests over drafting mutually acceptable rules for data flows.

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THE G20 SUMMIT AND THEREAFTER:

Challenges Increase Manifold

AMITENDU PALIT

India's G20 presidency organised its Leaders Summit in New Delhi on 9 and 10 September 2023. India's presidency continued till the end of November 2023, from when it moved on to Brazil. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has proposed a virtual summit of the leaders before the end of the presidency to take stock of the progress of the implementation of the various decisions announced.

The Indian presidency was perhaps one of the most challenging presidencies of the world's most prominent economic and strategic policymaking body. This was due to the complex circumstances that shaped the context of the presidency. The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic were still visible in the episodic recurrences of the virus in various parts of the world, disrupting normal business functions. The Russia-Ukraine conflict, which continues to prolong with no end in sight, also had the G20 community split across positions around the conflict. These challenges were compounded by the growing incidence of extreme weather events across the world, making acting on climate change an absolute urgency.

China's President Xi Jinping did not attend the Summit. While there could be various reasons behind his decision, strained ties with India were definitely among these. The ties were further damaged in the run-up to the Summit following China's release of new geographical maps showing parts of the territory that India claims as its own in the map. Xi's decision to stay away might have also been influenced by his intention to avoid meeting his Western counterparts, particularly the United States (US) and other G7 members, with whom China's relations have remained frosty.

Moving through the presidency, the prospect of failing to deliver a Leaders Declaration, based on consensus, was looming large. Fractions among global leaders within the G20 on the Russia-Ukraine conflict were a stumbling block. More pressures were arising from the enlarging of the differences between the US and China as major power rivalry assumed unsustainable proportions. In addition, there were traditional differences that persisted between the G20 members, specifically between the developed economy and emerging market economy members on various issues on the agenda, such as reforming multilateral financial institutions, mobilising affordable climate finance and digital public infrastructure.

The eventual outcome from the Summit included 'consensus' reflections on Ukraine as well as a lot of other substantive content. The Leaders Declaration has provided significant policy directions on various subjects, including the core issues on the agenda mentioned earlier that were thematic highlights of the Indian presidency.

The G20 is the world's most formidable economic group accounting for more than four-fifths of global trade. Clearly, the decisions served by the G20 on major economic challenges facing the world are taken as benchmarks for drafting policy strategies on these themes. In this respect, the Leaders Declaration announced in New Delhi has proposed emphatic perspectives and detailed outlines that are enabling for policy action by the G20 members on several major economic issues. These significant issues include reforming global financial institutions dedicated to funding development, managing large volumes of global debt plaguing several economies, and

regulating cryptocurrencies and global taxation rules.

At a time when accessing finance to address several urgent social and economic development priorities has become a crying need for the Global South, reforming international financial institutions to make them more inclusive, has been a high priority for the G20. The Leaders Declaration has emphasised the importance of multilateral development banks in developing greater skills and capacities to manage unforeseen shocks and their impacts on emerging markets and developing economies, particularly the poor and low-income ones.

Much will depend on how Bretton Woods institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) refashion themselves. These institutions have traditionally been dominated by the developed world's perspective in analysing the problems of the Global South. During its presidency, India's efforts were to specifically highlight the economic difficulties and distress of the Global South and prioritise the channelisation of multilateral financial support in needed areas. The financing decisions of the World Bank and the IMF in the foreseeable future will indicate whether the desired change has come through.

The World Bank, IMF and other multilateral financial institutions will also be closely watched for their efforts and strategies in addressing external debt vulnerabilities. Several countries facing these challenges, such as Zambia, Ghana, Ethiopia, and Sri Lanka, have been specifically noted for their situations. The wider idea in addressing these challenges is to ensure that more countries, particularly small and low-income economies, do not incur high debt



Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

liabilities upon their accessing finance to address macroeconomic and other development challenges, such as climate adversities. This is where development financing must be constructed in a way that it does not accentuate debt liabilities.

The G20 has also moved on to identify the overall structure of the global regulatory framework to manage cryptocurrencies. Regulating private digital currencies has become a major global imperative, given their booming growth. At the same time, rapid growth is also being noted in the implementation of sovereign digital currencies, including among the G20 community. The coexistence of private and sovereign digital currencies is a major policy challenge for much of the world – developed and developing – and the G20 is the ideal platform to address the issue. The Indian presidency has been able to generate considerable progress in this regard.

