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I am happy to note that the Diplomatist is publishing a Special Report on ASEAN-India Strategic Relations in 2017. The Report merits special attention as it is being published in a year when ASEAN and India are commemorating 25 years of their Dialogue Partnership as well as when ASEAN is celebrating the golden jubilee of its establishment. Since it is being published at a salient moment in our history, the report will prove to be indispensable to key stake-holders in the region.

India welcomes the central role ASEAN is playing in the emerging regional architecture in South-east Asian Region. This architecture, which pivots around a rule-based approach, consultation and consensus in decision making at a pace comfortable to all, and community building efforts, has proven to be the hallmark of oriental approach to diplomacy.

India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of our foreign policy and the cornerstone of our Act East Policy. The Act East Policy emphasizes three C's - Commerce, Connectivity and Culture – to provide a high trajectory to ASEAN-India relations by being more focused and action-oriented. It holds the mirror to the future of ASEAN-India relations – greater integration along the three pillars of ASEAN-India cooperation.

India has become the fastest growing major economy in the world on the crest of a burgeoning middle class which can provide a vast market for ASEAN goods. ASEAN, on its part, can be an important destination for Indian service exports and also a crucial source for our energy and economic security. India is concerned about the safety and security of sea lanes in international waters for these very reasons. Together we can create collaborative instead of competitive regional value chains to keep non-tariff measures at bay. For this reason India has also proposed turning our upcoming connectivity corridors into economic corridors, while simultaneously proposing institutional connectivity of Customs, Maritime etc. authorities.

Indian Mission to ASEAN is committed to harness the economic potential of India-ASEAN relationship through increased multi-sectoral engagements across all the sectors viz. government-government, business-business and people-people

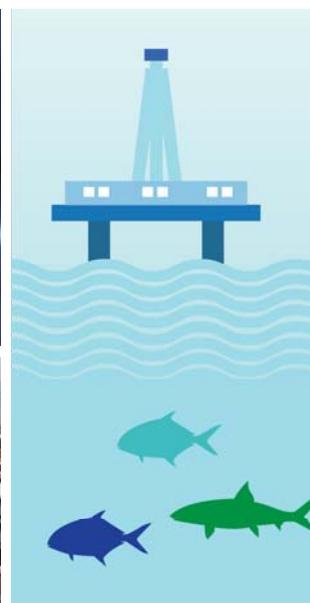
In this respect, I believe the report gives a detailed coverage of existing political, economic, business and cultural relations between the two regions and identifies areas of future cooperation. I wish the Diplomatist all success in this publication and all future endeavours.

With best wishes,

Suresh K. Reddy
Ambassador of India to ASEAN

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12th ASEAN – INDIA

Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, 12 November 2014



25 YEARS OF INDIA-ASEAN COOPERATION

BY PROF V. SHIVKUMAR

“The ASEAN community is India’s neighbour. We have ancient relations of trade, religion, culture, art and traditions. We have enriched each other through our interaction. This constitutes a strong foundation of a modern relationship.” This statement by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 12th India-ASEAN Summit in Myanmar’s capital Nay Pyi Taw on March 12, 2014, sums up the importance of our relations with our immediate neighbours.

On August 8, 1967, the foreign ministers of Indonesia,

Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand sat down together in the main hall of the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Bangkok, Thailand and signed a document, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The five foreign ministers who signed it – Adam Malik of Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos of the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razak of Malaysia, S. Rajaratnam of Singapore, and Thanat Khoman of Thailand – were subsequently hailed as the founding fathers of probably the most successful intergovernmental organisation

SUMMIT

ber 2014



in the developing world today and the document that they signed is known as the ASEAN Declaration.

It was a brief document containing just five articles. It declared the establishment of an Association for Regional Cooperation among the countries of Southeast Asia to be known as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and spelt out the aims and purposes of that Association. These aims and purposes were about cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, technical, educational and other fields, and in the promotion of regional peace and stability through “abiding respect for justice and the rule of law and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter”. It stipulated that the Association would be open for participation by all States in the Southeast Asian region subscribing to its aims, principles and purposes. It proclaimed

The year 2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership. It was on January 28, 1992 at the Fourth ASEAN Summit in Singapore that a decision to establish a Sectoral Dialogue Partnership between ASEAN and India was made

ASEAN as representing “the collective will of the nations of Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their peoples and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity”.

India’s desire to strengthen and have a multi-faceted relationship with ASEAN was an outcome of the significant changes in the world’s political and economic arena, in the era of globalisation, since the early 1990s and India’s own march towards economic liberalisation. India’s search for economic space coupled with a dynamic foreign policy resulted in the consolidation of the Look East policy. The Look East policy over the years matured into an action oriented Act East policy under the present NDA government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The year 2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership. It was on January 28, 1992 at the Fourth ASEAN Summit in Singapore that a decision to establish a Sectoral Dialogue Partnership between ASEAN and India was made. Since then, the relationship has progressed from strength to strength, with the two sides becoming full Dialogue Partners in 1996, Summit Partners in 2002 and Strategic Partners in 2012.

It is noteworthy that India’s trade towards this region accounts for little over 10 percent and ASEAN is the country’s 4th largest trading partner. Investment flows have been substantial both ways, with ASEAN accounting for approximately 12.5 percent of investment flows into India since 2000.

“The FDI inflow into India from ASEAN between April

2007 and March 2015 was about \$32.44 billion. Whereas FDI outflow from India to ASEAN countries, from April 2007 to March 2015 was about \$38.67 billion. The ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is now complete with the entering into force of the ASEAN India agreements on trade in services and investments on July 1, 2015,” states an article published by Observer Research Foundation, a premier think tank in South Asia.

Is India - ASEAN partnership limited to trade and economic cooperation?

The answer is NO. The relationship between ASEAN as a group and individual member states of the region with India encompasses various sectors as well. The 8th edition of Delhi Dialogue in February 2016 outlined emphatically the road map which touches upon cooperation in fields such as education, science and technology, agriculture, sericulture, environment, solar and green energy, health and space technology with ASEAN and its member states. This multi-dimensional cooperation has its roots in centuries old historical and cultural links since the period of Chola empire in India during 9th Century AD when Hinduism spread in the region as evidenced in Angkor Vat.

To observe India's connections nurtured with ASEAN in the past few decades, New Delhi is planning a series of events which include signing an air services agreement, a car rally and a maritime expedition by Indian naval ships to the region. This will underline in particular the land and maritime connectivity links India has with the region besides air links. Over the years India has had joint naval expeditions with many of the ASEAN member states. Apart from road, air and sea connectivity between India and ASEAN, the border trade regime is also being promoted. For all these activities the region requires sustainable peace and a shared vision of stability. With this in view, ASEAN has signed several agreements to combat terrorism and to declare the region as a Nuclear Free Area. Though individual member countries may have differing perception on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, India is committed to use clean and green energy for its economic and social development.

Addressing the ASEAN-India Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015, Prime Minister Modi said, “Terrorism has

There are many niche areas of ASEAN-India cooperation such as ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund, ASEAN-India Science and Technology Fund and ASEAN-India Green Fund to name a few.

emerged as a global challenge that affects us all here”. He called for the “adoption of a comprehensive resolution on international terrorism”. Recently, in an interview on Al-Jazeera TV, Prime Minister Modi expressed his anguish that even the UN is not able to bring out a comprehensive “acceptable definition on terrorism” that poses a grave threat to humanity the world over. India and ASEAN will have to join to evolve a strategy to combat the threat of terrorism.

The ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund, ASEAN-India Science & Technology Fund, ASEAN-India Green Funds to name a few are other examples of India-ASEAN cooperation. Academic cooperation between the two regions is very vital. Apart from members of Parliament, people to people contacts such as visits by students, scholars, researchers and businessmen must be escalated.

According to Government of India sources, India has been supporting ASEAN especially CLMV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam) countries under the Initiatives for ASEAN Integration, which include projects on training in English language for Law Enforcement Officers in CLMV countries and training of professionals dealing with capital markets in CLMV by National Institute of Securities Management Mumbai. To boost people-to-people interaction with ASEAN, India has been organising various programmes including training programme for ASEAN diplomats, exchange of Parliamentarians, participation of ASEAN students in the National Children's Science Congress, ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks, ASEAN India Eminent Persons Lecture Series etc. These efforts are a step in the right direction. The Indian Government must utilise every multinational group to enhance its image and gain bargaining power vis a vis Pakistan or China.

The 25 years of Indo-ASEAN relations marks a historical milestone for our foreign policy. Our journey starts from here to build a new world order of cooperation and shared destiny. ■

Sources: Agencies, MEA sources, ASEAN sources and Singapore Institute for International Affairs.



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ASEAN@50

BY VANNARITH CHHEANG *

Over the past 50 years, ASEAN has been regarded as one of the most successful and dynamic regional inter-governmental organisations, second only to the European Union in terms of the level of institutional capacity, regional integration and community building. ASEAN has been successful in promoting the culture of trust, socialising ASEAN norms such as peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference since its inception. Moreover, ASEAN has gained international recognition as a driving force in shaping the evolving regional architecture. The strength of ASEAN relies on its unity and centrality, and the strategic trust and partnership that the organisation has earned from and built with dialogue partners.

During the Cold War, ASEAN aligned with the US to curb the spread of communism in the region, which was believed to be the core threat to regional peace and stability.

ASEAN took a strong stance against Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. After the end of the Cold War, ASEAN was expanded to include all ten member states located geographically in Southeast Asia. The membership of Vietnam in ASEAN in 1995 was a milestone in regional cooperation and integration, marking the end of the geopolitical division between ASEAN and Indochina.

The realisation of the 10-member ASEAN in 1999, after Cambodia became an official member, significantly contributed to enhancing regional unity and institutional building. The image and role of ASEAN has improved since then. The 'ASEAN Way' was gradually formed and enhanced, which focuses on the principles of peaceful coexistence,

non-interference, equality, consultation and consensus and diplomacy.

'Unity in diversity' and 'One community, one destiny' are catch phrases of ASEAN community building efforts. ASEAN has been able to unite the ten diverse member countries and forge a common vision for common interest. The differences in political systems, historical and cultural roots, and economic development level have not prevented ASEAN from staying united and building a regional community together.

Confidence building measures have been gradually strengthened while preventive diplomacy (manage the conflict and prevent conflict escalation) is being experimented. The results of conflict prevention varied depending on circumstances and contexts. For instance, ASEAN played a role in preventing the border conflict between Cambodia and Thailand from escalating. ASEAN effectively contributed to peacekeeping and peace building in East Timor. In 2008, the ASEAN Charter was adopted, marking a new milestone in transforming ASEAN to become a more rules-based regional body. The Charter set a vision and core principles to realise an ASEAN community. One of the principles of ASEAN is to maintain and strengthen the centrality of ASEAN in external political, economic, social and cultural relations while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

ASEAN's voice on international platforms has been taken quite seriously, which in turn leads to increased diplomatic leverage in influencing the norms and practices

SPECIAL REPORT

of international relations and regional and global governance.

One of the explanations for ASEAN's success is the collective implementation of hedging strategy. Particularly, within the context of rising uncertainty driven by power competition and rivalry between major powers, ASEAN member states have individually adopted hedging strategies at different levels and ASEAN serves as an important institutional and diplomatic hedging platform.

The post-Cold War order in Asia has been led by the hegemonic power of the US. However, the rising power of China and the relative decline of the US are creating a security dilemma for regional countries (especially small and medium-sized countries). The regional order is in transition from a hegemonic stability to a new balance of power. This new, evolving balance of power is different from the one in the Cold War era. The new balance of power involves not only two major powers but multiple powers including medium powers and ASEAN (a collective power regional agency).

ASEAN is at a turning point in proving its relevant role in shaping a new regional order through the implementation of a robust diplomatic and strategic engagement and collective leadership. ASEAN needs to overcome some of its weaknesses such as bureaucracy, slow implementation, lack of enforcement, lack of core leadership (Indonesia used to take a core leadership role in ASEAN), lack of unity on certain sensitive issues such as the South China Sea disputes and the Mekong River trans-boundary water resources management.

The Next 50 Years

ASEAN is going through unprecedented strategic uncertainties and security dilemma, mainly driven by the US-China power competition. The member countries of ASEAN are not interested or willing to take sides. They are committed to maintaining permanent neutrality and upholding the principles of peaceful coexistence. However, if they are forced to take sides then the region will again be divided, which in turn leads to instability and intra-regional conflicts.

Deepening bilateral and multilateral defence and security cooperation is needed to strengthen ASEAN's common security. The survival and relevance of ASEAN depends on the unity and centrality of ASEAN. If ASEAN is divided (by some major powers) then it will lose its regional role and relevance. The whole region will then fall into instability and disorder. ASEAN needs to work harder to build a security identity based on common vision and interest. Non-traditional security (NTS) threats, such as climate change, water-food-energy security nexus, migration, natural disasters and terrorism are significant in the region. Regional cooperation and collaboration in addressing these NTS need to be strengthened. An ASEAN common security identity can be built by deepening regional cooperation while addressing NTS threats.

To adapt to intensifying power competition between China and the US, ASEAN member states and ASEAN as

a regional institution must implement a robust collective and comprehensive hedging strategy by combining security and strategic measures with economic, socio-cultural, and diplomatic measures. Collective and comprehensive hedging strategy will contribute to the realisation of a stable balance of power or dynamic equilibrium.

ASEAN needs to build a common vision and strengthen regional unity on certain sensitive security issues, particularly the South China Sea issue and the Mekong water resource security issue. These two issues should be integrated into one basket to forge a common ASEAN position.

Given its strategic location, Vietnam has a critical role to play in connecting the above regional security agenda. More dialogue on the Mekong River management must be implemented. The maritime Southeast Asian countries need to pay closer attention and provide technical support to mainland Southeast Asian countries in sustainable governance of the Mekong River and its tributary system.

For the short and medium term, ASEAN needs to simultaneously develop confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy. For the long term, ASEAN needs at least twenty more years to implement the conflict resolution mechanism given the complexity of regional security environment. ASEAN should promote multi-stakeholder discussion/dialogue on conflict management and conflict resolution in the region at least at Track 1.5 level.

ASEAN needs to promote and strengthen rules-based international systems and regional order. Upholding and enforcing rules-based order will help ASEAN better manage major power relations and transform it to become a normative power based on international laws/rules. However, ASEAN needs to effectively implement and enforce the ASEAN Charter, and strengthen rules-based ASEAN community building.

ASEAN should explore the opportunity to promote interregional strategic and security dialogues with other regional security arrangements such as Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Track 1.5 inter-regional security dialogue and consultation will be more doable or practical. ASEAN needs to further align its political security agenda with those of the United Nations. Having an ASEAN-UN alliance on climate change, an ASEAN-UN alliance on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and an ASEAN Peacekeeping Forces working under the UN framework to maintain peace and stability, would help promote and enhance the global image and role of ASEAN. ■

** The writer is a consultant at the Nippon Foundation in Japan. He is also a Co-Founder and Chairman of Advisory Board at the Cambodia Institute for Strategic Studies (CISS), adjunct senior fellow at Cambodia Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP).*



ASEAN & INDIA: STRENGTHENING REGIONAL VALUE CHAINS

BY PRABIR DE *

India and ASEAN are home to 1.8 billion people and have an economic size of \$3.8 trillion with a substantial share of world resources, economic and otherwise. India shares land and maritime boundaries with member states. ASEAN-India relations are firmly embedded in culture, commerce and connectivity. India's Look East Policy (LEP) was in force for more than two decades, and thereafter, it has been transformed into the impactful Act East Policy (AEP) with ASEAN at its core. ASEAN-India relations have gained constant momentum throughout this period. Starting as a Sectoral Partner of ASEAN in 1992, India became a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1996, a Summit Partner in 2002 and a Strategic Partner in 2012. The year 2017 marks 25 years of ASEAN-India dialogue partnership, 15 years of summit level interaction and five years of strategic partnership.

Economic ties between India and ASEAN are always in the forefront and have been deepening day by day. In 2016, ASEAN was India's 4th largest trading partner, accounting for 10 percent of India's total trade. In the same year, India was ASEAN's 7th largest trading partner. Barring the Philippines, India has completed the task of tariff liberalisation under agreement in December 2016. Investment flows have been growing constantly with more inward FDI coming for Make-in-India. The Trade and Investment Agreement (2015) between ASEAN and India represents an important effort

to enhance ASEAN-India integration. India has also signed bilateral CEPAs/CECAs with Japan, Korea, Singapore and Malaysia, along with the regional FTA with ASEAN. India is a partner of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which is a comprehensive free trade agreement being negotiated between the 10 ASEAN members and ASEAN's FTA partners, i.e., Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.

Global Value Chain (GVC) has gained significant importance in economic integration. A value chain is defined as the full range of activities that firms carry out to bring a product from its conception to its end use and beyond. When this value chain concentrates on a region, we call it Regional Value Chain (RVC). UNCTAD in its latest study has argued that almost 70 percent of MNCs are involved in GVC activities and have contributed almost 60 percent of global trade (worth of \$20 trillion in 2014). In GVC, both trade and investment are very well integrated, particularly through MNCs. The production networks have become an important phenomenon in Southeast and East Asia.

After almost two years of slow growth, India's export to ASEAN has increased to \$30 billion in 2016-17 from \$25 billion in 2015-16. India's import from ASEAN is a very important element to growing value chains. However, import is yet to acquire significant pace. Driven by rising

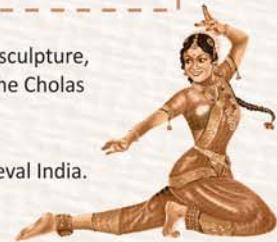


Gangaikonda Cholapuram

GET ENTHRALLED IN THE ARCHITECTURAL BRILLIANCE OF CHOLAS AND PALLAVAS



As you stroll through the temples, each and every sculpture, pillar, motif has a story to tell; and did you know, the Cholas had envisioned the temples not only as places of worship but also as centres of economic activity; some of the most sophisticated buildings of medieval India. Gangaikonda Cholapuram erected as the capital of the Cholas is a fine example.



In Thanjavur, the world's first complete "granite" temple, Brihadeeswarar Temple is beyond anything that you can imagine. The central attraction is the great Vimana built over the sanctum is 216 feet high and has 14 storeys of intricate sculpting with pilasters and niches, and images of God. The descriptive nature of these sculptures tell a thousand tales.



The Darasuram Temple in Kumbakonam is a paradise for the lovers of art and architecture. The main mantapa is called Raja Gambira where an elephant draws the chariot and the ceiling has a beautiful carving of Shiva and Parvathi inside an open lotus are few stunning pieces of yesteryear architecture.

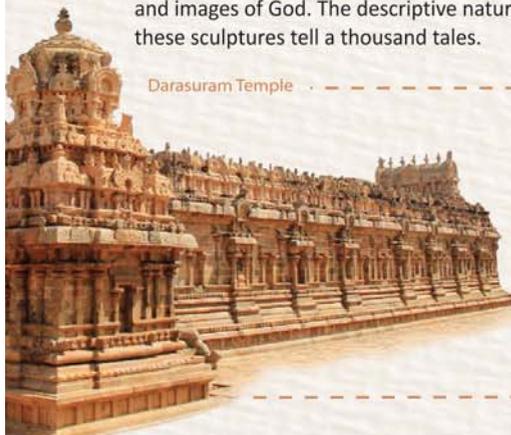
Darasuram Temple

Under Pallavas, some of the finest temples had been created at Mamallapuram and Kanchipuram. The Shore Temple, a structural temple complex, was the culmination of the architectural creations in mid 7th century starting with the Cave temples and the monolithic Rathas.

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Mamallapuram Shore Temple



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Indian textile and apparels have demand in both domestic and export markets. India's trade in textiles among ASEAN countries like Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand has been growing rapidly. Particularly noteworthy is India's textile trade with Vietnam

and favourable commodity prices, India's trade with ASEAN has increased to \$70 billion in 2016-17 from \$65 billion in 2015-16 FY. There have been significant developments in the agriculture, processed food, machinery, electrical and electronics, travel and tourism and education sectors. India is gaining production linkages with Malaysia (e.g. electronics), Thailand (e.g. automobiles), Singapore (e.g. digital networks) and others in ASEAN.

Given the variations in production of goods and services, complementarities between India and ASEAN countries are required to build and strengthen the value added stages needed for stronger RVC networks. Strengthening RVCs between India and ASEAN, therefore, has gained high importance in bilateral relations.

Parts and components have contributed almost 25 percent (\$6.27 billion) of India's export to ASEAN in 2014, followed

by 18 percent (\$4.60 billion) to EU, 14 percent (\$3.49 billion) to USA and 7.7 percent (\$1.95 billion) to China (Table 1). In terms of import of parts and components, India has imported 15 percent (\$5.48 billion) from ASEAN, 25 percent (\$9.39 billion) from China and 18 percent (\$6.81 billion) from Japan in 2014 (Table 2). Overall, India's export of final, parts and components, and processed goods to ASEAN was about 20 to 30 percent of India's total exports to the world, whereas, India's import from ASEAN was roughly about 15 percent in 2014. This shows that India is getting more engaged in production networks with ASEAN countries in both export and import of parts and components and processed goods. Among ASEAN countries, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam are major sources of parts and components.

Automobiles, textile & clothing are the other two sectors where RVCs between ASEAN and India are fast emerging.

Table 1: India's Export to Major Countries and Country Groups

	Export Value (US\$ Billion)						Export Share in World (%)					
	Final Goods		Parts and Components		Processed Goods		Final		Parts and Components		Processed Goods	
	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014
USA	4.03	6.51	1.80	3.49	4.27	9.17	25.50	15.39	15.56	13.76	15.44	13.37
EU	3.34	6.67	2.05	4.60	5.98	11.87	7.78	4.26	7.12	7.70	9.23	12.40
Japan	1.99	2.67	1.78	2.13	2.04	3.88	21.11	15.77	17.75	18.15	21.61	17.30
South Asia	0.44	1.52	0.38	1.10	1.88	5.57	12.59	6.31	15.45	8.42	7.38	5.66
China	1.23	1.80	0.82	1.95	2.55	8.51	2.78	3.58	3.25	4.35	6.79	8.11
ASEAN	2.75	6.80	3.64	6.27	5.23	11.76	17.42	16.07	31.49	24.75	18.91	17.15
World	15.80	42.31	11.55	25.33	27.67	68.61	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

*Note: Shaded columns represent the size of value chains. The selection of HS 6 digit level product is based on BEC.
Source: AIC's calculations based on WITS Database, the World Bank.*

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Table 2: India's Import from Major Countries and Country Groups

	Import Value (US\$ Billion)						Import Share in World (%)					
	Final Goods		Parts and Components		Processed Goods		Final		Parts and Components		Processed Goods	
	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014	2006	2014	206	2014	2006	2014
USA	1.39	2.20	1.70	2.82	2.25	5.39	9.27	6.31	11.62	7.73	6.37	6.02
EU	3.52	5.98	2.79	5.35	4.70	9.43	23.39	17.12	19.08	14.66	13.31	10.52
Japan	2.78	4.49	3.79	6.81	4.75	8.51	18.52	12.87	25.90	18.65	13.46	9.49
South Asia	0.10	0.33	0.05	0.25	0.83	1.60	0.64	0.95	0.35	0.67	2.37	1.78
China	2.98	12.92	1.71	9.39	4.60	17.16	19.82	37.00	11.72	25.72	13.03	19.15
ASEAN	2.05	5.61	2.92	5.48	4.67	10.83	13.62	16.05	19.96	15.01	13.22	12.09
World	15.04	34.93	14.63	36.51	35.29	89.63	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

*Note: Shaded columns represent the size of value chains. The selection of HS 6 digit level product is based on BEC.
Source: AIC's calculations based on WITS Database, the World Bank.*

The automobile industry is an emerging sector where ASEAN and India are building regional as well as global value chains. It is deeply integrated into both forward and backward linkages with several key sectors in the economy. The automobile policy has helped both India and Thailand to become major automobile hubs in Asia. The policy has helped countries to move from assembling stage to production stage.

India's RVC network with ASEAN in automobiles has been growing gradually. The country is gaining strength in automobile trade, particularly in parts and components, which also assures a strong link of value chains with major countries, including ASEAN. Among ASEAN countries, India's export of automobile parts and components to Thailand was almost 41 percent (\$282.10 million) in 2014. In case of import of parts and components of automobile products, India's import was almost 71 percent (\$720.49 million) from Thailand. In

terms of value chain of automobile products, India has been maintaining closer ties with Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam among the ASEAN countries. Indian cars manufactured by Suzuki, Toyota and TATA are getting market access in Southeast and East Asia. Further negotiations in ASEAN – India FTA for automobile products having high trade potential that fall under sensitive and exclusion lists would possibly strengthen the production networks between ASEAN and India.

Better connectivity is the core factor for strengthening the automotive industry as several forward and backward linkages within and across the region are taking place to supply intermediate parts to manufacturing units to produce finished goods. Both efficient time management (i.e., Just in Time) and low transportation cost would enhance potential links for the value chain in the automobile industry between India and Thailand.

Indian textile and apparels have demand in both domestic and export markets. India's trade in textiles with ASEAN countries like Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand has been growing. India's trade with Vietnam in textiles has been especially noteworthy. There are huge opportunities in the textiles and apparel industry in Vietnam.

The textiles and apparel industry in both India and Vietnam are more complementary than competing in nature. Both India and Vietnam have strong export markets for textiles and garments, mostly to USA and EU. Both the countries have huge trade potential in the textile industry to supplement and to grow in textile value chains. For instance, trade between India and Vietnam on textile components of final and processed products has grown at the rate of 30 and 40 percent between 2006 and 2014, respectively. The textile industry in India has specialised in complete value chain process of textile productions and also in value chain





Shri S C Bajpai, IOFS
DGOF & Chairman, OFB

Shri Bajpai took over the charge of DGOF & Chairman, OFB on 01st February 2017. He joined the Indian Ordnance Factories' Organization in 1979. He possesses M.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Kanpur and also holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from MDI, Gurgaon. Shri Bajpai went to Cranefield University, United Kingdom for a Master Degree in Advance Manufacturing Technology and also made a sojourn to Russia for training in tank overhauling. He is a distinguished fellow of the National Defence College.

EXPORT ENGINE OF ORDNANCE FACTORY BOARD

Consisting of 41 production units, and functioning under the aegis of Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence; Ordnance Factory Board [OFB] has been exporting its products since 1989 by maintaining foothold in traditional markets of India's immediate neighbourhood.

Furthermore, OFB made sustained efforts to reach out to India's extended neighbourhood in Central Asia, Middle East, and surely ASEAN countries.

European and American hubs too were not off OFB's export radar.

A gamut of products – ranging from arms and ammunition, weapon spares, to chemicals, explosives and troop comfort items have been exported.

At one end, pro-active marketing was undertaken by OFB through participation in International Exhibitions and concomitant interaction with visiting delegations from target countries and resource firms. Indian Missions abroad provide

valuable support in promotion of products manufactured by Indian Ordnance Factories. OFB has established viable contacts with firms based in India as well as abroad which act as conduits for boosting exports. Product promotion through advertisements in international media is being carried out.

Through these multi-pronged activities, OFB has achieved an export turnover of Rs. 24.43 crores (USD 4.10 mn approx) in the year 2016-17 and in the process has more than trebled its growth rate vis-à-vis 2015-16.

Following a focused policy-approach by the top echelons of OFB administration, the export turnover is further likely to increase in the coming years after modernization and capacity augmentation. Already in 2017-18, around 15 crores (USD 2.33 mn approx) export volume has been generated.

Traditionally bulk of the export orders, in terms of value and quantity, consists of supply of ammunition, mainly medium and large caliber. OFB has also received orders for smaller caliber (5.56mm, 7.62mm and 12.7mm etc.), medium

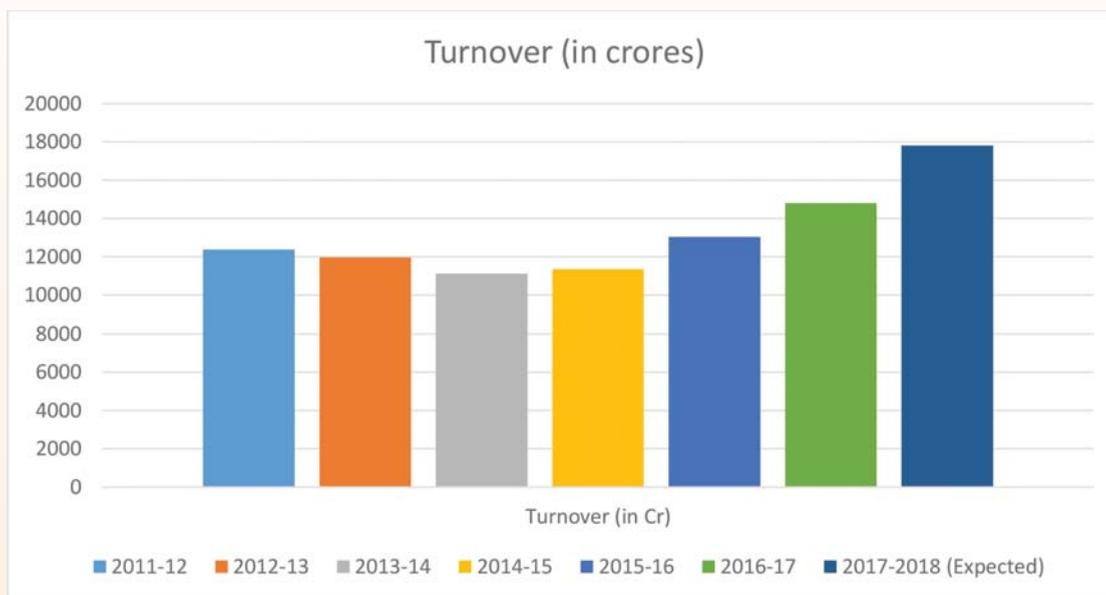


Fig. OFB's Growth Trajectory

caliber (30mm ammunition for CRN-91) and large caliber ammunition (84mm, 105mm ammunition) & demolition stores.

Manufacturing of ammunitions & explosives is one of OFB's core areas and involves lot of backward and forward integration. OFB not only meets the requirement of India's Armed Forces but also supplies ammunition to the State Police Forces as well as Central Armed Police Forces within India.

Certain European firms are sourcing ammunition components from OFB. Besides, OFB has also exported 5.56 mm and 7.62 mm Rifles and Machine Guns, 40mm L-70 Gun barrel, AK-630 gun, 12.7 mm HMG 'Prahari' AD gun, 7.62 mm MAG gun, Mortars, Night Vision Equipments, 105mm Field Guns, Brake Parachutes and certain Troop Comfort items including Tentages.

The market demand of OFB's products has kept on increasing. For instance, Kavach Mod-II, CRN-91 Gun, Brake Parachute, Tetryl and Signal Fog are in demand in the International market. In current year, OFB has received orders from Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkmenistan for the Brake Parachute whereas Guinea, Turkey and Bangladesh have placed orders for other products.

Moreover, OFB is developing competence toward other products including 9mm Pistol, .32 Revolver, Multi Grenade Launchers, Passive Night Vision Goggles, 12 Bore PAG, .30 O6 SPR etc, which could be competitive in the global market.

OFB & ASEAN

OFB appreciates the tremendous business opportunities that the ASEAN countries may offer. New vistas of defence

cooperation through MoUs and ToTs could be explored. OFB's common zones of export in ASEAN have been Indonesia and Malaysia. However, in tune with India's Act East Policy, OFB finds it imperative to venture with a greater momentum into the export markets of Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam & Myanmar.

Traditionally, Brake Parachutes, 7.62 mm MAG, Spares of 40 mm L-70 Gun, 7.62 mm & 40 mm ammunition and Naval Gun CRN-91 Gun have been exported to ASEAN nations.

OFB has developed several products through in-house R&D which can have sufficient export potential in ASEAN countries – for instance, 155mm Artillery Gun 'Dhanush', Bi-Modular Charge System (BMCS) for 155mm Artillery Ammunition, and Modernised Mine Protected Vehicle (MMPV), among others.

OFB is further developing Upgraded BMP-II vehicles, Futuristic Infantry Combat Vehicle (FICV), 7.62 x 51 mm Assault Rifle, Air Defence Gun and 155mm x 52 Cal Mounted Gun System and related ammunition and Electronic Fuzes.

In this direction, OFB showcased its range of exportable items in the International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (IMDEX)-2017 held in Singapore in May 2017 and plans to set up its pavilion in Defence and Security Exhibition, Thailand in November 2017.

OFB believes that ASEAN markets would benefit from its cutting-edge and cost-effective products. In this global ecosystem of defence exports and considering the geopolitics of South China Sea, ASEAN countries would find it beneficial to extend cooperation with the Indian defence establishment – and OFB being the Indian government's defence manufacturing arm, would be the finest choice.

India and ASEAN should improve physical and digital connectivity; develop industrial or special economic zones, logistics and customs systems

segments. Compared to Vietnam, India is raw material sufficient, whereas, Vietnam is dependent on import of raw materials from other countries, mostly China, for its textile inputs. Therefore it will be mutually beneficial for both India and Vietnam to cooperate and engage in the textile industry. India can be a raw material supplier for manufacturing textile products for Vietnam exports and also gain huge markets in the Vietnam garment business. Having huge trade potential for textile products, both ASEAN and India have to cooperate with each other for strengthening trade and resolving trade barriers such as Non Tariff Measures (NTMs).

India has huge potential for export in supplying raw material and know-how to Vietnam. Vietnam garment enterprises can make use of the 'Make in India' initiative, as it attracts foreign investors in its manufacturing industry such as textile and apparel sector. As for both India and Vietnam textile industries, European countries are the major export market, collaboration in textile production can benefit Vietnam firms in decreasing shipment costs. Similarly, Indian investors can invest in Vietnam in the textiles and apparel industry, where tariffs are expected to fall to zero from the current 17-18 percent due to international commitments.

To sum up, given a global competitiveness in the textiles and apparel industry for both India and Vietnam, in terms of designing and quality of products, labour productivity and technology upgradation, there is need for cooperation between India and Vietnam in the textile and garments industry to make a strong involvement in the global value chain. In view of the presence of RVCs among Southeast Asian countries and India's strong and stable relationship with the ASEAN countries, India and ASEAN countries have huge potential in RVC linkages. With the introduction of GST in India, RVC sectors are likely to grow as the market becomes more efficient.

India and ASEAN should improve physical and digital connectivity; develop industrial or special economic zones, logistics and customs systems, etc. There is a need for reforms in the NTM regime and maintaining consistency in standards to help firms engage in regional value chain.

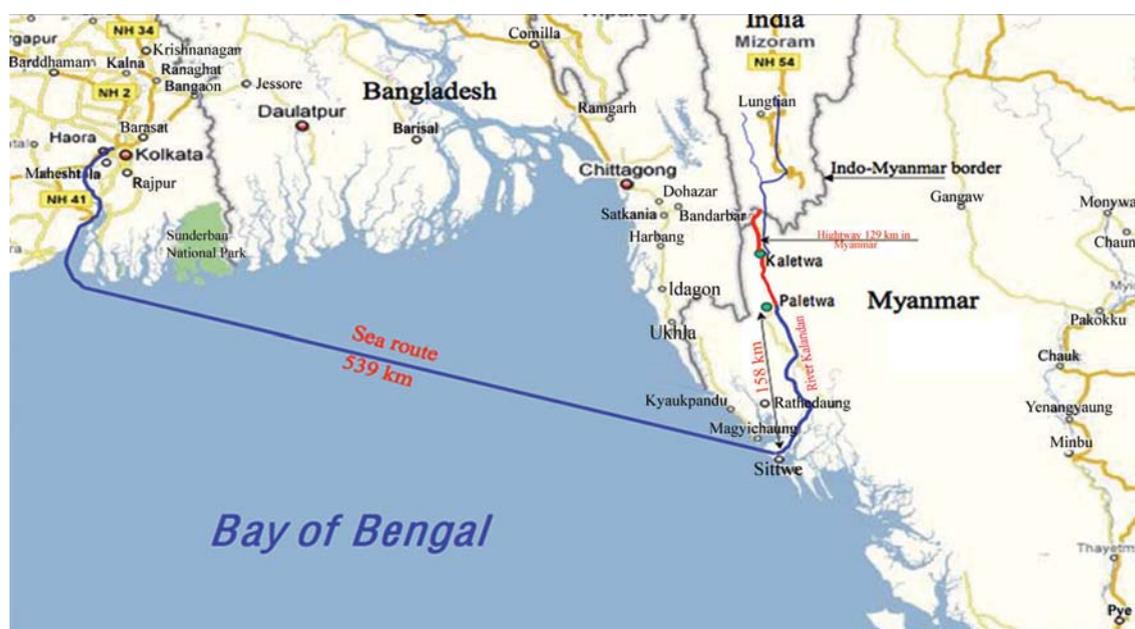
Harmonisation of standards, convergence of testing and certification requirements would help traders navigate complex procedures.

Firms engaging in GVCs/RVCs face huge competition and they require investment to meet standards and the challenges of dynamic market conditions. India should facilitate and strengthen financial institutions to provide financial access for firms to engage in GVCs/RVCs. ASEAN and India shall jointly undertake skill development programmes. India should facilitate FDI in potential RVC sectors. The government should encourage and provide technical assistance to SMEs, particularly in sectors such as automobiles, textiles, chemicals, electrical and electronic components, that have the potential to be a part of GVC through forward and backward linkages. To facilitate RVCs, free flow of investment and movement of skilled labourers across the region is essential.

Connectivity is an enabler to GVCs/RVCs. Given that ASEAN countries are at different stages of development, the degree of participation in production networks also differs widely across countries. Besides several physical connectivity projects which are presently under implementation, India has also announced a line of credit of \$1 billion to promote projects that support physical and digital connectivity between India and ASEAN. A Project Development Fund (PDF) with a corpus of Rs 5 billion to develop manufacturing hubs in CLMV countries has also been announced.

Finally, stronger connectivity across India's Northeastern Region (NER) will build a stronger network of cross-border production chains, particularly with ASEAN. The Indian government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken up huge infrastructure development projects in Northeast India. Stronger production networks between India and ASEAN are, therefore, drivers of the ASEAN-India partnership. ■

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KALADAN PROJECT: INDIA'S STRATEGIC DIPLOMATIC & ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

BY PRATIM RANJAN BOSE *

There is good news on the Kaladan Multi-modal Transport Project nearly a decade after it was launched in 2008. In June 2017, India finally awarded an estimated Rs 1600 crore contract¹ for the 110 km road project from the Paletwa inland river terminal in Myanmar to Zorinpui on the Mizoram-Myanmar border. The road will link landlocked Mizoram to Sittwe port at the Kaladan river mouth in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. Considering the difficult hilly terrain and lack of infrastructure in the region, construction should take a minimum of two years.

The road is part of the three-phase Kaladan project that India is building in Myanmar at its own cost. The project was scheduled to be completed in 2015. India has already completed the redevelopment of the Sittwe port that is now capable of handling 20,000-ton vessels ensuring maritime connectivity to the nearest Indian port of Kolkata. An all weather channel is being created in the Kaladan River from Sittwe to Paletwa, about 158 km upstream for movement of cargo by barges. The inland water terminal at Paletwa along with peripheral facilities is almost ready.

Unlike the upcoming Chinese sea port and SEZ at Kyaukpyu, approximately 40 km south of Sittwe, the India-built infrastructure will be fully owned and operated by Myanmar. The completed port project has already been handed over along with some dredgers and barges for maintenance and operations.

Idle Infrastructure

India has so far invested close to Rs 450-500 crore in Myanmar (estimated at \$120 million at the prevailing exchange in 2008). The total investment so far is significant, considering the additional \$115 million (over Rs 700 crore at current exchange of Rs 64 per USD) invested in building a new road connecting Zorinpui with NH-54 (old number) at Lawngtlai, covering approximately 100 km in southern Mizoram. But this huge investment is idle with not a single ship anchoring at Sittwe ever since the port was completed in early 2017. This is largely due to the missing Paletwa-Zorinpui road link. A good part of the delay can be attributed to bad planning. The plan on road and river transport was

India is also building rail and road connectivity in the northeastern state of Tripura to access the Chittagong Port

revised midway. Some original cost estimates were also unrealistically low. For example, the road component in Myanmar was estimated to cost \$50 million (Rs 320 crore at current exchange); approximately one fifth of the latest tender value. In 2015 India revised the project cost by nearly six times from approximately Rs 536 in 2008 to Rs 2904 crore (a little over \$450 million at current exchange).

There is another reason behind the idling of Sittwe port and the allied river transport infrastructure. Kaladan was conceived by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government in India in 2003 to open alternate connectivity to the country's northeast, which is linked to the rest of the country by a narrow strip of land better known as Chicken's neck or the Siliguri corridor.

Those were the days when Bangladesh was considered a non-cooperating neighbour, denying India transit through its territories, beyond the scope of the Inland Water Trade and Transit Protocol of 1972. The key point is Kaladan was conceived merely as an option to bypass the nearly 1500 km road travel from Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram, to Kolkata. The fact that Sittwe does not have much local demand was not taken into consideration. Neither did India plan any port-based industrial investment, as China was aiming at Kyaukpyu.

Changed Logistics Dynamics

India-Bangladesh relations improved dramatically since 2009, exactly a year after India kicked off the Kaladan project. Bangladesh has already widened the scope of river transport and transit protocol, adding new destinations to the list. The scope of transit will increase once the Bhutan-Bangladesh-India-Nepal sub-regional motor-vehicles agreement is implemented. Rail connectivity between India and Bangladesh is expanding. Rail connectivity between Kolkata and northeast through Bangladesh may be a reality once the Padma Bridge is completed tentatively in 2019. India is also building rail and road connectivity from the northeastern state of Tripura to access the Chittagong Port.

The connectivity to northeast through the Chicken's neck has also increased substantially in the last one-and-a-half decade. The completion of broad-gauge rail connectivity to Agartala, covering the entire length of the region, ensured more efficient goods and passenger movement than ever before. Broad gauge rail entered Bairabi, in Mizoram², in 2016 and will reach Aizawl sooner than later. The Narendra Modi government has also pushed the envelope for highway construction in the region.

Kaladan, therefore, now has to compete with a wider and more efficient set of logistics options – some of which were beyond imagination in the past - for viability.

New Opportunities for Kaladan

But the importance of the Kaladan project should not be undermined, that too in a dynamic global order, where China is creating multiple port options like Gwadar in Pakistan and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar to hedge geopolitical risks. The region is politically unstable. Despite the increasing engagements India Bangladesh relations are not risk-free. The rumblings against the Sheikh Hasina government in Bangladesh can turn into a thunder in no time. It is, therefore, in India's interest to keep multiple connectivity options open for the northeast.

Incidentally, despite the fabled efficiency in project implementation China too has its share of idle investments in





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Myanmar as is evident in the deadlock over the \$3.6 billion Myitsone dam. The oil pipeline from Kyaukpyu to China was completed in 2015, well before the port starts operation.

Moreover, China suffers from a serious image problem. While India is willingly transferring ownership to Myanmar; Beijing is reportedly contesting Naypyidaw's claim for 50 percent stake in Kyaukpyu. Rights groups are vocal against Chinese projects. Though New Delhi is yet to gather its act together on this front, a more skilful approach can help India gain greater social acceptance in Myanmar through the Kaladan project. The excellent camaraderie between Mizos and the Myanmarers is an added advantage.

One of the options would be to convert Kaladan from a mere connectivity project to an economic corridor, stretching all the way to Aizawl. The Kaladan project passes through one of the most underdeveloped areas of Myanmar and, any value creation here may have a substantial socioeconomic impact, on either side of the border – which is in India's long term interest.