Eight G20 members – the US, India, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, the European Union, France, Germany and Italy – launched the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) during the G20 Summit on partnership for global infrastructure and investment. The initiative comprises rail and shipping

links between India, the Middle East and Europe. It will focus on enhancing energy and digital connections between these three entities, including transporting green hydrogen and safeguarding regional supply chains.

The IMEC has invited comparison with China's Belt and Road Initiative as they will have overlaps. It remains to be seen whether they will emerge as strategically competitive entities, leading to new hostilities.

India would have drawn satisfaction from delivering a Leaders Declaration that succeeded in keeping the G20 together by preventing further ruptures. However, events after the Summit are going to test the G20's ability to take forward the outcomes.

The Summit was followed by significant turbulence in international relations. The first of these, pertaining specifically to India, was the allegation by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Indian agencies being involved in the murder of a local Sikh leader in Canada. The allegation and subsequent diplomatic spats between two prominent G20 members, which otherwise enjoy friendly relations, might become a sore spot in the G20 process in future. This will be in addition to the rift that already exists

in the G20 community, in terms of the fissures between the Western members, and China and Russia, on various themes.

The second significant disturbance in international relations arises from the conflict that has broken out in the Middle East between Israel and Hamas – the militant Islamic resistance movement operating from Gaza in Palestine. The military aggression in the conflict has led to the loss of hundreds of lives on both sides, including large civilian casualties. Like in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the G20 members are displaying a wide split in their support of Israel and Hamas on the issue. As the shadows of enduring violent conflicts such as Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas cast deep on global relations, the G20's challenges will enlarge manifold in making decisions to maintain economic stability and balanced development in the world.

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ISAS WELCOMES NEW PATRON

Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat



ISAS is pleased to announce the appointment of Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies, Mr Heng Swee Keat, as its Patron, effective from 1 September 2023. He succeeds Emeritus Senior Minister (ESM) Goh Chok Tong, who stepped down as ISAS' Patron at the end of April 2023.

DPM Heng played an instrumental role in the establishment of ISAS when he was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. He then served on the Institute's Management Board for several years, helping to steer its direction and growth. The Institute values DPM Heng's deep knowledge of the South Asian region.

ISAS also expresses its appreciation to ESM Goh for his invaluable contributions and guidance as ISAS' Patron since its inception in July 2004. Both the National University of Singapore and ISAS owe ESM Goh an immense debt of gratitude for originally conceiving the idea of a research institute dedicated to the study of contemporary South Asia. His guidance has been instrumental in enabling ISAS to build its reputation as a premier research institution on South Asia.

We look forward to DPM Heng's vision and leadership to take ISAS forward and to further develop the Institute as a global research hub on contemporary South Asia.

ISAS APPOINTS NON-RESIDENT SENIOR FELLOW

As part of ISAS' continuing effort to strengthen our work and widen our reach, ISAS has appointed Professor Robin Jeffrey as its Non-Resident Senior Fellow. The aim of this fellowship is to bring together a vibrant community of South Asian scholars, analysts, journalists and practitioners from around the world.

ISAS extends a warm welcome to the following fellow:



Professor Robin Jeffrey

Emeritus Professor, La Trobe University; and
Emeritus Professor, Australian National University

The Institute looks forward to Professor Jeffrey's continued contributions in promoting the understanding of the South Asian region, and in communicating knowledge and insights about it to policymakers, the business community, academia and civil society, in Singapore and beyond.

NEW RESEARCH STAFF AT ISAS

ISAS would like to extend a warm welcome to the following researchers who came on board in 2023:



Dr Puspa Sharma

Visiting Senior Research Fellow
(Joined on 20 November 2023)

Areas of Focus

- Regional and Sub-regional Cooperation (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC], Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal [BBIN] and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation [BIMSTEC])
- Trade and Trade Facilitation
- Agriculture and Food Systems
- Intellectual Property
- Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries
- Green Growth



Mr Raghav Khattri

Research Analyst
(Joined on 28 November 2023)

Areas of Focus

- Politics, Society and Governance
- Populism
- Disinformation
- Indian Party Politics



Mr Muhammad Saad UI Haque

Research Analyst
(Joined on 13 December 2023)

Areas of Focus

- Pre and Postcolonial South Asia
- Islamic History of South Asia
- South Asian Regional Politics



Ms Tanujja Dadlani

Research Analyst
(Joined on 26 December 2023)

Areas of Focus

- Film and South Asia
- Postcolonialism
- Identity Politics

The Institute looks forward to their continued contributions in promoting the understanding of the South Asian region and in communicating knowledge and insights about it to policymakers, the business community, academia and civil society in Singapore and beyond.

ISAS INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME 2023

ISAS offers research internships to students who are keen on furthering their academic and research interest in South Asia. This fulfils ISAS' educational role of nurturing students to develop greater awareness and understanding of the region. The internship also serves as a testing ground for potential research analyst appointments at the Institute.

The following intern joined us in the second half of 2023:



Ms Khadija Rashid

Australian National University
Graduated with Bachelor of International Relations (Honours)
Internship Duration:
2 August – 29 October 2023

During her internship, Ms Rashid participated in ISAS' seminars and events, where she interacted with local and overseas-based participants. She also collated data and provided research assistance to her supervisors, at ISAS as well as worked on joint papers with the ISAS researchers.

ISAS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH ASIA 2023

Everyday Experiences of the State in South Asia

ISAS hosted the annual ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023 from 23 to 25 October 2023. This virtual conference involved scholars, practitioners and researchers from diverse fields locally and globally.

The conference commenced with the opening remarks by Associate Professor Iqbal Singh Sevea, ISAS' Director, followed by a keynote address by Professor James Manor, Emeritus Professor of Commonwealth Studies at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London.

The central theme of the conference revolved around the everyday experiences of the state in South Asia, and it explored three key areas related to this theme. The first examined how people perceive the state in their daily interactions, while the second focused on state governance. The third theme delved into the limits and boundaries of the modern nation-state. Six roundtable discussions revolved around the state's authority, experiences, service delivery, identity and surveillance, and its impact on societal bodies. These discussions critically assessed the institutions, processes of political power and socio-economic group dynamics within the context of people's everyday lives.

The conference featured a diverse range of discussions spanning different themes, disciplines and geographic areas. The topics varied from examining trust dynamics in public spaces in Kolkata, India, to comparative analyses of debt in Sri Lanka, Italy and Greece. Several cross-cutting themes emerged during these discussions, notably concerning gender and neo-liberalism, which provided invaluable insights for the development discourse in South Asia.

Overall, the conference effectively bridged the realms of policy and academia, contributing to a deeper understanding of the state's role in South Asian societies.



ISAS RECENT EVENTS

13
JUL

ISAS SEMINAR

Nepal in South Asia's Changing Geopolitical Landscape



On 13 July 2023, ISAS hosted a seminar titled 'Nepal in South Asia's Shifting Geopolitical Landscape'. Dr Pramod Jaiswal, Research Director at the Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement, Nepal, was the guest speaker, while Dr Yogesh Joshi, Research Fellow at ISAS, chaired the session.

The seminar delved into the dynamic changes in South Asia's geopolitical scenario, primarily influenced by the ascendance of India and China, the deepening strategic ties between India and the United States (US), and the intensifying competition between the US and China. These developments have left a profound impact on Nepal's position within this landscape. Notably, China has significantly expanded its presence in Nepal through platform such as the Belt and Road Initiative, while the US has increased its involvement via the Millennium Challenge Corporation, earmarked for energy and road infrastructure projects.

The discussion illuminated how Nepal has emerged as a focal point for competition between India and China, as well as between the US and China. It also examined Nepal's foreign policy challenges as it navigates the intricate dynamics involving these three major global powers.

25
JUL

ISAS PANEL DISCUSSION (Webinar)

The Modi-Biden Summit: Indo-US Defence Ties and the Future of India's Military Deterrent



On 25 July 2023, ISAS hosted a virtual panel discussion titled 'The Modi-Biden Summit: Indo-US Defence Ties and the Future of India's Military Deterrent'. The guest speakers included Mr Pranay Kotasthane, Deputy Director at the Takshashila Institution, India; Dr Rajeshwari Pillai Rajagopalan, Director of the Centre for Security, Strategy and Technology at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi; and Air Marshal M Matheswaran, Chairman and President of The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. The session was chaired by Dr Yogesh Joshi, ISAS' Research Fellow.

This engaging discussion delved into multiple facets, including the implications of the recent upswing in India-United States (US) political relations on the Indian military, the evolving geopolitical dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region and the tangible dimensions of Indo-US military cooperation. These themes were explored against the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent landmark summit with President Joe Biden, where the symbolic significance and real-world impact of this high-level meeting were examined.