India unfortunately, is still in contemplation mode, in this regard. There was a proposal for setting up a SEZ in Sittwe. But no progress was made on the ground. Not

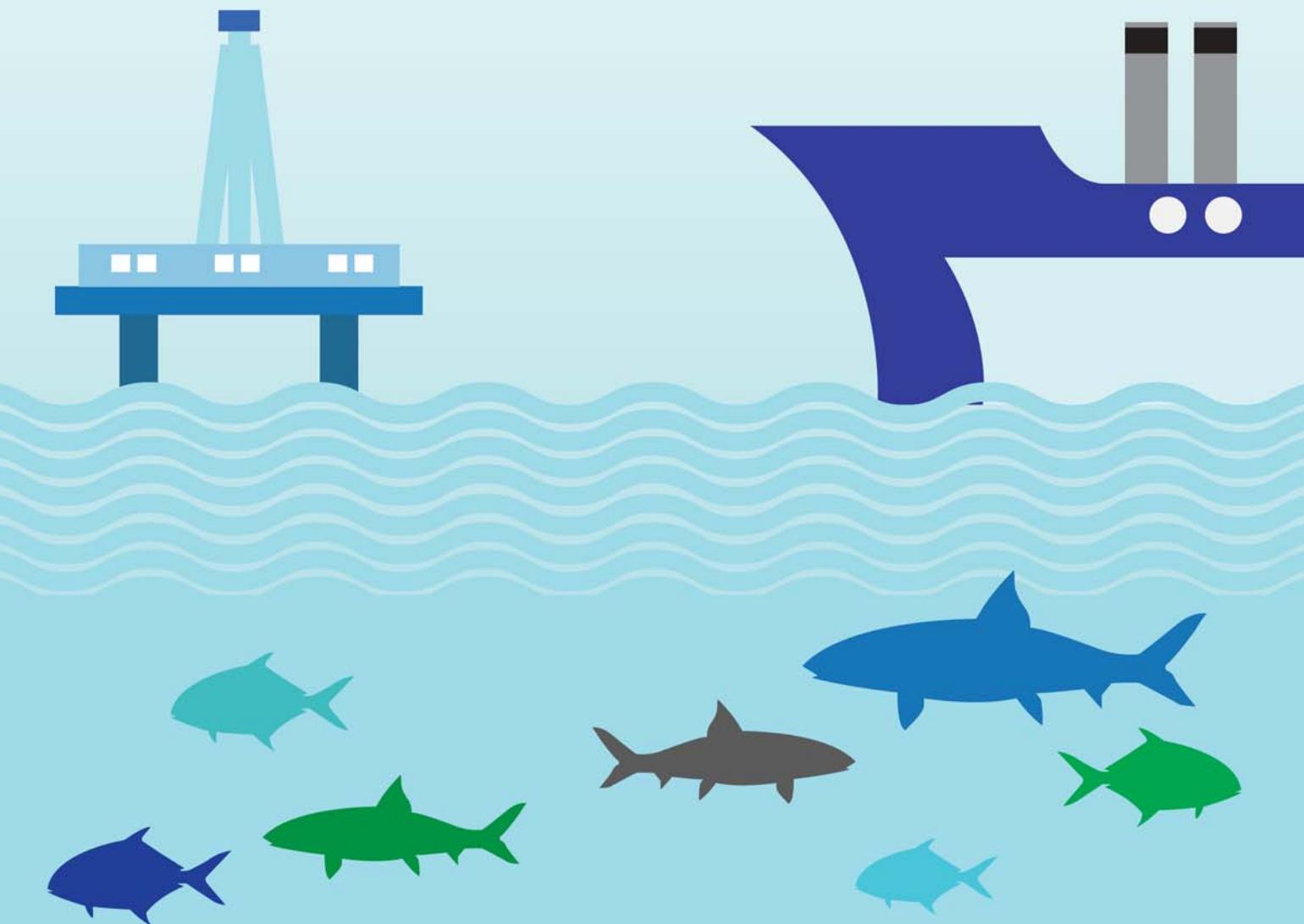
much progress is expected either unless we take a focused approach, involving private enterprise, which is more energetic in tapping opportunities. However, on the brighter side, the government recently rolled out a Rs 6000 crore (close to \$1 billion at the current exchange) national highway widening project from Aizawl to Tuipang in Saiha district at the southern tip of the state, covering a distance of nearly 300 km. This may be construed as a reaffirmation of India's commitment to the Kaladan multimodal project as the cargo from Sittwe will have to take this route. ■

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SPECIAL REPORT

BLUE ECONOMY PROSPECTS FOR INDIA & ASEAN



India's commitment to strengthen its cooperation with the regional partners and build a sustainable ocean economy aligns well with its domestic mega-modernisation projects that will enable the nation to harness the full potential of the Ocean based Blue Economy

Oceans cover three-quarters of the Earth's surface, contain 97 percent of the Earth's water, and represent 99 percent of the living area on the planet. Oceans are said to be the 'last frontiers' of growth and development, but the immense potential that the oceans represent remains to be tapped fully. However, this potential needs to be harnessed in a balanced manner, where the preservation and health of oceans are given their due importance, along with adherence to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal #14 that states "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."

The ocean-based Blue Economy is the next sunrise issue for development experts. Dr Gunter Pauli introduced this concept in the book "The Blue Economy: 10 years, 100 innovations, 100 million jobs". Blue Economy is based on the idea to use locally available resources and employ renewable inputs, for example, "ocean-as-a-resource" that addresses the problems of resource scarcity and enables sustainable development. This marine-based economic development will reduce environmental risks and mitigate ecological challenges. As a result, the optimised and responsible resource utilisation will enable the achievement of balanced socio-economic development.

The Indian Ocean Region is abundant with resources, particularly in the sectors of fisheries, aquaculture, ocean energy, sea-bed mining and minerals, and provides tremendous economic opportunities to develop marine tourism and shipping activities. Among these resources, fisheries and minerals are the most commercially viable industries. Commercial and artisanal fisheries sustain the livelihoods of more than 38 million people worldwide.

In the Indian Ocean, fish production increased drastically from 861,000 ton in 1950 to 11.5 million ton in 2010. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report states that while other world oceans are nearing their fisheries limit, in certain areas, the Indian Ocean's resources have the potential to sustain increased production.

Polymetallic nodules and polymetallic massive sulphides are the two mineral resources of commercial interest to

developers in the Indian Ocean. Typically found at four to five km in water depth, polymetallic nodules are golf to tennis ball-sized nodules containing nickel, cobalt, iron, and manganese that form over millions of years on the sediment of the seafloor. India received exclusive rights for the exploration of polymetallic nodules in 1987, in the Central Indian Ocean basin. Since then, it has explored four million square miles and established two mine sites.

A strong impetus on research, development and innovation in the areas of ocean energy, marine biology and biotechnology must be provided for the nation to achieve significant market shares in these sectors.

It is necessary for India to tap the enormous potential of the ocean based Blue Economy, which will propel the nation into a higher growth trajectory. The development of Blue Economy can serve as a growth catalyst in realising the vision to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2032. Additionally, the Indian Ocean Region is of strategic importance to India's economic growth as the most of the country's oil and gas is imported through the sea. Further, this dependency is expected to rise exponentially by 2025.

The Indian Ocean Region presents tremendous trade potential for the country. The countries in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) exhibited significant dynamism in the past few years as the trade in the region increased by over four times from \$302 billion in 2003 to \$1.2 trillion in 2012. The Sagarmala project, launched by the Ministry of Shipping, is the strategic initiative for port-led development through the extensive use of IT enabled services for modernisation of ports. It tackles the issue of underutilised ports by focussing on port modernisation, efficient evacuation, and coastal economic development. The government has allocated over Rs 3 lakh crore to fund 199 projects under the Sagarmala programme to be implemented in the next three years. Of these identified programmes, projects of more than Rs 1 lakh crore are already under implementation. Moreover, the Union Budget has increased the allocation to the project from Rs 406 crore in 2016-17 to Rs 600 crore in 2017-18, giving further impetus to port-led development.

SPECIAL REPORT

Under the Make in India programme of the Government, shipbuilding industry can benefit from a major thrust. This industry has a high multiplier effect on investment and can accelerate industrial growth along with its large number of associated industries. In December 2014, India had a fleet strength of just over 1,200 ships, which is expected to reach over 1,600 by 2025. A strong push in India's commercial shipbuilding and ship repair sectors, complementing the Sagarmala project of port development have the potential to drive economic transformation.

The Indian Ocean has always enjoyed a place of prominence in global strategy. Many nations have established a presence in the region to ensure their strategic interests. India was very active in the UN Adhoc Committee that was set up on the Indian Ocean and supported the cause of keeping the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace during the Cold War. However, with the re-emergence of piracy issues and growing importance to secure the oceanic ecosystem, India has been pro-actively involved in cooperative arrangements with like-minded neighbouring countries. The 'Trilateral Cooperative in Maritime Security between India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives' is one such example.

The India Maritime Security Strategy published by the Indian Navy articulates country's policy in the Indian Ocean region. It states that in the Indian Ocean region, India is committed to:

- Ensuring a safe, secure and stable Indian Ocean Region;
- Deepening security cooperation, through increased surveillance and monitoring with regional partners;
- Forging a multilateral cooperative maritime security initiative in the Indian Ocean to combat terrorism and piracy;
- Deepening cultural linkages with the people in region; and
- Building Indian Ocean Region as a frontier of sustainable economic development.

However, notwithstanding the above, other compelling issues demand a coordinated approach among stakeholders



in the region in combating the plaguing issues of the rise in narco-terrorism and human trafficking. These need to be tackled by strengthening trans-oceanic partnerships and developing a synchronized strategy for a way forward. In this era of advanced technology, oceans will become new centres of economic activity. Oceans already account for significant trade and commerce in the fields of shipping, offshore oil and gas, fishing, undersea cables, and tourism. Besides these areas, there are other emerging industries such as aquaculture, marine biotechnology, ocean energy and seabed mining that have the potential to create jobs and spur worldwide economic growth.

The Indian Ocean region needs a sustainable and inclusive framework for international partnerships. Countries in the region need to not only coordinate and manage the growing security challenges in the region but also realise the substantial economic potential the Indian Ocean presents. India has significantly upped its development efforts in Seychelles, Mauritius, Africa, and Sri Lanka. Such an approach earmarks a shift from the traditional focus on naval operations and anti-piracy efforts to that of environmental protection, national security, infrastructure creation, industrial capacity building and marine development.

India's commitment to strengthen its cooperation with the regional partners and build a sustainable ocean economy aligns well with its domestic mega-modernisation projects that will enable the nation to harness the full potential of the Ocean based Blue Economy.

This region is home to two great oceans the Indian and the Pacific leading an increasing number of people to refer to it as the Indo-Pacific. In both the Asia-Pacific (which, in the context of ASEAN and India, is seen as co-terminus with the footprint of the East Asia Summit) as well as the wider Indo-Pacific, emerging maritime issues and trends are driving geo-strategic transformation. These include

- (i) the need for a rules based maritime order;
- (ii) increasing cooperation amongst littoral states to develop maritime infrastructure to enhance their ability to exercise greater control over their Exclusive Economic Zones; and
- (iii) efforts to explore the feasibility of development of a seamless chain of maritime security coalitions spanning the region, while simultaneously enhancing bilateral cooperation among states in the maritime domain.

There is today a need by countries of the Asia-Pacific in general, and ASEAN and India in particular to strengthen cooperation to preserve the integrity, inviolability and security of the maritime domain, at a time when ASEAN unity and centrality in the region has come under immense strain due to pressures arising out of the maritime domain. As we know all too well, disputes in the maritime domain do not simply originate from competing claims for sovereignty, they also

Oceans already account for significant trade and commerce in the fields of shipping, offshore oil and gas, fishing, undersea cables, and tourism. Besides these areas, there are other emerging industries such as aquaculture, marine biotechnology, ocean energy and seabed mining that have the potential to create jobs and spur worldwide economic growth.

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involve jousting for access to and control over maritime resources, and the imperative of maintaining freedom of navigation in the open seas, which is a global common.

ASEAN and India are weaving a futuristic partnership with yarns from our shared maritime past. India's two thousand year old links with South East Asia were forged via maritime voyages undertaken by adventurers, kings, merchants, savants, religious men, royal emissaries and others. These connections facilitated the cross-pollination of ideas and art, religion, language and statecraft. Apart from ferrying commodities along the spice, silk and tea routes, cultural, religious and political influences were carried across the waves.

ASEAN is India's 4th largest trading partner, accounting for over 10 percent of our trade. Trade stood at \$65 billion in 2015-16. Keeping in view the vast untapped potential of trade with ASEAN, India is taking steps to augment infrastructure and capacity at all major ports on the eastern sea board. New container and multi cargo terminals are under construction at ports in Kamarajar, Ennore (near Chennai), Visakhapatnam, V.O. Chidambaranar, Tuticorin, Paradip and Kolkata. Partnership with ports located in Myanmar, including Dawei, can make Indian ports important gateways to ASEAN countries. The ongoing Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport project aims at providing connectivity between Indian ports on the eastern seaboard and Sittwe Port in Myanmar, which would promote economic and commercial links with Myanmar, and facilitate transit of goods to and from the northeast of India. The 'Mekong-India Economic Corridor' is conceptualised as a corridor linking our eastern seaboard with Dawei in Myanmar, and via it all the way up to Vietnam.

India has also proposed an ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement which is under negotiation. This Agreement would help improve access to maritime services through greater transparency in maritime regulations, policies and practices of trading partners; facilitating the flow

commercial goods at sea and at ports; and paving the way for establishment of joint ventures in the fields of maritime transportation, shipbuilding and repairs, maritime training, information technology including development of simulators, port facilities and related maritime activities.

A Task Force on Maritime Connectivity is also being constituted to provide an institutional basis to our cooperation in this field. It would be mandated to discuss issues such as ensuring the viability of a Coastal Shipping Network (short sea shipping), development of maritime cargo routes and a coastal shipping service between India and ASEAN countries which holds immense potential; training and capacity building; Mutual Recognition Agreements in shipping and logistic services, etc.

India is seeking a more cooperative and integrated future for the region through overall development of the ocean-based blue economy. A distinct feature of the Blue Economy lies in harnessing of marine resources for economic and social development and environmental sustainability without undermining the conservation and restocking aspects of these finite natural resources. Keeping this in mind, at the 11th East Asia Summit, Prime Minister Modi offered to share India's experience and build partnerships for protection of marine resource and tap the potential of the blue economy.

To take this forward, India would be organising, in partnership with Vietnam, an ASEAN-India Workshop on the Blue Economy in Hanoi in the latter half of 2017. The workshop would seek to identify opportunities and challenges in developing the Blue Economy; build the necessary institutional frameworks to support regional countries in developing the Blue Economy; foster support and commitments from regional countries and intergovernmental organisations in advancing the Blue Economy; and seek to integrate a Blue Economy approach into national and regional development strategies, making it a regional cooperation priority area. ■



ASEAN-INDIA MARITIME COOPERATION

Maritime cooperation in development of ports and shipping lines as well as security is an integral component of India-ASEAN strategic partnership. Both sides are keen on cooperation to safeguard their maritime, shipping and exploration rights in the region. Since the Free Trade Agreement between India and ASEAN on January 1, 2010, ASEAN-India partnership has assumed greater economic depth. In 2012-13, two-way trade between ASEAN and India crossed \$75 billion, with India contributing \$33 billion, and ASEAN \$42 billion. The bilateral trade potential between ASEAN-India is estimated at \$200 billion by 2020.

India's containerised trade with ASEAN countries is growing, but at a slow rate. The cargo produced in India and destined for different locations in Southeast Asia typically moves through the transshipment hub located in Singapore, Tanjung Pelepas and Port Klang. In the containerised cargo

segment, out of world's top 25 ports, seven ports are in ASEAN and only one in India – Jawaharlal Nehru Port. Indian ports have limited number of direct calls with ASEAN ports, except Singapore, Klang and Laem Chabang.

There is a need to build new shipping routes as the existing route through Malacca Strait is heavily congested and also relatively unsafe. As an alternative, economic corridor based multimodal connectivity such as Mekong India Economic Corridor is being promoted, which will connect the Indian coast with the unexplored Southeast Asian coast and beyond, at a shorter time and lower cost. Good ASEAN-India maritime connectivity will also boost production networks and spur global and regional value chains. ASEAN and India have been witnessing various economic corridors. A stronger maritime connectivity between India and ASEAN will enhance connectivity among various economic corridors between the two regions. Therefore, trade facilitation and well-connected

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A stronger maritime connectivity between India and ASEAN will enhance connectivity among various economic corridors between the two regions

ports are critical for building a common market between ASEAN and India.

As economic integration between ASEAN and India facilitates cross-border production networks, ports and shipping in India and ASEAN have to be sufficiently developed to support the infrastructure demand since land transportation between India and ASEAN is yet to take proper shape.

There is a need to connect ports in Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam with Indian ports with regular direct shipping services. Improved maritime connectivity between ASEAN and India would open considerable avenues and opportunities for trade. Competitive costs and operational efficiency of the ports and modern cargo handling equipment need to be introduced to improve trade performance. Efforts must be made to enhance the quality of service and productivity levels. In this regard, greater economic and/or commercial cooperation is desired from those ASEAN countries (e.g. Singapore) that have technological expertise in ports and shipping.

Through their long sustained strategic cooperation, both sides have shown keenness to deepen, widen and secure their economic partnership. Given the high significance and dependence on the Strait of Malacca for trade that connects the growing regions of South Asia and Africa to the economies in the East, ASEAN-India cooperation in maritime security in the region is as critical as development of ports and new shipping lines, or perhaps more so in the light of China's growing assertion in the South China Sea. ■



ASEAN-INDIA COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The first ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, held in Jakarta in 2011 under the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2010-2015), envisaged enhanced cooperation in agriculture and forestry between the two regions with a view to meeting the challenges of food security, exchanging information and technology, creating farmers awareness and interaction, cooperation in agro research and development, promoting agro forestry industries and strengthening human resources development in the sector.

The ministers adopted the Short Term (2011-12) and Medium Term Plan of Action for ASEAN-India Cooperation in Agriculture (2011-2015) and expressed their commitment to deepen their collaboration for

- i) improved agro productivity to meet the challenges of food security as well as better access to global markets;
- ii) promote networking between government authorities, agriculture experts, scientists, agro research institutions of ASEAN member countries and India;

- iii) promote capacity building, technology transfer, and R&D; and
- iv) information sharing to encourage better farm practices and management.

Actions taken in short-term ASEAN-India Cooperation in Agriculture & Forestry

- Instituted ASEAN-India fellowships for higher education in agriculture and allied sciences;
- Conducted Conference of Heads of Agricultural Universities;
- Organised exchange visits of 100 farmers from ASEAN countries and Indian farmers to ASEAN member countries;
- Launched training programmes;
- Conducted workshops on climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies;
- Conducted meeting of Agriculture Ministers of ASEAN and India; and
- Organised ASEAN-India Agri-Expo.

The ASEAN-India half-yearly newsletter on agriculture gave a platform for sharing information on agriculture among the ASEAN Member States and India.

The first issue of the ASEAN-India Newsletter on Agriculture was also released on October 17, 2012 in the Second ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry. In the exchange programme, farmers and officials from ASEAN countries toured various ICAR Institutes, farms and industries. The ASEAN-India half-yearly newsletter on agriculture gave a platform for sharing information on agriculture among the ASEAN member states and India.

The Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) is the host agency of the newsletter. ICAR also organised the following training programmes in India for the scientists from ASEAN countries:

- Training in Advances in Agricultural Equipment for Productivity Enhancement Including Precision Farming, April 23 – May 5, 2012, Bhopal, India;
- Training in Processing and Value Addition of Soy Products and Coarse Cereals, May 7-19, 2012, Bhopal, India;
- Training in Production and Processing Technology for Value Addition of Horticultural Products, April 30-May 12, 2012, Ludhiana, India.

The Workshop on ‘Adaptation/Mitigation Technologies for Climate Change’ was organised from August 23-25, 2012 at the National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC) in New Delhi. Sixteen scientists from eight ASEAN countries participated. India also submitted two concept notes ‘Forestry Management and Climate Change’ and ‘Forests in ASEAN REDD + Region’.

The 15th ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) meeting, held on June 28-29, 2012 in Hanoi, discussed the two concept notes and welcomed cooperation with India on issues related to forests and climate change. The ASEAN Secretariat was requested to convey views and comments of ASOF on the initiatives to India for further development of detailed proposals.

India also organised a conference of heads of agricultural universities and research institutions of ASEAN countries and vice chancellors of Indian agricultural universities and central universities during February 19-20, 2013 at the NASC Complex, New Delhi to identify strategy and to work out the modality of cooperation among the agricultural universities and research institutes in ASEAN and India.

Actions taken in Mid-term ASEAN-India Cooperation in Agriculture & Forestry

- Cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry to improve productivity and meet the challenges of food security, as well as its access to global markets (activities already started under different programmes);
- Promote networking between government authorities, agriculture experts/scientists, agriculture academic institutions of ASEAN member countries and India;
- Promote capacity building, technology transfer and R&D;
- Provide opportunities for ASEAN and Indian farmers to learn and develop more efficient farming practices and management skills through information sharing.