Notably, the conversation placed considerable emphasis on the Indo-US jet engine deal, a product of the summit, and its implications for the Indian Air Force and the advancement of aeronautics in India. Furthermore, the panel engaged in a detailed analysis of the current status and future prospects of indigenous defense production in India, emphasising how the Indo-US defence relationship can catalyse the industry and the potential role of civilian start-ups in this process.

11
AUG

ISAS SEMINAR

Nonalignment's Long Shadow: India and the War in Ukraine



On 11 August 2023, ISAS hosted a seminar on 'Nonalignment's Long Shadow: India and the War in Ukraine' which was led by Dr Rohan Mukherjee, Assistant Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow at ISAS, chaired the session.

The seminar explored India's nuanced trade and diplomatic ties with Russia, characterised by opportunism and independence. India's imports from Russia have seen a notable increase, and India, along with other Global South nations, has charted an independent course in its response to the Ukraine crisis. This independent stance is influenced

by several factors, including India's reliance on Russian defence supplies, its historical legacy of non-alignment, and enduring relations with the former Soviet Union.

The discussion further examined how India perceives its role in the global order. Beyond the exchange of material goods, nations aspire to attain positions of prominence within international institutions. As rising powers like India seek entry into the exclusive club of great powers, they often challenge the existing institutions designed to preserve the status quo. Despite benefiting from the current global order, India faces the challenge of achieving parity within the exclusive Western-dominated club.

29
AUG

ISAS-SLHC BOOK LAUNCH AND PANEL DISCUSSION

Singapore-Sri Lanka Relations: Perspectives from Sri Lanka



On 29 August 2023, ISAS in collaboration with the High Commission of Sri Lanka in Singapore, co-organised the book launch and panel discussion on 'Singapore and Sri Lanka at 50: Perspectives from Sri Lanka'. The address was delivered by Her Excellency Sashikala Premawardhane, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Singapore. The book

was launched by Ms Premawardhane and Associate Professor Iqbal Singh Sevea, Director, ISAS. It was then followed by a panel discussion comprising panellists, Dr Rajni Gamage, Postdoctoral Fellow, ISAS; Ms Nithya Subramanian, Journalist; and Mr Senura Abeywardene, Head of Public Policy, Central Asia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, Meta. The session was chaired by Dr Udan Fernando, Consultant, Association for Asian Studies, United States; and Head, Colombo Charter, Asian Civil Society Research Network, University of Melbourne.

The panel discussion delved into Singapore and Sri Lanka's shared history over 50 years, how they have drawn inspiration from each other, and sharing how each country's trajectories have evolved over time. The three panelists covered a range of topics from their presentations, ranging from historical linkages between Singapore and Sri Lanka, current domestic challenges, and the implementation of the rule of law in Sri Lanka. The interactive session included questions posed by the audience regarding political differences and future collaborative synergies between the two countries. The panel concluded with remarks on the need for a rethink of Sri Lanka's developmental policies and how Singapore could contribute to that aspect.

31
AUG

ISAS SEMINAR

Whither Bangladesh: Political Settlement and Economic Outcome



On 31 August 2023, ISAS, organised a seminar on 'Whither Bangladesh? Political Settlement and Economic Outcome'. Professor Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, Chairman of the Department of Development Studies at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, delivered an insightful presentation. The session was chaired by Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow at ISAS.

The seminar's objective was to unravel the intricate connection between economic progress and effective institutions in Bangladesh. It achieved this by dissecting the fundamental prerequisites for development, including factors such as land, capital, labour and technology, which have contributed to the country's economic growth. Additionally, the seminar delved into the nuanced conditions that prompt a deeper understanding of the interplay between political variables and their causal relationships in shaping Bangladesh's economic outcomes.

1
SEP

ISAS-CII COLLOQUIUM

Global Trade Colloquium on Regional Supply Chains and Institutions



ISAS and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organised the Global Trade Colloquium on Regional Supply Chains and Institutions in New Delhi on 1 September 2023. This colloquium was part of a series of dissemination events planned for the 'Trade, Connectivity and Institutions: A Study of Upcoming Prospects from Asia' project which is jointly being undertaken by ISAS and CII. The outcome of the project will be 20 research reports. A compilation of the

executive summaries of the reports was released during the event.

The colloquium saw participation from various industry experts, government officials and strategic experts. This included Mr Alex Ellis, British High Commissioner to India; Mr Dammu Ravi, Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs, India; Associate Professor Iqbal Singh Sevea, Director, ISAS; Mr Sumanta Chaudhuri, Principal Adviser, International Trade Policy, CII; and Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS.

The trade colloquium focused on two broad themes: 'Exploring the Evolving Landscape and sustainable solutions for Asia-Pacific Supply Chains' and 'The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and its Implications for Trade'. A curated panel delved into deeper discussions, giving industry related insights for policy issues. The two sessions also included presentations from Dr Swati Singh, Director, International Trade Policy Division, CII; and Mr Saeeduddin Faridi, Research Analyst, ISAS. The presentations provided a brief insight into the findings of the reports. The discussions focused on building resilient and reliable supply chains in the wake of disruptions caused by the pandemic, the following recession, and geopolitical instabilities. The participants also discussed aspects like sustainable development and its role in driving policy across all domains.

ISAS EVENTS LISTING (JULY TO DECEMBER 2023)

ISAS Seminar	Nepal in South Asia's Changing Geopolitical Landscape	13 July 2023
ISAS Panel Discussion (Webinar)	The Modi-Biden Summit: Indo-US Defence Ties and the Future of India's Military Deterrent	25 July 2023
ISAS Panel Discussion	The Roots of Political Centralisation in India	3 August 2023
ISAS-ORF Roundtable (India)	India and the Future of the G20	7 August 2023
ISAS-RIS Discussion Meeting (India)	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework: Issues and Way Forward	7 August 2023
ISAS Seminar	Nonalignment's Long Shadow: India and the War in Ukraine	11 August 2023
ISAS Seminar (Webinar)	Crisis in Sri Lanka and the World: Colonial and Neoliberal Origins: Ecological and Collective Alternatives	15 August 2023
Joint Roundtable with ARI-NUS	Narrating Asia: Power, Persuasion and Policy Architectures	16 August 2023
ISAS Panel Discussion (Webinar)	Reshaping Relations: The US-India Tech Partnership	17 August 2023
ISAS Closed Door Session	Political Empowerment in Enhancing Inclusive Development in Parliamentary Democracy	23 August 2023
ISAS-SLHC Book Launch and Panel Discussion	Singapore-Sri Lanka Relations: Perspectives from Sri Lanka	29 August 2023
ISAS Seminar	Whither Bangladesh: Political Settlement and Economic Outcomes	31 August 2023
ISAS-CII Colloquium (India)	Global Trade Colloquium on Regional Supply Chains and Institutions	1 September 2023
ISAS Panel Discussion (Webinar)	The Chandrayaan Moment: India's Moon Mission and the Unfolding Space Race	21 September 2023
ISAS Closed Door Session	Canada-India Relations	12 October 2023
ISAS Closed Door Session	Visit by Ambassador A.L.A. Azeez, Former Sri Lankan Permanent Representative to the United Nations	17 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Opening Session & Keynote Address: Everyday Imaginations of Authority in South Asia	23 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 1: Everyday Imaginations of Authority in South Asia	23 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 2: Everyday Experiences of the State in South Asia	24 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 3: Everyday Politics of State Delivery in South Asia	24 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 4: Everyday Politics of Identity and State in South Asia	24 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 5: The Surveillance State in South Asia	25 October 2023
ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2023	Roundtable 6: Stately Bodies in South Asia	25 October 2023
ISAS-CII-Pathfinder Foundation Workshop	Trade, Connectivity and Institutions	30 November 2023
ISAS Panel Discussion (Webinar)	Road to 2024: Elections in Five Indian States	7 December 2023