Joint Collaborative Projects

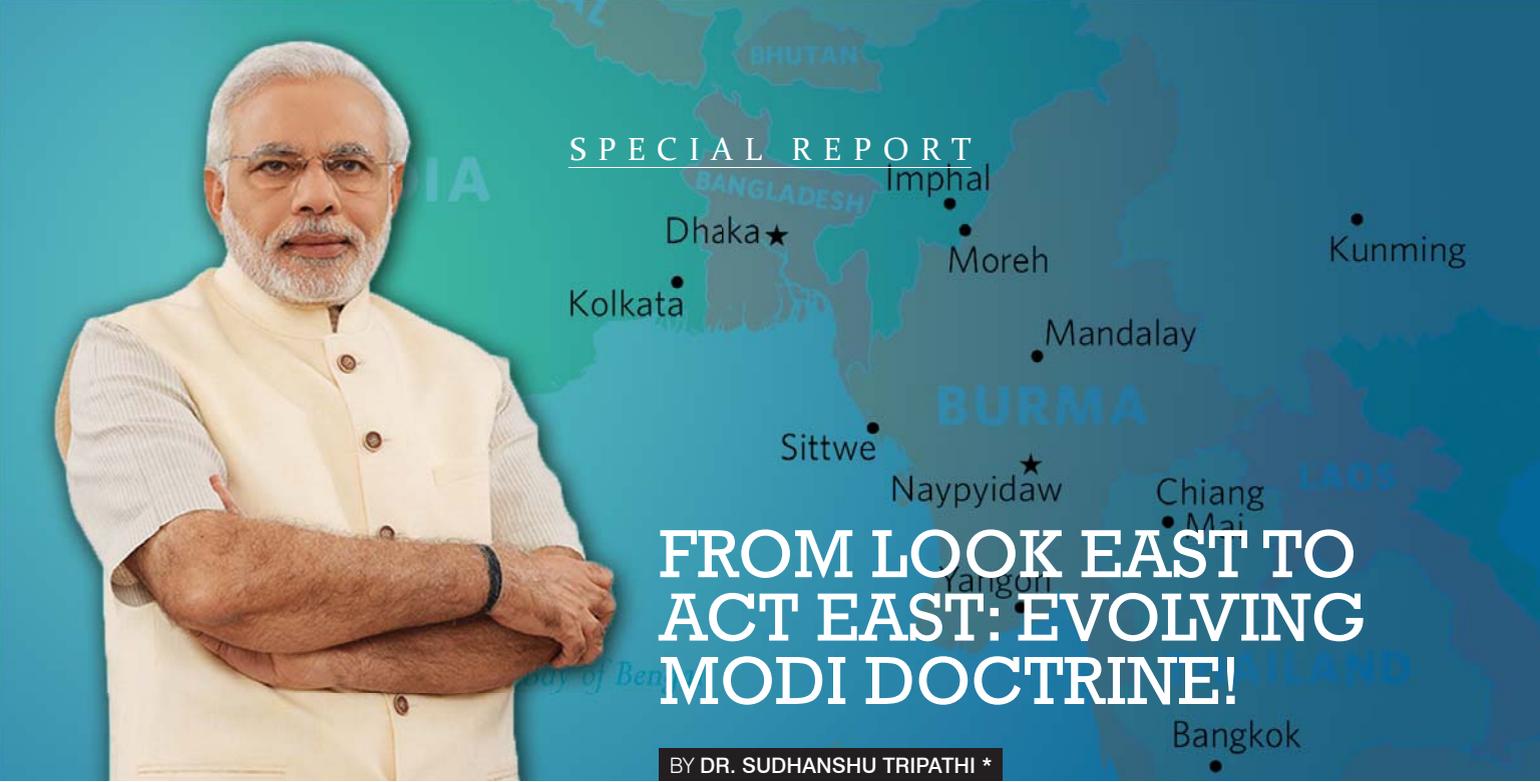
India developed and implemented joint collaborative projects in the following areas:

- Hybrid rice technology;
- Breeding for biotic and abiotic stress tolerance (submergence, drought, salinity, diseases and insect pests);
- Resource conservation technologies;
- Gene and allele mining;
- Quality enhancement of agricultural produce;
- Nutrient and water use efficiency management;
- Climate change and testing;
- Demonstration and exchange of farm implements and machinery;
- Agro-forestry systems;
- Food security, particularly food price volatility;
- Trans-boundary animal diseases.

Apart from these projects, India led training programmes in ‘conventional and molecular techniques in the diagnosis of trans-boundary animal diseases’ and ‘IT applications for agricultural extension’. ■

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SPECIAL REPORT

FROM LOOK EAST TO ACT EAST: EVOLVING MODI DOCTRINE!

BY DR. SUDHANSHU TRIPATHI *

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, soon after coming to power in May 2014, made Act East a cornerstone of his Government's foreign policy. Consequently, India has had a more focused engagement with the Asia Pacific region with several high profile bilateral visits. In addition, developing infrastructure projects in Southeast Asia has been on the Government's radar.

The Narendra Modi government decided to concentrate more on improving the country's relations with ASEAN and the East Asian countries by enlarging the core interests of the region to include the immediate requirements with regard to national as well as regional security. India's Act East policy encompasses security, political and economic interests executed in collaboration with the regional partners.

Consolidating India's maritime strategy requires an ambitious geostrategic and economic goal and an effective mechanism for the economic integration of the wider South Asian region with Southeast Asia. Such economic integration would go far beyond traditional trade agreements and encompass connectivity projects.

Mounting tensions in the Asia-Pacific due to rising Chinese aggression have prompted countries to have better coordination. Bangladesh is a key country in India's Act East policy. Dhaka has realised that it can work as an important partner in India's Act East policy. This is evident in Dhaka's pragmatic approach towards expansion of land, rail, and maritime connectivity.

India's focus on economic integration and greater connectivity with the regional members would be largely beneficial for all the ASEAN member states and vice versa. The bilateral and multilateral steps taken by India for improving relations with Southeast Asia besides South Asian neighbours must be geographically-expanded so that India may assume a prominent role in the region.

India's increasing footprints in the Asia-Pacific region can be complemented by Australia for a legitimate role in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific Region. "Both countries recognise the importance of freedom of navigation and over-flight, unimpeded lawful commerce, as well as resolving maritime disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS."

India's Indo-Pacific role is clear enough, especially after Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan in September 2014. A stronger maritime partnership is envisaged as both nations are committed to increasing their maritime interaction through Malabar exercises.

The net effect of these measures for stability in the IOR is a function not just of power and strategy, but that of evolving a culture of self-confidence and benign assertion on the high seas. Obviously, India is also focussing on its friendly strategic relations with all the littoral states in the region besides major powers.

Overall, India's outreach to the East has witnessed a transformation. India is willing to look at new partners based on strategic and economic priorities. What India needs to give greater attention to are FTAs, a part of Phase II of India's Look East policy. "Apart from dealing with its external interlocutors,

India will also need to take all domestic stakeholders on board for ensuring that the FTAs go ahead and domestic infrastructure is enhanced, especially in the northeast." Thus the Act East policy has a very strong domestic component yet it is so designed that it can ensure peace and progress of the entire East. ■

* The writer is Professor, Political Science at Rajarshi Tandon Open University, Allahabad (U.P.)



ASEAN-INDIA COLLABORATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY: EVIDENCE AND PROSPECTS

BY ALEXANDER DEGELSEGGER-MÁRQUEZ *

The intellectual and commercial ties to the Indian subcontinent are among the oldest Southeast Asia has. This fact alone would be reason enough to put a special focus on ASEAN-India science and technology (S&T) relations. However, there are additional reasons calling for a consideration of ASEAN-India S&T relations. Both ASEAN and India can be classified as emerging economies, which feature strong GDP growth rates and increasing investment in research and development. Both are increasingly important markets with a growing number of middle-income households. Both regions face global challenges related to infectious diseases, climate change or biodiversity. Maybe we can even compare the diversity of the Indian subcontinent (in terms of economic performance, S&T performance, innovation systems, etc.) with the diversity between ASEAN member states. There are, thus, plenty of good reasons to have a closer look at ASEAN-India ties in S&T.

The Policy Background

In addition to ASEAN's 50th anniversary, the year 2017 also marks the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India dialogue

partnership, 15 years of summit level interaction and five years of strategic partnership. ASEAN-India cooperation has been expanded over the years to cover an increasing number of topics. These now include science and technology, but also human resource development, people-to-people contacts, health and pharmaceuticals, transport and infrastructure, small and medium enterprises, tourism, information and communication technology, agriculture, food security, climate change, energy and regional integration. The ASEAN-India Fund (AIF) and the ASEAN-India Green Fund are the instruments that fund activities in these areas.

The policy framework for ASEAN-India S&T cooperation started in 1996 with the establishment of the ASEAN India S&T Working Group (AIWGST). In the last two decades, AIWGST has focused, among other things, on health, ICTs, engineering, marine and other biotechnology, environmental management, climate change, food and agriculture, alternative energy, biodiversity, space technology and framework conditions like intellectual property.

In 2016, the AIWGST met for the 11th time in Lao PDR. Meetings usually take place back to back with one of the two

According to a recent study by the SEA-EU-NET project, the ASEAN region has increased its annual publication output from around 24,000 records in 2004 to over 80,000 in 2014. India had an output of around 35,000 in 2004 and of over 125,000 in 2014.

annual ASEAN Committee of S&T (COST) sessions or the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on S&T (AMMST).

AIWGST is also the forum for top-down decision-making on joint ASEAN-India activities in S&T. These activities were initially supported through the AIF. In 2008, however, India established the ASEAN-India S&T Development Fund (AISTDF), which as of 2016-2017 has a total budget of \$5 million (with around \$700,000 already invested) and supports the development and implementation of joint R&D projects. A Call for Proposals was launched jointly by India and ASEAN. It specifies the rules and procedures to access AISTDF funding. Thematically, all areas except social sciences and humanities are eligible. Researchers are invited to consider the priority areas of ASEAN's Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation in particular.

The funding for AISTDF comes from Indian sources (shared by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Science & Technology). While this is still the usual mode of cooperation between ASEAN and its dialogue partners, there are some recent programmes involving co-funding from ASEAN member states; e.g. the Southeast Asia-EU Joint Funding Scheme, the e-ASIA Joint Research Programme between ASEAN and Japan and the regional activities of the UK Newton Fund.

ASEAN's own regional-level resources for S&T are limited. The ASEAN Science Fund, which was recently transformed into the ASEAN Science, Technology and

Innovation Fund (ASTIF) is a trust fund with a volume of \$10 million. Earnings from interests on the fund can be used for ASEAN-level projects. In the past, these were often scoping activities, capacity building measures and feasibility studies. Discussions are ongoing on the expansion of the Trust Fund or the rules of its utilisation.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of research and development spending occurs at the level of ASEAN member states. R&D investments as a share of GDP vary between 0.1 percent in countries like the Philippines or Indonesia, 0.5 percent in Thailand and 1.1 percent in Malaysia to 2 percent in Singapore. These GERD/GDP shares saw significant increases above

all in Malaysia and Singapore. The strong growth in GDP, however, meant that monetary inputs into R&D increased in all ASEAN member states. In India, GERD/GDP has increased continuously over the last two decades, but remains slightly below 1 percent (World Bank 2017). The increases in R&D inputs are reflected in R&D outputs.

Knowledge Outputs

Knowledge outputs in both ASEAN and India are much more visible nowadays than they were 10 years ago. One of the main indicators for knowledge outputs is the number of journal publications indexed in the major publication databases.

According to a recent study by the SEA-EU-NET project, the ASEAN region has increased its annual publication output from around 24,000 records in 2004 to over 80,000 in 2014. India had an output of around 35,000 in 2004 and of over 125,000 in 2014. Both have thus almost quadrupled their indexed journal publication output over the past decade.

Patterns of continuous growth are also visible in patent applications with inventors or applicants from Southeast Asia or India. Within this context of growing knowledge outputs in both regions, we can now have a more detailed look at ASEAN-India S&T cooperation from a bottom-up perspective.

The Bottom-up Perspective on S&T Cooperation

The study mentioned above also showed that researchers based in Southeast Asia, on the one hand and India on the other co-authored a total of 10,981 publications between 2004 and 2014. This puts India in the sixth place of ASEAN's co-publication partner regions. The most important co-publication partner region is the EU followed by the US, China, Japan and Australia. The growth in ASEAN-India co-publications between 2004 and 2014 was impressive (320 co-publications in 2004 vs. over 2,000 in 2014). It means that India is now a more important partner than Canada.

Indian co-authors are involved in two percent of the publications by ASEAN-based authors. This share increased

SPECIAL REPORT

from 1.3 percent in 2004 to 2.5 percent in 2014. In the case of individual ASEAN member states, the share is also higher. India-based authors are involved in three percent of publications of Malaysia-based authors, for instance.

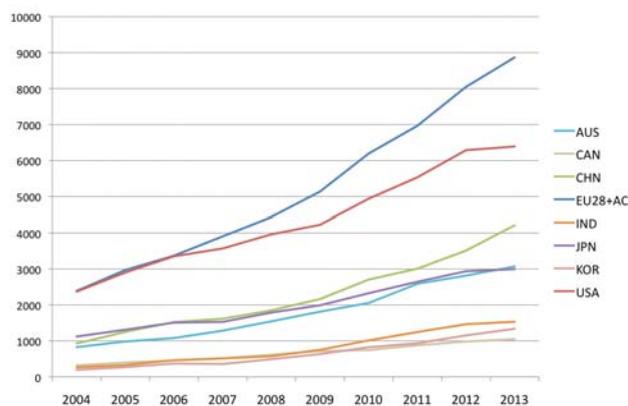


Figure 1: ASEAN's co-publication partner regions, 2004-2014
Source: www.sea-eu.net using Scopus and Web of Science data

Thematically, the co-publications of ASEAN with important partners like the EU, the USA or Australia are strongest in clinical medicine followed by biomedical research and ICTs. In the case of India, the highest number of co-publications is recorded in clinical medicine as well. This is followed, however, by chemistry and enabling & strategic technologies. In conjunction with the top down priorities mentioned above, this information on bottom-up priorities is important to keep in mind when assessing current ASEAN-India S&T cooperation.

While the growth in collaborative output between the two regions is encouraging, ASEAN's collaboration with Australia indicates that there is room for growth. Australia has around three-quarters the annual publication output of India. It is a country with English as an official language and of similar distance to ASEAN as India. Co-authors from ASEAN and Australia have produced a total of over 24,000



co-publications between 2004 and 2014 (4.3% of ASEAN output). Apart from its mature science base, another reason for the strong ASEAN-Australia co-publication relations might be the high number of ASEAN students or researchers spending time in 'down under'. ASEAN-India co-authorship has the potential to reach similar levels in the near future.

To realise the potential, research on science cooperation suggests that personal ties between the researchers in the two regions are crucial. Academic mobility between ASEAN and India is growing, but not as established as with the US or the EU. It is this mobility that gives room for the creation of lasting personal networks triggering continued collaboration. The joint projects supported by the ASEAN-India S&T Development Fund are another step towards intensifying collaborative knowledge production. These projects typically also include short-term mobility facilitating personal exchange. Joint degree programmes like the ones between NUS/Singapore and the IITs as well as internship schemes such as those offered to Indian students by NTU/Singapore are other pieces in the puzzle.

Future ASEAN-India S&T relations will also benefit from growing private sector investments in R&D (with the internationalisation of R&D intensive companies in both regions) and the young and increasingly well-educated human resource base. For the next decades of ASEAN's development path, regional level policy-making in science, technology and innovation will be crucial. The Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) agenda is now under the pillar of the ASEAN Economic Community, which brings it closer to the regional economic integration process. The hope is that regional-level STI policy-making will help to make the most out of the potential of ASEAN-India S&T relations (and others) for the benefit of all ASEAN member states. ■

**Alexander Degelsegger is a researcher at the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) in Vienna, Austria. For the last eight years, he has participated in and then led the ASEAN-focused research policy analysis work of the EU Research Framework Programme 7 project 'SEA-EU-NET'. He participated in similar projects with a focus on India. Alexander was the science and technology key expert of the Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument, READI (2011-2015). He can be reached at degelsegger@zsi.at*

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INTERVIEW WITH PROF. SUNAINA SINGH VICE CHANCELLOR NALANDA UNIVERSITY, INDIA



Prof Sunaina Singh
Vice Chancellor, Nalanda University

How did the idea of re-establishing Nalanda University come into being?

Eight hundred years after the destruction of ancient Nalanda University, former President of India Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, while addressing the Bihar State Legislative Assembly, in March 2006, stressed on the need for reviving the renowned ancient Nalanda University by re-establishing it. The state Government of Bihar under the leadership of Shri Nitish Kumar ji endorsed and help build the narrative of Nalanda.

Nalanda is perhaps the first exclusively Residential International University in the World. A globally renowned Centre of learning where scholars from across Asia and beyond came in quest to quench their thirst of knowledge to Nalanda University. It has been a seat of knowledge for over eight centuries in the ancient kingdom of Magadha right from the 5th century to the 12 century until it was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji. Nalanda, at its peak had 2,000 Teachers and 10,000 Students from all over Asia and central Asia, who lived and studied at the University.

The present Government through its proactive Act East Policy is dedicated to the task of rebuilding this renowned historical institution. Through the affirmative initiatives by our visionary Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj ji, Nalanda is foreseen as a symbol of Asian Renaissance and resurgence.

How is Nalanda envisioned as an International University?

Since the hallmark of the ancient Nalanda was its internationalism, the Government of India decided to share this proposal with the leaders of the East Asia Summit ('EAS'). The sixteen members States of the East Asia Summit at the Cebu Summit in Philippines in January 2007 and later at

the fourth Summit in October 2009, at Thailand, Hua Hin, the Member States supported and welcomed the revival of Nalanda University and it's establishment as Asian knowledge hub and encouraged regional networking and collaboration between the University and existing centers of excellence in East Asia. Till date, sixteen countries have signed MoU with Indian Government for supporting the establishment of Nalanda University.

The University came into being through special Act of Indian parliament as "Nalanda University Act, 2010", establishing Nalanda as an international institution for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical and spiritual studies. The University shall now endeavor to build its academic framework in line with international pedagogy while envisioning it as a Centre that aims to inculcate Human Values and Ethics through Indian Knowledge systems and Asian wisdom.

Why is the Asian interconnection important for Nalanda University?

The ancient Nalanda University attracted scholars and students from near and far, some travelling all the way from Tibet, China, Korea and Central Asia in quest of ancient Indian knowledge and wisdom. It was a Centre of excellence not only for the entire spectrum of Indian Knowledge Systems, including Vedic studies, Buddhism, philosophy, Medicine and Mathematics, Astronomy and Logic, Governance and Ethics, "Shastr" and "Shastra". After teaching thousands of students for centuries, Nalanda ceased to exist just as universities were opening up in Bologna, Paris and Oxford at the beginning of the second millennium CE, thus giving way to a paradigm shift in education from Asia to West.

Asia is today once again synonymous with a dynamic entrepreneurial and innovative culture, based on knowledge

and enterprise. Asian countries are coming together to forge a continent based on the foundations of peace and harmony. These countries have started believing that Asia needs to lead the world once again; and for this the knowledge route needs to be strengthened. This can happen only if there are strong opportunities for knowledge sharing, cultural and civilizational dialogues, collaborations and linkages. The External Affairs Ministry and Madam Minister Sushma Swaraj ji's resolute and indomitable commitment to initiating cultural and civilizational dialogue and developing inter and intra-Asian linkages gives fillip to my institution, Nalanda to act as the knowledge bridge.

The coming together of 17 countries underscores the commitment to these values through rebuilding Nalanda as a global seat of knowledge.

How does the University intend to position itself to bridge the ties with ASEAN countries?

Most of the member states of ASEAN have signed agreement for supporting the establishment of Nalanda University. Today, with the new leadership, the University now aspires to draw upon, the best resources of world particularly of Asia and ASEAN, and produce new knowledge trail and valuable insights on making the world a better habitable place. ASEAN and India are rich repositories of shared histories of many centuries, which intersect and connect, Nalanda University is well placed through its mandate to facilitate cutting edge research and produce new knowledge.

The University aims to further recover centuries old cultural and civilizational heritage, thereby supporting new modes of scholarship and intellectual inquiry. Nalanda will be a locus of histories related to ancient cultural and religious linkages as well as human values and ethics. The Ministry of External Affairs supports the possibility of establishing a "Common Archival Resource Center" at Nalanda University. This resource center will aim to enable and empower the inter-Asian interactions through its rich knowledge repositories. The University will provide platform for cross cultural and transnational sharing of knowledge amongst the scholars

coming from ASEAN countries, thus helping strengthen ties with the Asian community.

What are your future plans for making Nalanda University a truly Global Research-based University.

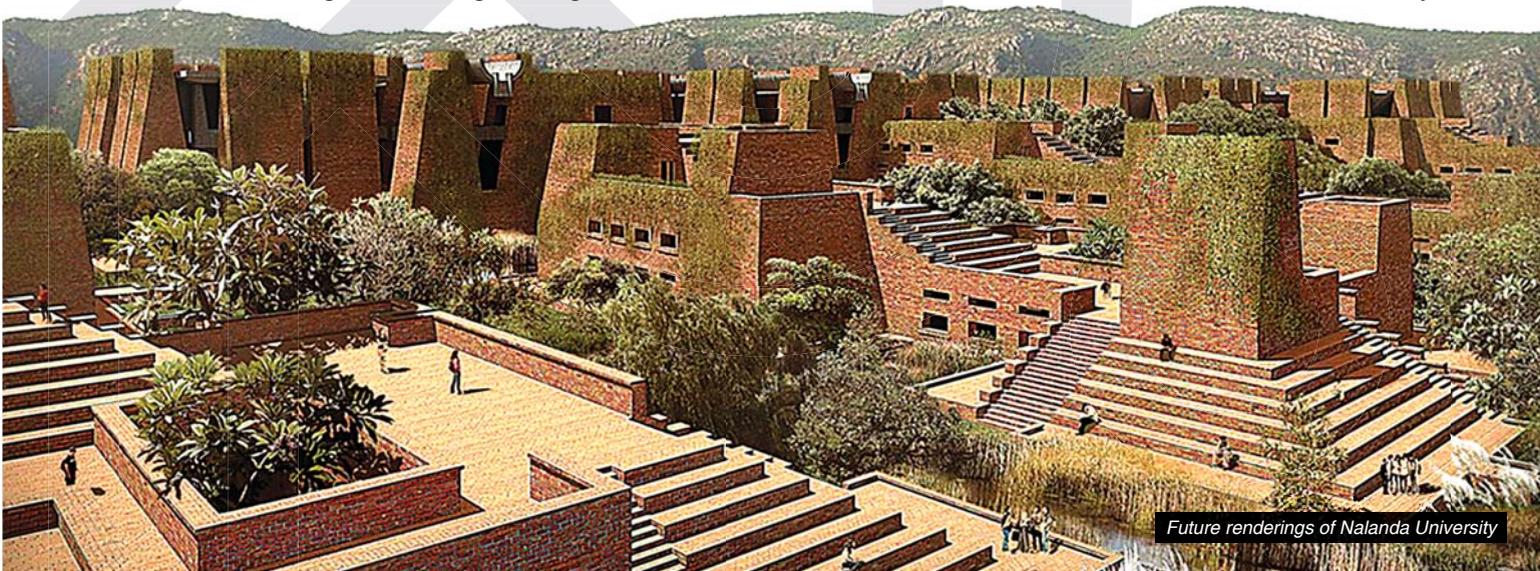
I have already articulated my plan and vision while answering your previous questions, but still to sum up: A university is where wise, knowledgeable people offer their intellectual hospitality, their wealth of learning to others, and earn in return the knowledge from the other worlds, this is the fundamental telos of knowledge. The term Nalanda is a synthesis of NA+Alam+Da meaning giver of inexhaustible knowledge or Vidya-Dana. For centuries Nalanda was a beacon which attracted scholars from all over Asia as a patron of knowledge and became a symbol of intra-Asia wisdom and interaction. It shall now embark on a similar journey, on an expanded scale with Asia Pacific and Ocean countries joining in. If the world's future lies in achieving a multipolar system, it is necessary that an institution such as Nalanda charts the course of new knowledge system for the 21st century.