LATEST SOUTH ASIA DISCUSSION PAPERS, SPECIAL REPORTS AND SOUTH ASIA SCANS

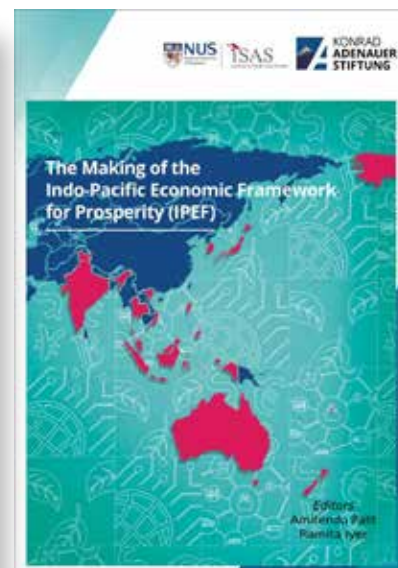
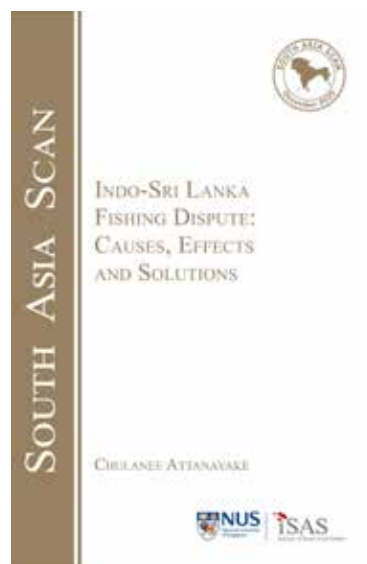
The ISAS publications series serves as a dynamic platform for sharing knowledge and research findings with a wider audience. Our rich collection of publications, curated by scholars deeply immersed in South Asian geopolitics, further enhances our understanding of the region's complexities and dynamics.

Under the South Asia Discussion Paper series, ISAS and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Regional Economic Programme Asia presented a series of papers authored by esteemed researchers. Titled *The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)*, these 16 papers provide distinct perspectives from various member countries on the challenges and opportunities presented by the IPEF. This initiative unites 14 nations, including Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States (US), Vietnam and Fiji. This collaborative effort aims to foster comprehensive trade and economic cooperation. Remarkably, this coalition represents nearly two-fifths of the world's economic output, establishing it as the largest economic bloc globally, surpassing both the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership – two other significant trade blocs in the region.

The Institute also brought out two Special Reports. The first report, titled *Japan-India-France Trilateral Dialogue: The Emerging Politics of the Indo-Pacific*, discusses the Indo-Pacific and how it has emerged as the most critical geography of the 21st century. The region – from the Western Indian Ocean to the Eastern Pacific – is undergoing enormous geopolitical change. France, India and Japan are uniquely positioned to collaborate on maintaining the security and stability of the Indo-Pacific. All of them have a geographical presence along the most critical maritime arc of the Indo-Pacific and a unique set of relations with the US, China and Russia. To understand the role of France, India and Japan in the emerging geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region, ISAS and Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan, organised a Track 1.5-level dialogue among experts from the three maritime democracies of the Indo-Pacific. The presentations, discussions and policy recommendations offered during the trilateral dialogue are compiled and analysed in this report.

The second Special Report, *75 Years of Partition: Rupture and Connectivity*, written in conjunction with the ISAS International Conference on South Asia 2022, scrutinises challenges in South Asia's regional integration post-1947. Commemorating the 75th year of partition, the report summarises the conference's discussions, emphasising connectivity in the wake of the partition' and norms of integration.

Finally, offering a comprehensive insight into the region, we published two South Asia Scans. The first, *India's Tryst with 5G Technology: Debates, Decisions, and Developments over Huawei*, explores the intricate landscape surrounding 5G discussions in India since 2019. The discourse within the country on domestic 5G has been shaped by a multifaceted interplay of security, economic, and political considerations. Our second scan, *Indo-Sri Lanka Fishing Dispute: Causes, Effects and Solutions*, highlights that the Indo-Sri Lanka fishing dispute, fueled by historical, cultural and maritime boundary issues, has persisted since the 1990s. The publication underscores the urgency for both countries to find a lasting and sustainable solution, possibly through joint efforts for marine protection.



BOOKS

Ranjan, Amit, *Federalism and Inter-State River Water Disputes in India*, Routledge, 2023

Ranjan, Amit and Kattan, Victor (eds), *The Breakup of India and Palestine: The Causes and Legacies of Partition*, Manchester University Press, ed. 2023

Ahmed, Zahid Shadab and Akbar, Ali, *Iran's Soft Power in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, Edinburgh University Press, 2023

Mitra, Subrata K, Schottli, Jivanta and Pauli, Markus, *Statecraft and Foreign Policy: India 1947 – 2023*, DCU Press, 2023

Sevea, Iqbal Singh, Palit, Amitendu and Rai, Vinod (eds), *India and the Future of G20: Shaping Policies for a Better World*, Bloomsbury, 2023

SOUTH ASIA DISCUSSION PAPERS

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 1 to 3 of 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 8 September 2023