Adapting Khadi for its Academic Regalia, NU became the only University in India to do this. What is the idea behind this move? Can it encourage Khadi trade in South East Asia?

Khadi has been India's signature fabric for centuries. Khadi stands for our heritage, ethnicity and self-reliance. Its use gives us a sense of pride and identity. Nalanda will now further promote not just Khadi but Indian dress doing away with the colonial legacy of gown. Indian dress is a marker of our glorious traditions, Nalanda as an ancient legendary Indian institution is well placed to promote our national attire.

Of course use of Khadi by students at NU will showcase India to the outside world. The international students may further spread its use, as brand ambassadors of not just the University but India, in their respective countries.

Prof. Sunaina Singh
Vice Chancellor
Nalanda University



Future renderings of Nalanda University



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INDIA ASEAN DEFENCE COOPERATION AND FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

BY MAJOR GENERAL P K CHAKRAVORTY *

India has strengthened her relations with ASEAN ever since she became a Sectoral Partner in 1992. Relations got upgraded to a Dialogue Partnership in 1996 and a summit level partnership in 2002. Apart from ASEAN, India is also an active participant in several regional forums such as the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Minister's Meeting + (ADMM+) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). In 2012, India and ASEAN completed 20 years of partnership. A commemorative summit was held on December 20-21, 2012 in New Delhi. Leaders of all the ten ASEAN countries attended this summit. The summit resulted in a Strategic Partnership between India and ASEAN. During the summit, the leaders also adopted the ASEAN India Vision Statement, which charts the future of ASEAN-India cooperation. India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of India's foreign policy and an important pillar of our Act East policy.

Defence Cooperation

The 20th anniversary of the ASEAN-India dialogue relationship elevated the relationship to a Strategic Partnership, encompassing political, security, economic, socio-cultural and development cooperation. Today smart power has gained prominence and India and the ASEAN have both realised the same. It is pertinent to note that for a long time, ASEAN's defence cooperation was largely the purview of one or two states in the traditional area of military cooperation. This aspect of sectoral cooperation within ASEAN increasingly came to be referred to as defence diplomacy. It essentially comprised the following:

- Contacts between senior military and civilian officials dealing with defence;
- Defence Attachés playing their traditional role in various countries;
- Bilateral agreements pertaining to defence cooperation;
- Training of personnel; ship visits and visits by Army and

- Air Force personnel between member countries;
- Exchange of military intelligence;
- Provision of military equipment to other countries;
- Assistance of military forces providing disaster relief;
- Bilateral and multilateral patrolling of common areas such as the Straits of Malacca and the Gulf of Thailand;
- Bilateral and multilateral training exercises (ASEAN member states were involved in military exercises with the United States, Britain, Australia and China).

As part of the defence diplomacy, ASEAN also started focusing on security issues. This began with the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia, the formation of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and now ADMM+ 8.

By 2011, ASEAN had evolved a defence concept, which had the following issues:

- Collaboration of defence industry to manufacture defence equipment;
- Capability development in the field of Human Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to deal with natural disasters effectively;
- Finding pragmatic solutions to the problems of the South China Sea. This remains a difficult area primarily due to Chinese intransigence.

As regards to defence cooperation with India, initially it was only bilateral and primarily involved Indonesia and Vietnam. With the introduction of the Look East policy, India came to be viewed as a useful and important defence partner.

ASEAN member states were involved in various India initiated military exercises which included the following:

- Exercise Milan; a biennial gathering of friendly naval forces at Port Blair, India;
- Exercise Malabar; a multilateral exercise held annually;
- The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

Apart from this, there has been bilateral training with Singapore, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam. The agreement with Indonesia in 2001 has seen joint cooperation with all the three services.

Fight against Terrorism

During the 13th ASEAN Summit held in Kuala Lumpur on November 21, 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi sought the backing of ASEAN nations for the adoption of a global convention on terrorism to step up the fight against global terror.

This cooperation can be seen in the India-Myanmar relationship and a dialogue has already begun for the joint



Former Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and visiting counterpart, Vietnamese Minister for National Defence General Phung Quang Thanh signing a MoU on defence cooperation.

fight against terrorism. Since the National League for Democracy came to power in Myanmar, the government of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has taken initiatives to bring the various groups in the country to terms with each other along with efforts to make greater headway for the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. India has a common border with Myanmar and cooperation with the latter has enabled India to deal effectively with terrorist groups operating in the northeast, thus improving the situation along this border.

To counter terrorism, the most important aspect is to share intelligence. Intelligence sharing would enable India and ASEAN to coordinate their operations and decimate terrorism. The next issue pertains to financial support. Funds are the terrorist's oxygen. India and ASEAN can jointly share data regarding terrorist funding and take steps to curtail finances to terrorist organisations. The next aspect pertains to training in counter terrorist operations. India has training institutions, which can train personnel of the member states on this critical subject.

India and ASEAN have been Strategic Partners since 2012. Defence cooperation has improved with members of ASEAN over the years. A unified approach by India and ASEAN members will help in reducing terrorism. ■

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RENEWABLE ENERGY

At the 6th ASEAN-India Summit on November 21, 2007 in Singapore, India had announced the setting up of an ASEAN-India Green Fund with an initial contribution of \$5 million to support collaboration activities relating to the environment and climate change. Some of the areas identified for collaboration under the fund are climate change, energy efficiency, clean technologies, renewable energy, biodiversity conservation and environmental education. Projects worth \$1.97 million covered under this fund are currently at the implementation stage.

India has been cooperating with ASEAN by way of implementation of various projects in the fields of agriculture, science & technology, space, environment & climate change, human resource development, capacity building, new and renewable energy, tourism, people-to-people contacts and connectivity.

In 2012, the Indian Government hosted a two-day workshop for renewable energy experts and policy planners from ASEAN member countries and India, where they shared their experiences, learning, best practices in renewable energy R&D, promotion and production, and technological strengths of their institutes to forge a collaboration.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the workshop, the then Secretary of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Sources, Gireesh Pradhan said that ASEAN and India have completed 20 years of partnership. As a full Dialogue Partner for about two decades and also as a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum, India seeks larger cooperation with ASEAN member countries in the renewable energy area. “The Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security of 2007 has already laid the foundation for ASEAN-India cooperation in renewable energy,” he said. At the workshop, foreign

India accounted for four percent of global investment in clean technology and ranked sixth among the world's 20 leading economies in attracting funds to build clean energy infrastructure

investors were encouraged to set up renewable power projects on 'Build Own Operate' basis with 100 percent Foreign Direct Investment.

Later, the meeting of the ministers of renewable energy of ASEAN countries and India, discussed the policy framework for the promotion of renewable energy in the member countries and India. The focus was on cooperation in renewable energy R&D, financing, technology transfer and resource assessment.

In the years since India's renewable energy generation has leapfrogged. From installed renewable power generation of 3475 MW, or mere 2 percent of total power generation, in April 2002, renewable energy generation in India as of June 2017 stood at 57.472 GW. In the past three years alone the renewable power share has moved from about 15 percent of the total installed capacity in 2014 to 18 percent in 2017. Power generation from solar and wind has trebled in the last three years from 3.4 GW in 2014-15 to 11 GW in 2016-17. In fact, in the year 2016-17, more power addition was made through renewable sources of solar and wind than conventional energy.

India plans to achieve a 175 GW addition by 2022, making it the largest renewable energy expansion plan. The core drivers for the development and deployment of new and renewable energy in India have been energy security, electricity shortages, energy access and climate change. From 12.5 percent of the total installed power generation capacity in 2012 to 18 percent in 2017, India's renewable energy generation has made very significant strides. The period has also seen a marked decline in the cost of renewable energy production and distribution.

Clean Technology

Clean technology mainly includes recycling, renewable energy (wind power, solar power, biomass, hydropower, biofuels), and appliances that are more energy-efficient. It is used to generate electricity and fuels that minimise

environmental pollution. India accounted for four percent of global investment in clean technology and ranked sixth among the world's 20 leading economies in attracting funds to build clean energy infrastructure. Its clean technology investments crossed \$10.2 billion in 2011, some 52 percent higher than the \$6.8 billion invested in 2010. This was the highest growth figure of any significant economy in the world. India's clean energy sector, half of which consists of wind energy, grew the second fastest in the past year.

Today, China and India have surpassed the United States to become the two most attractive countries for renewable energy investment, according to a report by the UK accountancy firm Ernst & Young. From a policy standpoint, there is a genuine push towards clean energy, across wind, solar, hydro and biogas. There is opportunity across the entire supply chain, not just on the generation front. The immediate prospect lies in addressing the challenge in the transmission and distribution losses, estimated to be close to 30 percent due to sub-standard grid infrastructure and pilferage. Energy efficiency is another sector that holds tremendous potential. Also, the fact that all large consulting firms have set up sustainable building or infrastructure business units indicates that they see Indian clean tech as an engine of growth.

Four ASEAN member countries, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Myanmar, already have bilateral agreements with India to collaborate in research and development in the field of renewable energy through appropriate technology transfer, setting up technical demonstration projects, capacity building, exchange of scientific and technological information and data, joint research and promotion of investments. ■

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EXPLORING NEW AVENUES OF INVESTMENT IN ASEAN

BY SURBHI ARORA

Investment in any country across any sector in ASEAN provides access to the region's flourishing middle-class market, which is expected to touch 400 million by 2020. This offers huge potential on the supply side. Investors are also positioned to access other, mostly developed nations with whom ASEAN has signed FTAs

India's position at the head of the Indian Ocean, astride the East-West trade route is an asset for the country. Presently, India's strategic influence stretches to both the entry points into the Indian Ocean, from the Straits of Hormuz in the West to the Straits of Malacca in the East. India's foreign trade is mostly seaborne. The country has to patrol a 200 km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) besides protecting its coastline and sea lines of communications.

India is among the pre-eminent players in the Indian Ocean Region and thus trade with the Southeast Asian countries assumes great importance in the country's economic strategy. There is much scope for expansion and deepening the cooperative agenda, thus synergising the economies of India and ASEAN.

India announced its Look East (which later evolved into the Act East) policy in 1991 to increase its engagement with East Asian countries. In 1992, it became a Sectoral Partner of the Association of ASEAN. India became a Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1995 and a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996. India and ASEAN signed a Framework Agreement – the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) – on October 8, 2003 with a view to providing an institutional framework that would enable economic cooperation to come into effect. Negotiations on a trade in goods agreement between India and ASEAN were started in March 2004. The negotiations continued for six years and finally the India ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AIFTA) was signed on

August 13, 2009 during a meeting of ASEAN finance ministers in Bangkok. The agreement, which only covers trade in goods between India and the ASEAN members, came into effect on January 1, 2010 in the case of Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

The main exports from India to the ASEAN region include

meat, edible vegetables and fruit, cereals, cotton, tobacco, mineral fuels, salt, sulphur, organic chemicals, pharmaceutical products, iron and steel, copper, electrical and electronic equipment, and machinery. The main imports by India from the ASEAN region include mineral fuels, animal and vegetable fats, chemicals, pharmaceutical products, rubber products, wood products, iron and steel, wearing apparel, electrical and electronic equipment, machinery, ships, boats and floating structures, optical and photographic equipment, and musical instruments.

Though ASEAN is the fourth largest trading partner for India and India is seventh largest trading partner to the ASEAN countries, there is far more trading potential between

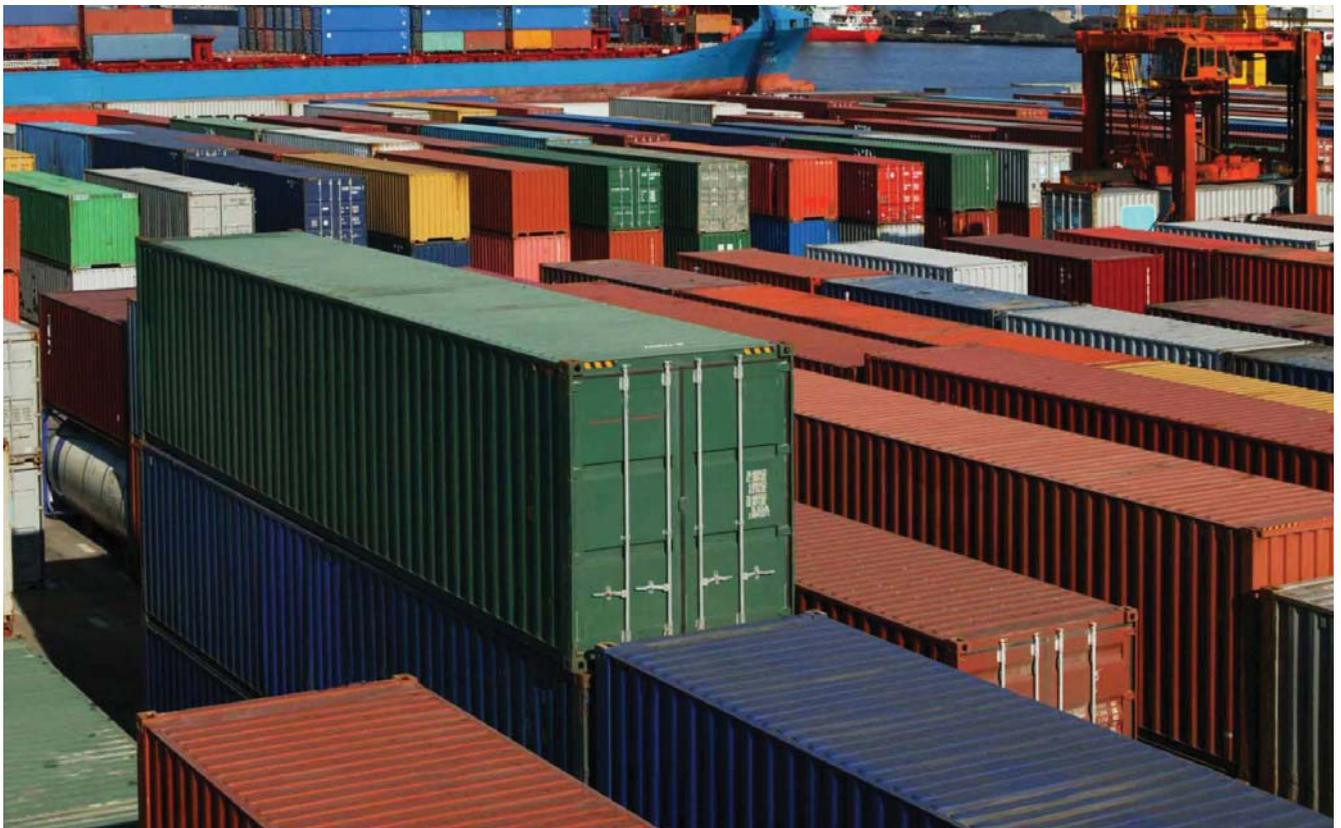


India and the ASEAN countries. Connectivity is a key factor in boosting the partnership between the two regions. The Government is planning massive infrastructural development in the northeast states as the region is extremely important for Indo-ASEAN connectivity.

The Southeast Asian region has been receiving massive amounts of investments from abroad. Indian businesses have often been found to look either inward, or towards the West, while remaining sceptical when it comes to investments in its immediate neighbourhood. ASEAN countries have received \$1,252 billion in FDI between 2003 and 2016. Despite being an emerging economy in Asia, India accounted for merely three percent of ASEAN's total FDI from 2003 to 2016, and two percent of that of the CLMV region.

Indian businesses should take up the huge opportunity that exists only a few hundred miles away, as other countries continue to establish their footprint in those regions. Of the top ten investors in ASEAN, seven are developed countries, constituting almost 55 percent that are proactively participating in the growth story of this regional trade bloc. China, ranking after the US and Japan, had a 10 percent share.

The ASEAN-India Free Trade Area has been completed with the entering into force of the ASEAN India Agreements on Trade in Service and Investments on July 1, 2015



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Mechanisms must be created to expose Indian businesses to the success stories involved in investing in ASEAN, including in the emerging CLMV.

Investment in any country across any sector in ASEAN provides access to the region's flourishing middle-class market, which is expected to touch 400 million by 2020. This offers huge potential on the supply side. Investors are also positioned to access other, mostly developed nations with whom ASEAN has signed FTAs, such as Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan and South Korea. Indian businesses investing in Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, by virtue of these countries carrying a 'Least Developed Country' status, stand to benefit from the most favourable regime available under the European Union's (EU) 'Everything but Arms' scheme, which provides duty-free and quota-free access to the EU for the export of all commodities, except arms and ammunition.

Emerging economies like CLMV in the ASEAN are substantially lower on base salaries than India, and thus these countries provide the potential for labour-cost competitiveness. If we see the readymade garments industry, India is being left behind in its major markets by countries like Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam. Of the top ten exporters of readymade garments to the US, three belong to the ASEAN countries. Vietnam has a 10 percent share in this \$104 billion market, as compared to India's six percent. Indonesia has a five percent share and Cambodia has two percent. Given such increasing competition from its Asian peers, India's textile exports to the world have almost halved from 24.26 percent in 2001 to 13.71 percent in 2016. Thus, it is high time that Indian textile firms gear up to take advantage of the economies of scale.

India can also look to penetrate ASEAN's services market since it has a comparative advantage in information technology, healthcare and education. This can reap large benefits if accomplished over a sustained period of time.

ASEAN and India have finalised a list of priority areas for the period of 2016-2018, which would contribute to the successful implementation of the 2016-2020 Plan of Action. Fifty four of the 130 activities identified in the 3rd Plan of Action have already been implemented. India-ASEAN trade and investment relations have been growing steadily, with ASEAN being India's fourth largest trading partner. The annual trade between India and ASEAN stood at approximately \$76.53 billion in 2014-15. It declined to \$65.04 billion in 2015-16 essentially due to declining commodity prices amidst a general slowing down of the global economy.

Investment flows are also substantial both ways, with ASEAN accounting for approximately 12.5 percent of investment flows into India since 2000. FDI inflows into



India from ASEAN between April 2000 and May 2016 stood at about \$49.40 billion, while FDI outflows from India to ASEAN countries, from April 2007 to March 2015, as per data maintained by DEA, was about \$38.672 billion. The ASEAN-India Free Trade Area has been completed with the entering into force of the ASEAN-India Agreements on Trade in Service and Investments on July 1, 2015.

ASEAN and India have also been working on enhancing private sector engagement. The ASEAN India-Business Council (AIBC) was set up in March 2003 in Kuala Lumpur as a forum for bringing key private sector players from India and the ASEAN countries onto a single platform for business networking and sharing ideas.

India's Look East policy is now more than twenty-five years old and some good results are expected from it. In addition, the Project Development Fund worth Rs 500 crore, set up the Indian Government and to be operated by the EXIM Bank, will help Indian businesses to set up ventures in CLMV countries. India needs to analyse its ASEAN strategy more closely. ■

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THE POTENTIAL OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK REDUCTION

BY JANKI ANDHARIA AND SHIRISH SRIVASTAVA *

The Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) held in Cancun, Mexico from May 22-26, 2017 was a significant event for those concerned with the management of disasters, as it reaffirmed the need for world leaders and regions to work together to reduce disaster risks. It highlighted that globally direct economic losses attributed to disasters are increasing significantly, amounting to close to \$1.4 trillion over the last decade. Indirect economic losses magnify the figure further. Losses to countries' capital stock, including housing, infrastructure, productive assets and livelihoods, and impacts on health and education have major fiscal implications, hindering economic growth and development. Between 2005 and 2015, disasters impacted the well-being and safety of persons, communities and countries

in diverse ways. Over 700,000 people lost their lives, over 1.4 million were injured and approximately 23 million became homeless as a result of disasters.

Evidence indicates that exposure of persons and assets in all countries has increased faster than vulnerability has decreased, thus generating new risks and a steady rise in disaster-related losses, with a significant economic, social, health, cultural and environmental impact in the short, medium and long term, especially at the local and community levels.

The Southeast Asian region has one of the world's highest levels of disaster risks. Geographically, the countries form one block where there are complex trans-boundary contiguities that cannot be demarcated. However, disasters have no



boundaries and crisis situations require response management and coordination across national borders. The ten countries of the ASEAN share a remarkably common history and culture, making the idea of regional co-operation for DRR, very relevant. However, sub-regional dynamics, trans-boundary political sensitivities and trust deficits between countries, make such cooperation complex and pose several challenges.

The absence of critical infrastructure or its destruction in the aftermath of a hazard event make a country more vulnerable

and amplify the impact of a disaster. These include natural hazards, conflicts, accidents and terrorist attacks. Cascading impacts on multiple sectors increase damage. At Cancun, world leaders recognised the close nexus between climate change and water-related disasters, which account for almost 90 percent of the 1,000 most disastrous events since 1990. They propagated the idea of Integrated Water Resources Management as an effective way of strengthening resilience for disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change and exhorted all stakeholders to subscribe to this approach. The platform also stressed that the public and private sectors are interdependent in terms of development, functioning, maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure. Working together, they can reduce disaster risk and losses by ensuring that investment practices and regulatory frameworks are risk informed, jointly planned, data is exchanged and an enabling environment is built.

The establishment of global frameworks including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change all aim to reduce risks, improve development pathways and reduce the impact of natural hazards. The goals are ambitious and require trajectories that are mutually beneficial and supportive. Upholding the relevance of these frameworks at the local level and the translation of national policies based on these policies, into local action, is a daunting task. Globally, about one in seven people live in overcrowded, low-quality housing. Low-

income households are particularly at risk as they usually live in hazard-exposed areas with low land value, deficient or non-existent infrastructure and services, low-quality and fragile dwellings and within degraded environments.

Some 60 percent of the area expected to be urbanised by 2030 has yet to be built and trillions of dollars are expected to be invested in new infrastructure every year. Meeting the needs of a global population that will reach nine billion by 2050, achieving the SDGs by 2030 and responding

to the adverse effects of climate change will require considerable investments in resilience building and vulnerability reduction.

Since the Southeast Asian region is prone to disasters, ASEAN has focused on DRR and Disaster Response in fulfilling its charter of regional wellbeing and development. The disaster management structures created within the ASEAN system are in consonance with the UN systems.

AADMER, UNCMCoord

The ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response

(AADMER) signed in July 2005 seeks to provide effective mechanisms for achieving substantial reduction of disaster losses and to jointly respond to

disaster emergencies through concerted national efforts and intensive regional and international cooperation. To ensure preparedness for effective response, the agreement required the establishment of the ASEAN Standby Arrangements for Disaster Relief and Emergency Response where parties, on a voluntary basis, identified and earmarked assets and capacities which can be made available and mobilised for disaster relief and emergency response. The agreement also requires the preparation of Standard Operating Procedures that would guide the actions of Parties and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (called AHA Centre) in implementing various trans-boundary arrangements.

The methodology for the periodic conduct of the ASEAN regional disaster emergency response simulation exercises

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(ARDEX) has also been specified and tests the effectiveness of this procedure. The AHA Centre facilitates coordination between Parties and also with relevant United Nations and international organisations. India attends ASEAN summits as one of the plus three members as it is one of the major trade partners of ASEAN countries. India is one of the significant members of SAARC, with trade estimated to reach \$200 billion by the end of this decade. Other major areas of cooperation between India and ASEAN pertain to peace and progress, connectivity, security, trade and co-operation

Since the international disaster response community was first created, the United Nations Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UNCMCoord) function, has adapted to the changing environment. The United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) now has a

Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS), since national armed forces are often relied upon as first responders in many countries, and governments increasingly deploy military forces as part of their international assistance to a natural disaster response. The key coordination elements in natural disasters and complex emergencies are information sharing, task division and planning. The scope and modus operandi of these key elements change with the context and with the focus of the tasks. Through multidimensional and integrated peace operations, UNCMCoord became an important interface between the humanitarian community and military components of UN and regional peacekeeping operations.

UNCMCoord provides a platform for dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian

emergencies that is based on the need to protect and promote humanitarian principles, avoid competition, minimise inconsistency and, when appropriate, pursue common goals. Basic strategies range from cooperation to co-existence.

Conflict of Interest

The 2016 World Risk Report rightly points out that since the energy and service sectors are getting increasingly privatised, the economic interests and constraints of the private sector pose further risks to countries affected by disasters. While new and better technologies are being rolled out by private agencies in the aftermath of a disaster, this often represents a false faith in technology especially when users are not trained. Issues of access, security and logistics remain controversial. For example, while drones are promoted for humanitarian rescue and relief, there remain issues of trust.

Conflicts of interest in humanitarian work have been experienced often, especially as disaster situations become more complex. Besides, debate rages over how humanitarianism should relate to human rights. Should various actors denounce human rights violations that often lead to or complicate humanitarian distress, or should they be content that humanitarian needs are being addressed and mute, if not avoid, the rights discourse?

Sometimes aid money is diverted to military. While development requires security, development alone cannot bring security. In Afghanistan, the vast amounts of aid money sent to insecure parts of the country were often dangerous and ineffective. One section building schools in a contested area invited attacks by the other side. The Taliban attacks on



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schools skyrocketed. Building roads through conflict areas often resulted in construction workers being attacked and the roads being mined anyway. In places like Somalia, Sudan, and Afghanistan, the perception of being allied with the 'other side' has resulted in increased attacks on aid workers: the number of violent attacks on them has more than doubled since 2003.

Re-emphasizing Regional Cooperation

Despite these challenges, opportunities for regional cooperation that exist need to be valued and made more robust especially since Disaster Risk Management (DRM) offers a fairly neutral agenda. Although national strategies for DRM vary, regional initiatives such as ASEAN, SAARC and IORA with their DRM focus, merit special support.

According to the Sendai framework, international, regional, sub-regional and trans-boundary cooperation remains pivotal for supporting the efforts of states, their national and local authorities, as well as communities and businesses, to reduce disaster risk. Existing mechanisms may require strengthening in order to provide effective support and achieve better implementation. Developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and African countries, as well as middle-income countries facing specific challenges need special attention and support to augment domestic resources and capabilities through bilateral and multilateral channels in order to ensure adequate, sustainable, and timely means of implementation in capacity-building, financial and technical assistance and technology transfer in accordance with international commitments.

Although regional mechanisms of cooperation are playing increasingly important roles in disasters, there has been remarkably little research on their role in disaster risk management. There are few systematic studies analysing the relative strengths and weaknesses of regional bodies, much less comparisons of their range of activities or effectiveness in disaster risk management. A mutual appreciation of disaster management frameworks entails an analysis of what regional activities would be useful to each country in order to prevent, mitigate and respond to disasters and the extent to which policies and programmes can be acceptable.

Joint trainings capacity building, exercises and drills around the management of disasters such as oil spills, floods and cyclones, and rescue and evacuation protocols are examples. Sharing data for decision support or early warning can be a step forward. Supporting the development of health infrastructure and networking may be worthwhile activities towards disaster preparedness and response. Similarly, the rising interest in disaster response and globalisation of response through networks and associations offers vast opportunities to strengthen supply chain management and logistics for disaster management. Ideas such as using

zeppelins to reach remote areas need financial and technical support. Finally, promoting cooperation between academic, scientific and research entities and networks and the private sector, would be useful in order to develop new products and services to help reduce disaster risk, in particular when these products would assist developing countries and their specific needs.

If the aim is to enhance resilience (as the Hyogo and Sendai Frameworks emphasise), individual countries, regions and international communities need to come together to work towards disaster risk reduction and disaster response. Possessing a vision and garnering political support for cooperation and exchange requires enlightened leadership and wisdom at multiple levels. ■

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BEL: CREATING GLOBAL FOOTPRINTS

Navaratna Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is fast gaining a foothold in the global Defence market. During the last one decade, BEL has consistently achieved double digit growth in Export of Defence goods from India.

The Company has been exporting state-of-the-art products and systems such as Coastal Surveillance System, Radar Finger Printing System, Identification of Friend or Foe and Radar Warning Receivers to countries such as USA, UK, Russia, Italy, Brazil, Germany, France, Israel, Indonesia, Honduras, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Myanmar, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa.

Among these products and systems, many have high indigenous content: Akash Weapon System, Battle Field Surveillance Radar, Night Vision products, Naval Communication and Surveillance Systems and EVMs to name a few. Various initiatives are being taken to identify new markets and product requirements based on user preferences for countries in the African continent, South East

Asian countries & SAARC, Middle East, South America and Western Europe.

While Defence continues to contribute to nearly 80 to 85% of its revenue, BEL has touched a chord with the common man through civilian products like solar traffic signals and Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). BEL's reliable and tamper-proof EVMs have redefined voting in India, facilitating free and fair elections. BEL has already supplied its Electronic Voting Machines to Namibia while countries like Mauritius, Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka have shown interest in the BEL EVMs.

In addition to direct Export of products and systems, BEL also takes up manufacturing of high technology Defence systems on Build-to-Print basis. Some of the major OEMs who have utilised BEL's design and manufacturing services are Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Thales, SAAB, IAI, Elbit Systems and Pilatus.

As part of its Export marketing initiatives, BEL participates in major international Defence exhibitions in South America,

Europe, Africa and South East Asia to explore new markets and introduce new products. Extensive follow-up is being done with the end customers to customise the product offering to meet their country's requirements. Product demonstrations and field trials are also carried out to enable the end users appreciate the features, specifications and the quality of the products and systems offered by BEL.

BEL has the required infrastructure and skill sets to tap possible Offset business and Contract Manufacturing opportunities from major foreign countries, arising out of the opening up of Defence market to foreign OEMs through FDI. Seven Business Units of BEL have been certified for International Aerospace standard AS9100C. BEL engineers are sent to various Indian and foreign customers' facilities to understand their basic manufacturing, Quality and Testing requirements and manufacture products which can be exported to various designate OEMs for integrating in their systems for global requirements.

BEL is also investing in setting up infrastructure in various fields like Space Grade Hybrid Micro Circuit. A new facility has already been established for Electronic Warfare and Avionics. The newly formed Product Development & Innovation Centre has been recognised by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. New NABL accredited EMI and EMC centres have been set up at Bengaluru and Hyderabad Units for Quality and capacity enhancement. Other new facilities include a Test set up for Missile Systems, Antenna Test Range Facility and High Roof Hangar for Radar & Antenna Integration.

New Marketing centers are being planned in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Indonesia and Myanmar. BEL is in the process of signing MoUs with various Indian, Israeli, European and American organisations for partnerships in Land, Air and Naval platforms which will, in future, cater to the requirements of the Government of India's 'Make in India' initiative as well as those of foreign customers.



BEL is also in the process of identifying and developing new foreign partners for tapping business opportunities in those countries. The main focus is on South East Asian and CIS countries, which offer a huge business potential for BEL's products and services.

BEL registered Export sales of US \$65 Million in the year 2016-17. Major products exported during the year included Coastal Surveillance System, CoPASS, VHF Radio Bharti, Advanced Composite Communication System, Ship Borne EW System (Sanket), Electro Optic Fire Control System, Electro Mechanical parts, etc. BEL's Export order book was US \$82 Million as on April 1, 2017, which included an Offset order book of US \$15 Million. The Company has been consistently winning the annual Karnataka State award for 'Excellence in Exports' under the category 'Electronics & Communication (excluding IT / BT) - Medium and Large'.

BEL was established in 1954 under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, to cater to the specialised electronics needs of India's Defence services. Over the years, BEL has evolved into a multi-product, multi-technology enterprise offering customised products and services to the armed forces.

BEL has nine ISO 9001:2000 & ISO 14001 certified manufacturing Units, four Regional Offices and two Central Research Laboratories across India. BEL is also represented in 24 countries with offices in New York and Singapore. The Company has vast infrastructure, including facilities like High Volume T/R Module manufacturing facility for Active Phase Radars, multiple Near Field Test Ranges (in Bengaluru and Ghaziabad) for Radar Testing, Walk-in Chambers for environmental evaluation of wheeled/tracked vehicle based Defence systems, labs for various equipment and systems in the field of optics, communication, Radars, Sonars and Electronic Warfare.





ASEAN-WAY FORWARD TO ECONOMIC GROWTH, SOCIAL PROGRESS, AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the primary aims of ASEAN is to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development among its members and to promote regional peace through various means. In order to achieve these goals, the organisation has set up several platforms and events wherein member states can interact and help accelerate the process of community building.

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) aims to contribute to realising an ASEAN community that is people oriented and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the people. It seeks to forge a common identity and build a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and where the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of the people are enhanced. ASCC is focused on nurturing the human, cultural and natural resources for sustained development in a harmonious and people-oriented ASEAN.

ASCC Blueprint: The ASCC Blueprint represents the human dimension of ASEAN cooperation and upholds the organisation's commitment to address the region's aspiration

to lift the quality of lives of its peoples. The goals of the ASCC are envisaged to be achieved by implementing concrete and productive actions that are people-centred and socially responsible. This set of cooperative activities has been developed based on the assumption that the three pillars of the ASEAN community are interdependent and interrelated and that linkages are imperative to ensure complementarity and unity of purpose.

The ASCC Blueprint was adopted by the ASEAN leaders at the 14th ASEAN Summit on March 1, 2009 in Cha-am/Hua Hin, Thailand

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Communities:

- ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture & Arts (AMCA)
- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Sports (AMMS)
- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM)
- COP to AADMER (Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response)
- ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED)

ASEAN Ports & Shipping is the largest ports, shipping and logistics exhibition in the ASEAN region and one of the largest in the Asia Pacific region

- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME)
- COP to AATHP (Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution)
- ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM)
- ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI)
- ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM)
- ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE)
- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD)
- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW)
- ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY)
- ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matter (ACCSM)

Event Calendar of High Level Meetings (2017)

- 14th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Security Policy Conference (ASPC) at Metro Manila on June 7
- Track Two Dialogues on the Implementation of the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties on the South China Sea at Metro Manila on June 7-8
- 8th Meeting of ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) on June 14-15 in Myanmar
- 4th ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Climate Change on June 14-15 in Myanmar
- R & D Congress on Sustainable Urbanization in the Course of ASEAN Economic Integration at Metro Manila on June 26-30
- 2nd ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM) Working Group (WG) and ADSOM-Plus WG Meetings at Metro Manila on June 27-30
- Seminar on Prevention and Protection against Disaster in June in Myanmar
- 10th ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Environment on July 24-28 in Philippines

Business Conclaves

13th ASEAN Electronics Forum, Philippines (June 20, 2017): The ASEAN Electronics Forum (AEF) established linkages among the ASEAN governments and private stakeholders in the electronics sector and discussed possible opportunities for collaboration among the ASEAN members to enhance electronics integration in the region. The event dovetailed with the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines' Semiconductor and Electronics Convention and Exhibition. The previous AEF was held on September 30, 2011.

ASEAN Electric and Hybrid Vehicles Summit, Philippines (June 29-30, 2017): The Summit brought together key electric and hybrid vehicle (EV) industry players from ASEAN member states. Hosted by the Philippines with the theme 'Strengthening Partnerships for Greener Transport in ASEAN and Beyond', the summit was the first regional conference for ASEAN in the electric and hybrid vehicles industry. Held at the World Trade Centre, the Summit aimed to provide ASEAN industry players and stakeholders with valuable insights from global and local experts, business leaders on the growth and development prospects for the



industry via a series of exclusive keynote presentations, expert panel discussions, business-to-business meetings and interviews. The Summit was complemented with the staging of the ASEAN EV Technology World.

ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit, Philippines (September 6, 2017): The ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit will highlight the role of businesses in achieving national and regional development goals, as well as the role of governments in creating an enabling environment to allow Inclusive Business (IB) models to thrive. The Summit is expected to provide an overview of the IB landscape in ASEAN and showcase examples of successful IB models in partnership with local and/or national governments in the region.

Linking ASEAN MSMEs with ASEAN and Global MNEs, Philippines (October 19, 2017): The Focused and Strategic (FAST) Action Agenda on Investment, an initiative of the Philippines and one of the key deliverables for its ASEAN 2017 chairmanship, will push for greater linkages of the regional trade bloc's MSMEs with ASEAN and global MNEs. The FAST Action Agenda on Investment has four components which focus on investment promotion, facilitation, protection, and liberalisation. Under investment promotion, a project component is to link ASEAN MSMEs with ASEAN and global MNEs and help them grow and expand through specific projects for collaboration. As an activity under this project, a business conference will be held in Manila on October 19, 2017 where business meetings will take place between ASEAN MSMEs and and global MNEs.

ASEAN Printing Industry Forum, Philippines (November 21-22, 2017): The Forum will bring together printing industry stakeholders from the ASEAN member states. The two day meet will see the presentation of country reports highlighting the performance of the printing industry in each of the member states. These would include the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities, threats and outlook for the next 20 years. The Forum will also focus on technical aspects including best practices on training of printing personnel, total quality management technology and trends. Business-to-business meetings are scheduled among industry players for possible collaborative projects. An agreement will be signed by the member states on the steps that need to be taken to ensure greater growth in the printing industry among ASEAN countries.

Trade Fairs

The 15th ASEAN Ports & Shipping, Yangon (July 6-7, 2017): ASEAN Ports & Shipping was the largest ports, shipping and logistics exhibition in the ASEAN region and one of the largest in the Asia Pacific region. It aimed to foster investments in the developing Vietnamese shipping industry, port facilities, maintenance and management. Therefore it

provided companies an ideal platform to showcase products and services and presented opportunities for companies and industry professionals to raise brand awareness, launch new products, network and establish business contacts. A conference with leading speakers analysed the latest global transport and logistics issues.

ASEAN Retail Show, Bangkok (July 13-16, 2017): The ASEAN Retail Show took place from July 13-16, 2017 at the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre (BITEC) in Bangkok, Thailand. The show included rapidly growing franchise business, both food and non-food, from across the world.



DIDAC ASEAN International Educational Equipment and Technology Expo, Malaysia (Oct 19-21, 2017): DIDAC ASEAN is a three day event that will showcase products like higher education, education technology, systems, equipment and much more in the human resource consultants industry.

ASEAN Trade Fair, South Korea (November 24-26, 2017): The trade fair will showcase products like traditional food, local food, halal food, organic food, food ingredients, fine foods, agrifood, wine & drinks, food technology, culture & tourism, traditional handicrafts.

Youth and Cultural Festivals

India – ASEAN Youth Summit, India (August, 14-19, 2017): India's civilisational links with the region are centuries old. They have been renewed and revitalised with the Act East policy of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Partnership in 2017, the India Foundation and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (MEA) organised an India-ASEAN Youth Summit on the commemorative year's theme of 'Shared Values, Common Destiny.' It aptly reflected the close cultural and civilisational links that India and South East Asia have enjoyed over two millennia. ■

Sources: Agencies, <http://asean.org>, <http://pia.gov.ph> asean and <http://www.asean2017.ph>

INDIA'S CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATIONAL INFLUENCE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA

BY JAYSHREE SENGUPTA *

India's Look East policy aims at improving economic and political relations with the Southeast Asian region which had close contacts with India for centuries and is linked culturally and geographically with it. India has made inroads in trade and investment with the ASEAN since the signing of the Free Trade Agreement in the year 2009. The increased business interaction renewed the partnership and contact with member countries having similar culture, artistic tradition, family values and customs.

In Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia or Burma today, many symbolic remnants of India's influence are clearly visible in their art, culture and civilisation. Through the centuries, India has been a source of inspiration for art and architecture in countries belonging to the present day ASEAN. The temples of Angkor Wat, Pagan, Borobudur and Prambanan bear evidence to the deep penetration of Indian art and architectural forms in these famous Southeast Asian monuments. Some of these monuments surpass the grandeur of Indian temples from the same period because of their scale, extensive stone bas relief carvings and expanse. Thanks to the contact with Indian civilisation, Southeast Asia also created many literary works based on the Ramayana but with something distinctively their own being discernable in them.

It must be said that Southeast Asia did not accept all foreign influences in an indiscriminate manner. Two notably

important external influences came from China and India, but Southeast Asia accepted only those influences and practices that were suitable to their local cultures. Almost every country accepted Ramayana because it is easy to retell, understand, modify and apply to contemporary culture.

Folklore singers and artistes played a very important role in popularising and modifying Indian literary works in Southeast Asia and it was the most popular and effective way of propagating Indian culture. Through retelling of the stories from generation to generation, the great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata could be edited and retold to attract bigger and bigger audiences. The artistes who popularised these were called 'dalangs' and contributed to the process of adaptation of these epic works originating outside their country by adding or changing them to make them more contextual and localised. This was the beginning of the formation of new texts like Seri Rama (Malaysian adaptation of Ramayana) and RamKer (Ramayana Khmer) in Cambodia. These are regarded as some of the highest literary works of Southeast Asia.

Similarly, sculptors and artists copied and combined original Indian motifs with local artistic motifs to arrive at something distinctively Southeast Asian and produced stylised masterpieces of their own. Modelled after Gupta period icons, the Cambodian (Khmer) sculptures of 8th to 13th centuries are very different in appearance and form, yet they are beautiful

Temples of Angkor Wat



creations representing stylised figures of gods, goddesses, Buddha, apsaras and demons with Southeast Asian features.

India's civilisation and culture spread in many parts of the world through trade but struck firm roots in Southeast Asia including in dance forms. Yet India's cultural conquests were peaceful and without forced conversions. There was no evidence of violence, colonisation and subjugation and there was no extensive migration from India to the countries of Southeast Asia. The Indians who went there did not go to rule nor had any interest in controlling from afar.

Southeast Asia was particularly attractive to the Indian mercantile class and they named the faraway lands Swarnabhumi or land of gold, Tokola or land of cardamoms or Narikeldeep, land of coconuts. They followed two routes; one through land via Bengal, Assam, Manipur and Burma to reach different parts of Southeast Asia. The other route was the maritime route from Coromandel Coast or the coast of Bay of Bengal to Cape Comorin and via Malacca strait to reach the Malay Peninsula.

India during the Gupta period was a land of riches and people possessed great skills at weaving textiles, crafting gold jewellery, metal, sculpture and beautiful objects. There was much demand for Indian goods, and trade between India and Southeast Asia - which was seen as a land of spices and rice growing fertile lands - flourished. Funanin, the Mekong Delta in Vietnam was the first trading post of Indian traders. Traders took residence there and from there spread to other countries of the region.

Hindu priests and Buddhist monks accompanied the mercantile class and assumed a leading role in spreading the message of Indian thought and culture to the entire Southeast Asian region. Since they had no political ambitions and were living in hermitages and ashrams, the local people welcomed them. Thus merchants, monks and Hindu Brahmin priests travelled to faraway kingdoms like Cambodia and Indonesia in large numbers and India's culture, religion and civilisation spread to different parts of Southeast Asia. The kings of the region wore Indian made silk and brocade textiles during ceremonious occasions and donned jewels imported from India. Printed and woven textiles were eagerly sought after by the common people.

Sanskrit scripts are the first form of writing known to have reached Southeast Asia. Similar alphabets were adopted for local languages as well. The alphabets used today for Burmese, Thai, Laos and Cambodia derive originally from Indian prototype.

Indian religion, political thought, literature, mythology, artistic motifs and style, were absorbed deeply into the local culture as greater interaction with Indians who settled in the courts of South East Asia took place. Buddhism came to Southeast Asia from India in 3rd century BCE when Buddhist monks were sent by King Ashok. In medieval times, from the sixth to 14th century, there existed a great maritime empire based in the Indonesian islands of Java and Sumatra. Many Indian artisans came to work temporarily in the courts and were from Kalinga (modern day Orissa). They helped in building great temples and

monuments. Many of the motifs on the walls of Borobudur and Angkor Wat resemble carvings of Konarak and other medieval temples of eastern India.

Brahmins also played an important role in the Siamese court as experts in astrology and in conducting ceremonies. They were not only experts in performing religious rites but were also knowledgeable in political affairs, art and architecture. They were invited by rulers to serve as advisors, administrators and priests. They were experts in Sanskrit. Sanskrit scripts are the first form of writing known to have reached Southeast Asia. Similar alphabets were adopted for local languages as well. The alphabets used today for Burmese, Thai, Laos and Cambodia derive originally from Indian prototype. A large number of ancient inscriptions which have been discovered are in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit terminology was used in all legal aspects of court procedures and only the factual aspects were described in vernacular. The use of Indian framework of code of law was mentioned by these inscriptions. Codes of law and public administration especially the concept of "God King" was adopted by many kings of Southeast Asia. They considered themselves to be incarnations or a descendant of one of the Hindu deities. Later when Buddhism came, this view was modified. The kings of Cambodia, Jayavarman VII (the founder of Angkor) and his successors were addressed by the people as king of the mountain and they built their palaces and temples on hill peaks (Bayon temples).