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 4 to 6 of 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 15 September 2023

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 7 to 9 of 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 22 September 2023

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 10 to 12 of 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 29 September 2023

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 13 to 14 of 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 6 October 2023

The Making of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) [Papers 15 & 16], Edited by Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS; and Ms Ramita Iyer, Research Analyst, ISAS, 13 October 2023

SOUTH ASIA SCANS

Rajeev, Nishant; Joshi, Yogesh and Nachiappan, Karthik, South Asia Scan No. 19 – *India's Tryst with 5G Technology: Debates, Decisions and Developments over Huawei*, Institute of South Asian Studies, August 2023

Attanayake, Chulanee, South Asia Scan No. 20 – *Indo-Sri Lanka Fishing Dispute: Causes, Effects and Solutions*, Institute of South Asian Studies, December 2023

SPECIAL REPORTS

Japan-India-France Trilateral Dialogue: The Emerging Politics of the Indo-Pacific, Dr Yogesh Joshi, Research Fellow, ISAS; Mr Ippeita Nishida, Senior Research Fellow, Sasakawa Peace Foundation; and Ms Shavinyaa Vijaykumarr, Research Analyst, ISAS, 29 June 2023

75 Years of Partition: Rupture and Connectivity, Ms Claudia Chia, former Research Analyst, ISAS; Ms Wini Fred Gurung, former Research Analyst, ISAS; and Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 December 2023