Traders were also accompanied by Shudras (the lowest caste according to the Hindu caste hierarchy) who migrated in search of a better life from India and many settled in

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Bali. The caste system was modified when adopted by Southeast Asians as they had a class system of their own. They also did not adopt the Manusmriti which relegates women to an inferior place. The Indonesians still have a matriarchal society in Sumatra (Minangkabau) where women are head of the family and inheritance is through the daughters' lineage.

Finally, the decline of India's influence in Southeast Asia began from around 13th century when conversions to Islam took place in many major countries like Malaysia and Indonesia. But within Indonesia, Bali practices Hinduism even today. The rise of India's influence had taken place when the Khmer kings spread it to other regions and decline began with the coming of Islam. But even India's influence on Southeast Asia's culture and civilisation more or less halted a long time ago, the impact can be seen and felt even today on its customs, culture and architectural designs.

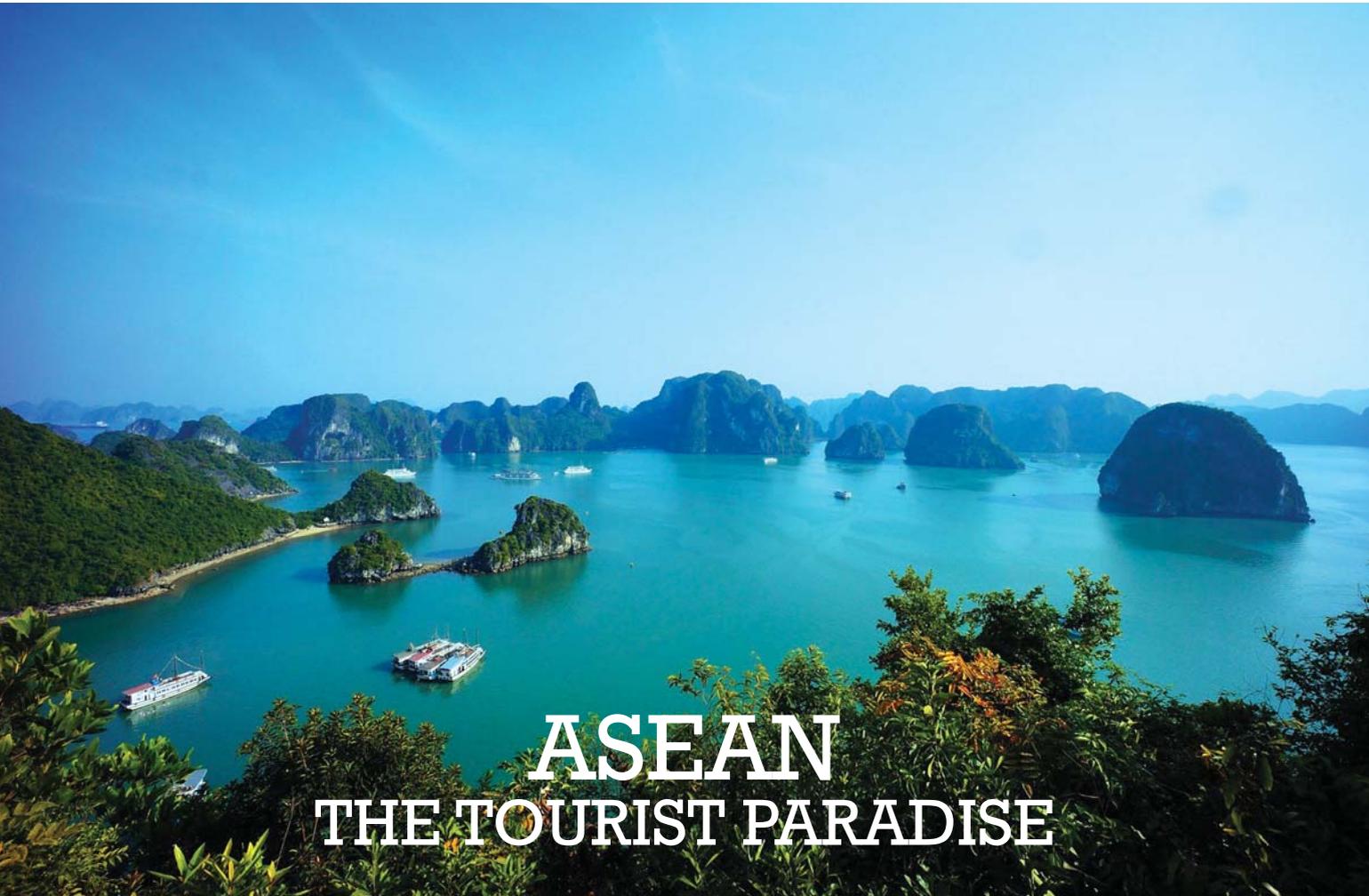
The syncretic culture of Southeast Asia is evident in Buddhism being practiced in Hindu temples in Cambodia, Muslim wedding rituals and dress in Malaysia which are based on Hindu rituals and attire, Garuda –the vehicle of

Hindu God Vishnu, is the name of Indonesian Airlines, and Naga and Kubera, which are prevalent in both Hindu and Buddhist cultures can be seen carved in many places. A Mahabharata monument depicting Krishna and Arjuna riding a chariot pulled by eleven horses is placed prominently in a park in central Jakarta.

Southeast Asia absorbed and retained its past Indian influence in a very distinctive manner over the centuries and today it has melded into the Southeast Asian culture. In Indonesia, shadow play involving leather puppets with moveable arms and legs on a screen, narrating scenes from Ramayana is very popular even today. It is also a popular art form in Orissa. There was a reverse exchange of ideas and artistic techniques in the last century when Rabindranath Tagore travelled to Southeast Asia and brought the art of Batik from Indonesia to India and taught it to the students in Santiniketan.

The influence of India can also be felt in the food and flavours of South East Asia. There are many spices in common between Indian and Southeast Asian foods. Nearly all the people of Southeast Asian region eat rice and curry like the people of eastern India with many common ingredients. Indian herbal medicines also reached Southeast Asia in ancient times and are used even today in many countries. Closer links with the Southeast Asian region are thus a natural outcome for India and its Look East policy. ■

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ASEAN THE TOURIST PARADISE

The ASEAN region has some of the best-known beaches, uniquely rich biodiversity, beautiful locales and terrains, and a variety of fun and adventure sport activities. In addition, the warm hospitality of the hosts enhances the entire tourism experience.

Adventure Tourism

If your idea of a Southeast Asia vacation involves a surplus of adrenaline, these adventure travel destinations will give you everything you need and more. The region's warm seas, teeming undersea life, challenging limestone and granite cliff faces, raging rivers and scenic dirt trails provide a blank canvas for sweaty, risky fun. Add the region's customary radiant hospitality, and you have got yourself the ingredients for an adventure travel experience you will want to repeat again and again. Choose your adventure from many options, and let the action-packed fun begin.

Biking or Motor Biking: In many parts of Southeast Asia, getting around on two wheels is the only way to go. Bicycles and scooters make up the majority of wheeled transport in cities like Hanoi in Vietnam; as you venture away from urban areas, you'll find dirt trails and lonely highways that lead to temple ruins in Cambodia and Hmong villages in Laos. For adventurers looking for an up-close, intimate look at their destinations of choice, a biking adventure throughout Southeast Asia should be on the top of their list. Biking expeditions throughout the region comprise a wide range of adventures - from exploring Cambodia's Angkor Wat to cycling down peninsular Malaysia's west coast, to exploring Bali, Indonesia's hinterlands.

Boating and Sailing: The people of Southeast Asia have water-borne travel in their blood. Many local cultures still rely on the rivers or the sea for sustenance; their experience has shaped the vessels that locals and tourists use today,



from Indonesia's phinisi to the longtail boats so integral to the Thailand island experience. If you are hankering for an adventure on the high seas (or fast-flowing rivers) you will find it here. You can watch dragon boat races from the sidelines in Penang in Malaysia. Or travel through Indonesian waters on a phinisi boat, crossing between islands of unspeakable beauty. Or take a slow river boat between cities in Cambodia. Or paddle a kayak into a rain-carved sheltered cove in the Philippines.

Camping and Caving: Some of Southeast Asia's most breath-taking landscapes can be found underground. Large sections of the region possess a karst (limestone) geology that serves as a perfect canvas for cave formation.

Parts of Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand possess these in abundance: massive cave chambers, stalactites glimmering with moisture, and underground rivers that will stun even the most experienced spelunker. The other side of the altitude adventure takes you vertically up mountainsides. Experienced wall-climbers will find plenty of material to work with in Southeast Asia, from the karst cliff faces in Krabi, Thailand to the granite heights of Sarawak and Selangor.



Diving and Snorkelling: Southeast Asia lies smack in the middle of the Coral Triangle, a six-million sq. km. Undersea space whose abundance of reef-building corals make it a global hotspot for marine biodiversity. Over 70 percent of the world's coral species, six marine turtle species, and over 2,000 reef fish species call this region home. So at almost any place where Southeast Asian landmass meets the sea, you will only be a short ride and a dive away from seeing magic happening before your eyes.

A wealth of marine life - from coral to nudibranch to sea slugs to whale sharks - blaze across the sea floor like dashes of colour from an Old Master. Coral reefs and wartime wrecks alike provide accessible spots where divers can come face to face with the region's underwater flora and fauna. And you will not be lacking in help, either - dive shops are regularly found near popular diving spots, underscoring Southeast Asia's reputation for treating divers right, accessibility - and value-wise. Whatever adventure you seek - down in the dark or up in the heights - Southeast Asia has a variety that mesmerises.

Once you've seen the natural beauty of the region, you'll know why it's so important to preserve it. Eco Tourism in Southeast Asia is becoming more and more important and prevalent

Endurance Sport

Not everybody comes to Southeast Asia to relax at the poolside. A few travel there to test themselves against the clock, against others, and against the landscape, through a number of tough competitions. In Langkawi, Malaysia, you have the Ironman - one of a global series of triathlons where challengers race against each other on bicycles, by foot, and through the sea. Throughout the region, full-length marathons like those in Singapore and Cambodia's Angkor Wat draw thousands of racers raring to carve out new personal bests.

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And in Thailand, a few tourists come to take up the ancient and brutal art of Muay Thai.

Flying, Parachuting & Parasailing: The birds'-eye view of Southeast Asia provided by the region's many aerial adventures - from hot-air balloons to ultralights to ziplines - supply an unbeatable view of the surroundings, with an extra shot of adrenaline. You can take to the air in one of many ways, none of which requires a flying licence. First, you can suspend yourself from a zipline and travel through treetops and over canyons, making a safe landing after a few minutes of flight. Or you can free-fall down a bungee drop before the cord yanks you back to safety.

You can ride an ultra-light with an experienced pilot and get an overhead view of the land that used to be the sole privilege of birds. Or you can enjoy the overhead view of Cambodia's and Myanmar's temples afforded only by a hot air balloon ride. Whatever adventure you choose, you can be assured that the highest standards of safety apply to your every flight or free-fall in Southeast Asia.



Hiking and Camping: You do not need much to explore Southeast Asia's most out-of-the-way places by foot. You just need sturdy shoes, a backpack, camping supplies, and a sense of adventure as limitless as all outdoors. You will need these to tackle all the scenery and wildlife that Southeast Asia can throw at you along its hiking trails. You will find hidden coves to swim in, ancient forests to traverse, rivers to ford, and even active volcanoes to climb! For travellers on a limited schedule, you can book day-trips; for those in no hurry, multi-day treks are available.

Surfing: The search for the perfect wave first brought surf aficionados to Bali in the 1970s. As surfing culture took hold, surfers combed Southeast Asia's beaches to find other breaks worth riding and have found them in the Philippines, Thailand, and even Vietnam. Some of the best surfing throughout Southeast Asia happens in concert with the monsoon season, between April and September. And in both established surfing spots and up-and-coming ones, the friendly locals have learned to go with the flow – you will find surfboards for rent, surfing lessons and other supplies you need when you hit the beach.



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Beach Nature and Wildlife

Travelling through Southeast Asia is a photographer's dream. The most diverse, beautiful, enjoyable and accessible landscapes in the world exist: secretive, spectacular, sun kissed beaches rim the region; verdant, vibrant jungles colour the interior and teem with unique wildlife; and mystic mountains offer unobstructed views.

Beach & Ocean: Imagine lying on a beach, enjoying the warmth of the sun, slowly hypnotised by the metronomic beat of waves rolling onto the shore. Walking on a pearly white beach and letting the sand seep between your toes, while warm white waters wash over your feet commands your relaxation. The beaches of Southeast Asia are spectacular. Beautiful scenery, beautiful weather and beautiful people abound. Throw in some amazing food and the clear, warm water and there is no better place to spend a vacation. This is Southeast Asia.

Ecotourism

Once you have seen the natural beauty of the region, you will know why it is so important to preserve it. Eco tourism in Southeast Asia is becoming more and more important and prevalent. Enjoying an amazing trip to Southeast Asia and impacting the region in a positive way is now possible through environmentally friendly tours, transportation and accommodation.

Flora and Fauna: The beautiful, unique, fascinating and frightening are on display in Southeast Asia. The largest flower in the world blooms in Malaysia and tigers roam the temples of Thailand; elephants teach travellers in Laos while orang-utans and gibbons swing from the trees in Indonesia; tiny tarsiers stare at us in wonder in the Philippines; dragons rule the island of Komodo and vibrant birds rule the sky. Southeast Asia's natural beauty is staggering



Jungles and Forests & Land and Sea Safaris: So much to see and so little time. It's nice to have someone to show you the way. Wildlife experts and insiders are available to take you on trips through the jungles, forests and out into the deep blue sea. Specialists know where to find reclusive rhinos, they know where you can swim silently beside whale sharks, they know the secrets of the land and they know how to show it to travellers to Southeast Asia.

Mountains & Volcanoes: The steaming peaks of Southeast Asia are a reminder of how much of the region was formed. Volcanoes and mountains provide a cool alternative to the beach life that garners much of the attention. Southeast Asia offers some of the best treks through some of the most stunning terrains on the planet. It's time to take a peek into Southeast Asia.



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Nature-based Tourism

Australia's Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) defines nature-based tourism as any tourism that relies on experiences directly related to natural attractions. This includes ecotourism, adventure tourism, extractive tourism, wildlife tourism, and nature retreats. Southeast Asia abounds in nature tourism. Some of the popular country-wise destinations are: Brunei Darussalam- UluTemburong National Park, Selirong Island and TasekMerimbun; Cambodia – KohPhdao CBT in Kratie Province, O'RusseyKandal CBT in Stung Treng Province, Tmatboey CBT in PreahVihear Province and Cambodia Bay; Indonesia – Batur Caldera (Geopark), Rinjani National Park, Komodo National Park; Lao PDR – KhonPhapheng Waterfall, Kong Lo Cave, and Kuang Si Waterfall; Malaysia – Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre in Sabah, Royal Belum State Rainforest Resort in Perak, Taman Negara in Pahang; Myanmar – Inlay Lake in Southern Shan State, Mount Popa in Mandalay Region, PyinOoLwin in Mandalay; Philippines – Pamilacan Island Whale and Dolphin in Pamilacan and Bohol, trekking through rice terraces in Banave and Ifugao, Siargao Island and Surigao del Norte; Singapore – Gardens by the Bay, Wildlife Reserves and PulauUbin; ThailandKhaoYai National Park, Mu KohSurin National Park and DoiInthanon National Park; Viet Nam – Ha Long Bay, NhaTrang Bay and PhuQuoc Island.

Rivers and Lakes: Southeast Asia is not all pristine beaches and azure seas. Its inland lakes and rivers hold some of the most rewarding experiences for those looking to explore. From the mighty Mekong flowing through five countries, to warm volcanic lakes in Indonesia and the Philippines, to the gentle streams of Laos, and the tributaries that flow through Brunei, the beautiful rivers and tranquil lakes are the lifeline of Southeast Asia.

Cruises: Cruises are quite popular as they give a fantastic view of the region. These cruises take you through multiple countries and multiple experiences, through rivers and seas – a great way to travel and see more than one ASEAN destination on your visit to the region.

Rail: Trains have a long and storied history in Southeast Asia. Connecting countries via an arterial network of rails, trains still hold their romantic allure. Travelling by train remains a popular way to explore the region, revelling in local life and culture, while sharing stories with fellow travellers. The best way to discover an area is to pair with a local friend or guide to show you everything beyond the normal tourist locations. Tours are a fantastic way to expand upon your trip to Southeast Asia. With in-depth knowledge and local contacts, tour operators are able to take your trip beyond the typical.

Culture, Heritage and Homestay

Culturally diverse and historically rich, the 10 countries of Southeast Asia consistently amaze and enchant travellers to the region. It conserves its past and celebrates life like no other in the world; this is the beauty of Southeast Asia.

Community Tourism: Tourism Concern of the United Kingdom describes community-based tourism as that which aims to include and benefit local communities, particularly indigenous peoples and villagers. ASEAN Community tourism projects give local people a fair share of the benefits/profits of tourism and a say in deciding how incoming tourism is managed.

All the ASEAN countries offer community eco-tourism. Some of these are: Brunei Darussalam – BaitulWajihah, Kampong Sungai Matan, Melilas Longhouse; Cambodia – Chiphat in Koh Kong province, PreahRumkel, Stung Treng province, Chambokin Kom Pong Speu Province; Indonesia – Pentingsari village, Laweyan village, Kampung Naga; Lao



PDR – Ban Hadkhai village and Thapabath in Bolikhamxay province, Ban Kietngon in Champasack province, Nalan village in LoungNamtha province; Malaysia – Kampung Kuala Medang and LualaLipis in Pahang, WalaiTokou and Kundasang in Sabah, KampungSantubong and Kuching in Sarawak; Myanmar – Kyaing Tong in Eastern Shan state, Putao in Kachinstate and Kalaw in Southern Shan state; Philippines – Abatan river community life tour in Bohol, Donsol whaleshark interaction tour in Donsol, and Sorgoson, Tibolo cultural village tour of Tagabawa and Bagobo tribes, Digos city, Davao del Sur; Thailand – Mae Kampong village in Chiang Mai province, Kiriwon village in Nakorn Si Thammar province, Leeled village in SuratThani province; Viet Nam – Dong Van Karst Plateau Geopark in Ha Giang province, Sa Pa in Lao Cai Province and Co Phat village in Con Cuong district.



Culture and Heritage Tourism: The National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States defines heritage tourism as “travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past” and cultural heritage tourism as “travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present”.

If you are looking for this flavour of tourism, all ASEAN member countries have a very rich experience to offer. You can experience urban heritage tourism in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, world heritage and cultural heritage sites in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Historic and Religious Sites

Massive ancient temples, elegant mosques, historic churches and mysterious ruins; the diverse nature of Southeast Asia’s history is forever on display. Triumphant and sometimes tragic a historical record can be traced through

Southeast Asia has developed some of the greatest contemporary artists and performers working today. Dynamic dancers, rogue filmmakers, bold artists and hypnotic singers are coming out of Southeast Asia

the sites and monuments that have been saved for future generations and travellers to Southeast Asia.

Museums and Galleries: The countries of Southeast Asia know their history. Proud of their past, be it glorious or notorious, artefacts of historical significance are on display in local galleries. From the utterly fantastic, to the utterly devastating, the museums of Southeast Asia revisit the history that helped form the region and the future it holds.

Contemporary Performing Arts: Southeast Asia has developed some of the greatest contemporary artists and performers working today. Dynamic dancers, rogue filmmakers, bold artists and hypnotic singers are coming out of Southeast Asia. Proud to promote their past and recognise the future, Southeast Asia unabashedly supports the arts.

Traditional Art and Performing Arts: All the colour, all the glamour and all the history of Southeast Asia comes alive in the traditional performances and celebrations. Elegant, elaborate, heart-warming and occasionally frightening, the passion and devotion to art and story is dazzling.

Traditional Sports: Before martial arts became mixed Southeast Asia was home to many fighting styles seen in popular competitions today. Thailand’s Muay Thai, Indonesia’s elaborate PencakSilat and the punishing Filipino Kali are just some of the popular combat styles that exist in the region. But it's not just all fighting, sports like the amazingly acrobatic SepakTakraw and exciting water buffalo races are just two of many popular spectator sports that originated in the region. UNESCO has identified a number of World Heritage sites in the region. The names on the list are often staggering in both scope and splendour.

Bars and Nightlife: World famous nightclubs, full moon parties, concerts, karaoke, parades, the celebrations in Southeast Asia never end. The region simply knows how to

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party. Alive during the day, Southeast Asia rocks after dark. People travel to the region specifically to be part of these parties. Full moon parties, ZoukOut, Chinese New Year, X2: it's an endless list of rowdy revelry.

Food: This may be the single greatest reason to visit Southeast Asia. In Southeast Asian countries, eating is a national pastime. The tastes here are amazing, diverse, fresh and flavourful. It is very likely that your favourite local ethnic restaurants received recipes from this region, but they can't match the freshness of ingredients used nor the experience and verve used to create the mouth-watering masterpieces. Southeast Asian countries are home to a unique melange of traditional cuisines.

Fun, Leisure and Cities

If you want an easy life, ASEAN countries offer the best of it – you can enjoy a leisurely round of golf, roll the dice or maybe just take the family out for many attractions on offer. There is a reason residents of Southeast Asia are always smiling: they know what good life is.

Casinos: No longer confined to Vegas and Macau, casinos have gained a foothold in Southeast Asia. Manila's small casinos, Malaysia's Genting Highlands' massive resort and a huge new complex set to open in Singapore means it's time to gamble on a trip to Southeast Asia.

Golf: Golfing in Southeast Asia is on the rise. There is a reason legends like Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and Greg Norman have developed golf courses in the region. They recognised Southeast Asia's intrinsic beauty as the ideal backdrop to create some of the most challenging and rewarding courses in the world. Parks and Attractions: It's a

fact that residents of Southeast Asia like to have fun. Always cheerful, it is no surprise therefore that the people of this region have developed some of the greatest attractions in the world. Huge amusement parks, amazing aquariums, zoos and parks and the largest Ferris Wheel in the world are just some of the wonderful options.

Shopping: So much to choose from and so little credit, the shopping in Southeast Asia borders on the ridiculous. The choice, variety, deals, outlets, the favourable exchange rate are maddening – it's a shopaholic's paradise.

Health and Spa

Sometimes you just want to get away from it all, without getting away from it all. Spas and retreats in Southeast Asia have been helping travellers relax, recharge and refocus for years. Elegant, sophisticated, lush and welcoming, Southeast Asia will bring the gleam back to your eyes.



Pilgrimage Tourism

ASEAN region also offers an unmatched trail of Buddhist pilgrimage. Important among Buddhist shrines in the region are Wat Phnom (Wat Phnom Daun Penh), Emerald Buddha in Royal Palace, WatUnaloam, Bayon Temple - a Mahayana Buddhist shrine and Phnom Oudong in Cambodia; Mendut, Pawon, and Borobudur in Indonesia; Dharmikarama Myanmar Temple and WatChayamankalaram Temple in Malaysia; Bagan and Mandalay in Myanmar are known for their beautiful, ornate temples.

There are an estimated 40,000 Buddhist temples in Thailand. Thai temple architecture, while sharing influences with other Southeast Asian styles, is unique. Typically comprising a multi-building complex, Thai temples, or wats, feature a tall, bell-shaped stupa with multiple tiers and gables ending in a long, thin ornate chofahs. ■

Sources:

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IT'S TIME TO CAPITALISE ON THE GROWING PARTNERSHIP

BY H.E. MR. TON SINH THANH *

For the ASEAN – India partnership to blossom, effectively implementing its plan of action and other agreements should be top priorities.



Over the past half a century, ASEAN has grown into a regional group with all 10 member nations, operating on the basis of the ASEAN Charter. ASEAN has brought benefits to not only its member countries but also their citizens. The formation of the ASEAN Community on December 31, 2015 with the three pillars of politics-security, economy, and culture-society was a breakthrough that helped the association to enter firmly into a new period. In the context of the complex developments in the Asia-Pacific, ASEAN has always tried to increase its vitality as well as the centrality in the region and demonstrate its role in connecting and promoting regional cooperation.

The policy of ASEAN is to promote our partnership with all major powers in the world. The group attaches great importance to the Dialogue Partnership with India, which has become the fastest growing economy and an active player in the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. ASEAN - India bonds have been built on a firm foundation, with close linkages in culture, history and civilisation. The

shared interests have led ASEAN and India to establish a Sectoral Partnership, which was upgraded to a full Dialogue Partnership in 1995.

ASEAN sees India as a natural and reliable partner in the region while India has considered the association a key pillar of its Act East policy. The relations between ASEAN and India are almost free from any problem. India consistently supports the centrality and leading role of ASEAN in the regional structure-building process.

Multi-dimensional Cooperation

Over the last 25 years, the relationship between ASEAN and India has extended to plenty of areas of cooperation, including the political, economic, commercial, as well as security dimensions. There are now 30 mechanisms for cooperation between ASEAN and India. According to the ASEAN secretariat, 21 among 26 priorities, or 80 percent, of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action for the period from 2016-2018 are being implemented.

In order to further increase tourist flows and people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and India, enhancing connectivity should be a strategic priority

Politico-security cooperation is a major pillar of partnership between India and ASEAN, who have strong engagements in EAS, ARF, ADMM+ and the MGC. These engagements have made significant contribution to regional growth and stability. Investment flows are increasing. ASEAN appreciates the Indian government's establishment of the Project Development Fund worth \$75 million to support Indian investments in CLMV countries, particularly in the textile and garments sector.

In terms of connectivity, India's support to the implementation of the ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity, especially the Indian government's offer of \$1 billion credit line to improve the physical and digital connectivity between India and ASEAN will promote economic growth and narrow the development gaps within the ASEAN countries. Besides, the increase in allocation for the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund by the Indian Government from \$1 million to \$5 million has hugely benefited development projects focused on innovation in industry, training, and short courses, as well as other activities involving researchers and students in ASEAN.

For a "Common House ASEAN"

The date July 28, 1995 marked an important integration milestone for Vietnam and ASEAN as it officially became the seventh member of the regional organisation that is now considered one of the world's most dynamic groups. In the 22 years since, Vietnam has made huge efforts in joining other members to build and develop a "common ASEAN house". Vietnam has also actively contributed to development policies, cooperation directions and major decisions of the block.

Besides efforts to enhance cooperation within the bloc, Vietnam has fostered the expansion of relations between the association and its outside partners through various forums and mechanisms such as ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM+).

For Vietnam, ASEAN is the main pillar for its foreign

policy. ASEAN becomes Vietnam's bridge to connect to the wider world, including India. Similarly, for India the relationship with the ASEAN block is one of the cornerstones of its foreign policy and is also a bridge to integrate deeper with other Asian countries.

Deepening the Strategic Partnership

To make the strategic partnership stronger, it is time to move up the volume of trade and investment between ASEAN and India which remains relatively low compared with other dialogue partners. Besides implementing the free trade agreements, other measures should be taken to reach the target of \$200 billion in trade between ASEAN and India by 2025.

In order to further increase tourist flows and people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and India, enhancing connectivity should be a strategic priority. Cooperation in other areas such as science-technology, IT, biology, new materials and environmental protection health and education is also important.

It is believed that, by joining ASEAN in highlighting the international law, including UNCLOS 1982 and the diplomatic and legal processes in the region, India can play a constructive role in maintaining peace and security in Southeast Asia. Working closely to shape an open, inclusive and rule-based regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific region will bring benefits not only for the association but also to India – a country that has close linkage with Southeast Asia through the sea-routes between Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean.

The potential for cooperation between ASEAN and India are immense. Both sides have to work together and make full use of available opportunities to deepen their strategic partnership. Vietnam as the coordinator for ASEAN-India dialogue for the period of 2015-2018, is trying its best to facilitate a closer partnership between India and ASEAN. ■

** H.E. Mr. Ton Sinh Thanh is Ambassador of Vietnam in New Dehi and Vietnam is the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-India relations*

ASEAN STANDS FOR INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

H.E. Chutintorn Gongsakdi, Ambassador of Thailand to India spoke to MK Aftab of Diplomatist Magazine on ASEAN and the India-Thailand relationship.



As one of the founding members, Thailand has played an important role in the first 50 years of ASEAN's journey. What is your vision for the next 50 years?

Thailand is a founding member of ASEAN, together with several other cooperation frameworks. One area of cooperation always leads to another, thus contributing to community building. With ASEAN, it started with political cooperation. We had immediate political and security issues to address in our region. The economic part came later. I think the end goal of all the frameworks created to date is integration and community building.

This means that since we cannot stand alone in a globalised world, we need to make Southeast Asia a community where people can travel and work with relative freedom, in peace. When talking about ASEAN, we can point to the aspirational example of the European Union (EU). The EU remains a living laboratory for integration and continues to inspire us.

However, today there is some critique regarding the EU and the extent of its success in integration. What would you tell the people of Thailand about ASEAN's contribution to their lives?

When we speak of the EU and Brexit, people around the world question globalisation and the benefits of integration. But I think the issue is one of inclusiveness. It is about maximising the winners, minimising the losers, and if possible, through job retraining or compensation, not to have any losers. Globalisation and integration without inclusiveness is not sustainable. Integration is an adjustment process and requires structural reforms. However, economic nationalism is very much alive and well in today's world. This is a hindrance to integration. The private sector can also play a big role as their regional and global value chains determine the patterns of integration. The Japanese have had their economic footprint in ASEAN for a long time and their outward investment has contributed to ASEAN's regional economic integration.

Foreign multinational companies have their own master plan about what their supply chain should look like in the manufacturing and services sectors. Their supply and value chains have already been superimposed on the ASEAN member states. That helps our integration, creates jobs, lifts living standards and spurs our development.

However, what is most important is to respond to the

It is most important to respond to the needs of individuals, especially at the grassroots, leaving nobody behind. Furthermore, any government should always try to increase the economic operating space of its citizens.

Skilled professionals can now practice or work in ASEAN member states without much hassle. This would have been unthinkable 50 years ago.

needs of individuals, especially at the grassroots, leaving nobody behind. This holds true whether we are talking about ASEAN, IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association), ASEAN-India or India's Northeast Region (NER). Furthermore, any government should always try to increase the economic operating space of its citizens. Skilled professionals such as engineers, dentists, nurses and others can now practice or work in ASEAN member states without much hassle. This would have been unthinkable 50 years ago. To increase the economic operating space of Indian companies, I would like to highlight for investment the sub-region made up of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, which are adjacent to India's NER.

What is it that binds the ASEAN countries together besides geographical proximity? Is there a shared ASEAN identity?

People often ask me such questions. Other countries are attracted to the ASEAN community because of the 620 million size of the market, but they also wish to know the level of our commitment to the ASEAN Economic Community.

On this, I think I can almost speak for all the ASEAN member states. In any case, the answer for Thailand would be, without ASEAN, we are nothing. As Ambassador of Thailand to India, I think that I would be able to command much less attention, if we were not a member of ASEAN. I always leverage the 620 million market in the same way that India represents a 1.2 billion market.

If we were not integrated as ASEAN, then we would not be investing in the economic future of Thailand in the best possible way.

In this context, I just wanted to mention that multidimensional connectivity is vitally important and that we have a Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC).

We are expanding the MPAC into BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative on Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), ACD (Asia Cooperation Dialogue) and beyond. Connectivity should be limitless, without boundaries. Integration increases the economic space, economic opportunities and choices, but of course there are integration issues such as cross border transport agreements, mutual recognition of professional skills, interoperability of rules and regulations, as well as security issues to be addressed. On these issues, ASEAN has progressed well.

Thailand is known as an investor's gateway to Asia, how important is ASEAN's trade liberalisation efforts and the exploration of new avenues of investment to your country? In which business areas do you see untapped potential and how can these opportunities be seized?

As an Ambassador of Thailand, I would wish to agree with you that Thailand is an investor's gateway to ASEAN, but I must admit that all the ASEAN member states are gateways to investing in ASEAN. You may question why, as Ambassador of Thailand, I am speaking equally as much about Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar? This is because this sub-region is a part of the Japan+Thailand+1 economic development model that requires us to expand into these three emerging countries where land and labour availability are more available and competitively priced. Meanwhile, Thailand moves further up the value chain, as per the Thailand 4.0 initiative.

ASEAN member states do have different investment promotion policies and therefore Indian investors can shop around. I admit that this is not an ideal situation, but the member states do still compete on investment promotion.

If we talk about untapped areas of investment from India, I would say it is in manufacturing, services and agriculture.

We would like to see Indian companies go into Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar in a big way. But from Thailand's side, we are particularly interested in pharmaceuticals. We are gradually becoming an ageing society. There is also potential in the relatively untapped defence industry.

Tourism is also an area that requires more work. After 25 years of ASEAN-India relations and 70 years of Thailand-India relations, we really do not know each other very much. In the business sector, only 26 Thai companies are working in India, albeit with very high annual earnings, so I am trying to increase this number by exploring other options.

'Visit ASEAN@50' is an effort to attract tourists to visit ASEAN countries. Thailand, like many other ASEAN countries, is already a prominent tourist destination. What is the advantage of this shared approach?

A shared approach is a win-win situation because people go to Thailand and then go to other ASEAN destinations. 'Visit ASEAN@50' is a great initiative, but I think Thailand itself can do more to promote tourism beyond the shopping and beach destinations that are the favourite of Indians. In terms of travel facilitation, if we are speaking about something like the Schengen visa, we do have an ACMECS Single Visa operating between Cambodia and Thailand. It is available for Indian citizens. As for visa free travel, the world today is one where security considerations are at the forefront, so that is unlikely soon. However, Thailand is currently implementing a trial period for waiving visa fees for tourists, including from India. The trial period will end in August 2017.

Representing Thailand in India, what can you tell us about your experience with India-ASEAN so far and where would you like to see it go in the near future as well as in the long run?

As India is an emerging power, I would like to see more Indian presence in ASEAN. India's presence, together with that of other regional powers will help ensure stability in the ASEAN region.

India's focus on the NER while engaging with ASEAN makes sense as we have a land connection there. However, air and maritime connectivity are also important and we want a relationship with the whole of India.

Furthermore, we share a culture and history that dates back thousands of years, which needs to be leveraged. I want Indians to see us as more than a tourist destination and a great place for Indian weddings. I want Thailand to be considered India's great economic partner in ASEAN. Some well-known Indian companies are already in Thailand, such as the Aditya Birla Group, Indorama Ventures, Tata Consultancy and Tech Mahindra, but I want new companies to explore

possibilities in the ASEAN market as well. Indian companies have much to offer from the space industry, defence industry, pharmaceuticals, biotech and IT, to name a few.

Anyone who does not have a presence in ASEAN, is missing out on a great growth opportunity. ASEAN is right here on your doorstep and it's a large, affordable and growing market.

This year, India and Thailand are celebrating 70 years of diplomatic relations. So tell us about some new initiatives that need to be taken to increase trade as well as strengthen bilateral relations between the both countries – as Thailand is the second largest economy of ASEAN countries too.

A great initiative is the first Army-to-Army talks this year, with the aim to build and promote bilateral Army-to-Army relations and enhance interoperability between the two armies. As part of the exercise the two armies will jointly plan and execute a series of drills for the neutralisation of likely threats that may be encountered in a counter terrorism environment.

A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Controlling Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, their Precursors and Chemicals and Drug Abuse between India and Thailand was signed on June 30, 2017.

To be honest, I cannot single out a specific initiative as being the most important, but I can say that our relations are progressing well. We have regular visits by members of the Royal Family to India. Recently, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn visited New Delhi on March 30, 2017 to receive the Padma Bhushan award.

We have 1.2 million tourists from India, so we are lucky to have that and everywhere we go and among all types of professions we meet, including from people who serve us in hotels, to VVIPs, there is goodwill for Thailand. But we hope for even more tourists along with investment in the ASEAN member states, including in Thailand.

Besides, there is something else we see the need to work more on – BIMSTEC, where we can do better, along with stepping up efforts to forge closer partnerships within concerned regional and multilateral organisations such as ASEAN-India, IORA, APEC and the OECD.

Researchers say that there is a gap in our history where we lost our cultural links, so we must rebuild and revive relations in a historical and cultural context. On the civilisation front, religious and cultural links could be reenergised to develop new contacts and connectivity between our peoples. On connectivity, special efforts are being made to develop a coherent strategy, particularly for linking ASEAN with India's NER, but also much further beyond, as part of the Indo-Pacific region. ■



MALAYSIA-INDIA RELATIONSHIP WILL FORGE AHEAD WITH MUTUAL BENEFITS

H.E. Dato' Hidayat Abdul Hamid,
High Commissioner of Malaysia to
India in conversation with Diplomatist
Publisher Linda Brady Hawke

Malaysia's deradicalisation programme has been recognised globally as a success. What are the various elements involved in it? What can India learn from it?

In Malaysia, we believe that preventive measures are very important in addressing extremism and terrorist threats. We place great emphasis on pushing counter-narratives via social media, and have founded the Regional Counter-Messaging Centre to combat extremism in Malaysia, Southeast Asia and beyond. We also have special programmes to counter the narratives of the extremists especially in preventing youth from being radicalised.

Malaysia has considerable experience in rehabilitating people who have succumbed to the siren voices of terrorism. Our deradicalisation programme has worked with hundreds of extremists, and has had a 95 percent success rate in reintegrating them so they can return to the mainstream and show that even those who have fallen prey to false and evil ideologies can ultimately reject them and be a warning, example and instruction to others.

Our holistic programme incorporates both deradicalisation and rehabilitation to change the mindsets of radicalised extremists. They are sent to special detention centres, separated from common criminals. The modules include various aspects such as nationalism, religious and moral values, psychology and public security. These modules have been translated into other languages, namely English, Arabic and French. Malaysia is ready to share our experience and expertise in this area with India.

Like India, we also believe that the concept of moderation should be embraced by all. Towards this effort, the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF) was established in Kuala Lumpur in 2010.

How can India and Malaysia strengthen their cooperation to counter terrorism in the region?

Malaysia is fully committed to fighting the threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism. We fully support the United Nations' plans of action in preventing violent extremism which calls for intelligence sharing among member states.

Malaysia and India have formed a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime in 2012. The working group serves as an important platform for both Malaysia and India to share experience and best practices in addressing these issues. Our police and security agencies are already sharing information on real-time basis with regard to extremism and terrorist threats.

Given our very good bilateral relations, strong cultural ties and shared heritage, what is Malaysia's contribution in India's success at ASEAN?

India's partnership with ASEAN comes naturally. India and ASEAN not only share land and maritime linkages, but has also deep ties through history in the multi-religious, multi-cultural composition of its people. This is especially obvious in Malaysia as commonly reflected in the tagline "Malaysia truly Asia". Come to Malaysia and you would immediately understand ASEAN.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of our formal relations. Malaysia views this year as the best opportunity to reflect and realise the true potential of our strategic partnership.

Indian firms have moved to Malaysia in a big way, making it a base to do business with other ASEAN nations. What are the reasons for this?

Many Indian companies have chosen Malaysia as the hub for ASEAN because we are centrally located and well connected with the rest of the region. Through the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the ten nations have broadened and deepened economic integration in the region.

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Malaysia offers numerous advantages and incentives for Indian companies such as the following (to name a few):

- liberal investment policies;
- pro-business Government;
- well-developed infrastructure; and
- great connectivity between India and other ASEAN countries.

What are India and Malaysia's security concerns and how can we cooperate better to address them?

Malaysia and India both views extremism and terrorism as a clear threat to the security and stability of the region. Malaysia believes that the concept of moderation should be embraced by all, and looks towards India for its continuous support in this aspect. A concerted effort by moderates in all areas and dimension would provide an effective way to counter extremism, increase tolerance and peaceful coexistence to enhance security, stability and cooperation.

What about defence cooperation between our two countries? What role does it play to allay maritime concerns?

India has been Malaysia's strategic partner in defence for a long time. Defence cooperation continues to be enhanced and strengthened through the Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Meetings (MIDCOM), staff talks, high-level military exchanges, and enhancement of cooperation between the air force and navies of the two countries. It is set to expand further into potential areas such as defence industry and procurement.

Education is the key to empowering our people. What is the extent of collaboration between the two countries in this area?

Malaysia and India have a long-standing cooperation in the field of education. We have signed a MoU in the field of higher education, where joint collaborative activities are focused on education research, curriculum development, exchange of students and staff, as well as training and scientific research including in AYUSH.

According to our data, more than 3000 Malaysian students are currently enrolled in universities and colleges in India to study medicine and dentistry, while approximately 2000 Indian students are present in Malaysia.

What are the areas of Malaysian investments in India?

Malaysia is among India's top ten trading partners. Although bilateral trade is currently recorded at \$10.7 billion, both leaders are confident that the trade will grow to \$15 billion by 2020. India is Malaysia's 20th largest investor, with total investments worth \$2.31 billion. Malaysia's investment in India meanwhile has been estimated to be at least \$7 billion. Malaysian banks are interested in opening branches in India to extend greater contribution in the financial sector. This

reflects the growing economic and financial linkages between Malaysia and India.

We are very impressed by India's rapid development and transformation in all spheres, particularly the economy where GDP growth has consistently registered 7 percent. Malaysian companies have seized the opportunity to be part of India's economic development, and have invested in a number of key sectors, including infrastructure development, construction, information technology, transportation, aviation and telecommunication.

The two countries share an agreement to promote development of clean technologies and renewable energy. How much success has been achieved in this front?

Both sides agreed to set up a Joint Working Group on New and Renewable Energy in November 2015. This has served as a good platform for both countries to exchange ideas and forge mutually beneficial collaboration.

Solar energy is one of the key areas for better cooperation. Malaysia is also part of the International Solar Alliance, of which India is the founder. There are a number of business entities from both sides working closely on solar panels especially for the rural areas.

In April 2017, India and Malaysia signed 31 business memorandum of understanding (MoUs) amounting to \$36 billion, the largest in the history of economic relations between the two countries. Please share the details and what are the expectations?

These MOUs among others are related to port construction, highways construction, solar power plant, development of smart city & technology park, degasification terminal project, coconut & palm oil development and higher learning education. Both sides are working diligently to ensure that all the MOUs will be materialised.

We are encouraged that many Indian companies have realised that Malaysia is a good place to invest. We hope that the plan by an Indian company to build a port in Malaysia will take off soon. It is quite an extensive, long-term project which is a big boon for our economic ties.

Malaysian companies are actively bidding for and pursuing the highways projects in India. India is aggressively developing its network of highways throughout the country. Our experience in Malaysia and the past good records of building numerous highways in India gave us the confidence that Malaysia and Indian companies can work well in this sector.

Both PM Najib Razak and PM Narendra Modi had expressed their aspiration to see the bilateral trade increase to \$15 billion by the year 2020. Malaysia and India have enjoyed strong bilateral ties for 60 years and we will continue to forge ahead. ■

INDIAN-ASEAN



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13th ASEAN-India Summit

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 21 November 2015



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other ASEAN leaders at the 13th ASEAN-India Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Nov 21, 2015.

Indian External Affairs Minister H.E Sushma Swaraj inaugurates the Indian Mission to ASEAN on April 23, 2015.

Dignitaries from left to right: H.E I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Director General for ASEAN of Indonesia, H.E Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of India, H.E Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of ASEAN, H.E Suresh K. Reddy, Ambassador of India to ASEAN.



PM Narendra Modi in Laos during 14th ASEAN-India Summit in September, 2016

Photo Feature



Minister of State, Gen V.K. Singh (Retd) at the 2nd International Conference on ASEAN-India Cultural and Civilizational Links held on January 19, 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia



Left to right: Shobana Kamineni, President, CII; Elizabeth P Buensuceso, Permanent Representative, ASEAN Mission to Philippines; Suresh K Reddy, Ambassador to Indian Mission to ASEAN and Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII at an Interactive session on ASEAN-India Cooperation on July 5, 2017 at New Delhi.

Meeting at the annual ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee at the ASEAN Secretariat in June end, 2017



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