BRIEFS

1035 Finalising India's Data Protection Bill, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 6 July 2023

1036 Pawar Struggle in Maharashtra, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 7 July 2023

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- 1037** Disparities of Subnational Economies of Sri Lanka: A District-Level Analysis, Dr Tilak Abeysinghe, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, ISAS; and Ms Nethmini Gunarathna, Research Assistant, Gamani Corea Foundation, 7 July 2023
-
- 1038** The GIFT Nifty: Landmark India-Singapore Deal, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 10 July 2023
-
- 1039** The iCET and India-US Tech Partnership, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 10 July 2023
-
- 1040** India and the SCO: All is Not Well, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 10 July 2023
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- 1041** Internationalising the Indian Rupee, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 July 2023
-
- 1042** Modi, Macron and the Art of Strategic Autonomy, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 17 July 2023
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- 1043** India's Increasingly Geo-economic Foreign Policy, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 18 July 2023
-
- 1044** Ranil Wickremesinghe's India Visit: Key Bilateral Commitments and Challenges, Mr Pradeep Ranaweera, Academic Instructor, Department of Strategic Studies, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka; and Dr Rajni Gamage, Postdoctoral Fellow, ISAS, 27 July 2023
-
- 1045** Strategy for India in a New Era: Working in Concert with the Middle Powers, Dr Swagato Ganguly, Research Affiliate, Lakshmi Mittal South India Institute, Harvard University; Non-Resident Fellow, Center for Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania; and Consulting Editor, *The Times of India*, 2 August 2023
-
- 1046** Xi Jinping in India: A Diplomatic Opportunity?, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 3 August 2023
-
- 1047** Indian Opposition gets its Act Together, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 4 August 2023
-
- 1048** Converging Challenges in Bangladesh: Complexities in the Lead-up to Elections, Dr Iman Ahmed, Research Fellow, ISAS, 10 August 2023
-
- 1049** The Final Passage: India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 August 2023
-
- 1050** Afghanistan's Water Fight with Iran, Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 14 August 2023
-
- 1051** Crossroads of Uncertainty: Pakistan's Challenges Ahead, Dr Iman Ahmed, Research Fellow, ISAS; and Ms Hatizah Rashid, Research Intern, ISAS, 16 August 2023
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- 1052** India's Changing Relations with Taiwan, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 21 August 2023
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- 1053** Relief for Rahul Gandhi in Disqualification Case, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 24 August 2023
-
- 1054** India, the Quad and the Taiwan Challenge, Dr Yogesh Joshi, Research Fellow, ISAS, 25 August 2023
-
- 1055** Sri Lankan President's Visit to Singapore: Climate Adaptation for Small Maritime Nations, Dr Rajni Gamage, Postdoctoral Fellow, ISAS; and Ms Amila Prasanga, Commander, Sri Lanka Navy, 28 August 2023
-
- 1056** The Presidential Elections in the Maldives, Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 28 August 2023
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- 1057** India's Two-Front War Anxiety and Nuclear Deterrence, Dr Yogesh Joshi, Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 August 2023
-
- 1058** The Strategic Logic of India in BRICS, Dr Yogesh Joshi, Research Fellow, ISAS; and Ms Devyani Chaturvedi, Research Analyst, ISAS, 31 August 2023
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- 1059** Church Attacks in Jaranwala and the Issue of Religious Intolerance in Pakistan, Dr Imran Ahmed, Research Fellow, ISAS; and Ms Hatizah Rashid, Research Intern, ISAS, 5 September 2023
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- 1060** Simultaneous Elections on the Agenda in India, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 8 September 2023
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- 1061** The G20 and India's Digital Public Infrastructure, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 September 2023
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- 1062** Connecting India, Arabia and Europa, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 11 September 2023
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- 1063** G20: India's Diplomatic Triumph, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 11 September 2023
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- 1064** The G20 Summit: Major Policy Directions Mark Credibility of the Process, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 12 September 2023
-
- 1065** India and Bhutan-China Boundary Talks, Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 15 September 2023
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- 1066** The United States in Gwadar: Testing China's Dominance in Pakistan, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 19 September 2023
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- 1067** Indian Parliament Passes Women's Reservation Bill, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 29 September 2023
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- 1068** Pension Politics Intensifies in India, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 3 October 2023
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- 1069** A New President in the Maldives: Muizzu Faces Domestic and External Challenges, Dr Amit Ranjan, Research Fellow, ISAS, 4 October 2023
-
- 1070** Beyond Trudeau: Connected Politics of India and the Anglosphere, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 5 October 2023
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- 1071** The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor: Will Recent Challenges Create a Setback?, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 10 October 2023
-
- 1072** Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy During Crisis Recovery, Dr Rajni Gamage, Postdoctoral Fellow, ISAS, 10 October 2023
-
- 1073** The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor: An Alternative to the Congested Suez Canal, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 16 October 2023
-
- 1074** Prioritising IPEF Outcomes: India Should Join Trade Talks, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 1 November 2023
-
- 1075** India's Global Climate Strategy, Dr Karthik Nachiappan, Research Fellow, ISAS; and Dr Constantino Xavier, Fellow, Center for Social and Economic Progress, New Delhi, 6 November 2023
-
- 1076** Five Indian States Go to Polls: A Test for the 2024 General Elections?, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 8 November 2023
-
- 1077** Bangladesh's Crucial Juncture: Elections, Uncertainty and Ramifications, Dr Imran Ahmed, Research Fellow, ISAS, 9 November 2023
-
- 1078** Beyond Gaza: India's Changing Middle East Policies, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 14 November 2023
-
- 1079** Deepening India-Australia Relations in an Evolving Indo-Pacific, Dr Iqbal Singh Sevea, Director, ISAS, 29 November 2023
-
- 1080** Electoral Bond Scheme Faces Supreme Court Scrutiny, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 30 November 2023
-
- 1081** The BJP Wins the Semi-final: Impressive Gains in State Elections, Mr Vinod Rai, Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow, ISAS, 6 December 2023
-
- 1082** The BJP in Pole Position for the 2024 General Elections, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 7 December 2023
-
- 1083** Environment Versus Economy: Nepal's Dilemma with Electric Vehicles, Dr Puspa Sharma, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, 8 December 2023
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- 1084** Beyond 1971: Kissinger and India's Geopolitics, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 19 December 2023
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- 1085** COP28, South Asia and Fossil Fuels: Difficulties in Transition and Adaptation, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 19 December 2023
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- 1086** The Maldives-China FTA: Grave Economic Consequences, Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Trade and Economics), ISAS, 21 December 2023
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- 1087** India-US Relations in 2023: Advancing Amid New Problems, Professor C Raja Mohan, Visiting Research Professor, ISAS, 27 December 2023
-
- 1088** Women Lead Change in Mizoram from the Frontlines, Dr Navaneeta Deori, Senior Assistant Professor, Tate Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati Campus, Assam, India; and Dr Biswajit Choudhury, Senior Assistant Professor, Handique Girls' College, Assam, India, and Research Fellow, Centre for Asian Politics and Policy, Clarewood University, United States, 28 December 2023
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- 1089** Surprise Chief Minister Appointments: In Tune with the BJP's Policy, Dr Ronojoy Sen, Senior Research Fellow and Research Lead (Politics, Society and Governance), ISAS, 28 December 2023
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INSIGHTS

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