



RIS Diary

— Research shaping the development agenda

RIS Webinar Series on TRIPS Waiver: I

TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges

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SOUTH CENTRE

**TRIPS Waiver
Issues and Challenges**

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi
Director General, RIS
Welcome Remarks

Ambassador Jayant Dasgupta
Member, RIS Governing Council and General Body
and Former Ambassador of India to WTO
Chair

Professor Carlos Correa
The Executive Director,
South Centre, Geneva

Ambassador Xavier Carim
Deputy Director General, The
Department of Trade, Industry
and Competition, National
Government of South Africa

Professor Graham Outfield
Leeds University, UK

Dr Siva Thambisetty
Associate Professor,
London School of Economics

Saturday, 5 June 2021, 5.00 pm (IST)

WEBINAR

Ms Leena Menghaney
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Access Campaign

Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas
Senior Fellow & Consultant, RIS

Developing countries including India should ensure that the WTO discussions on the temporary waiver from certain provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 should not end up as a “hollow promise”. The talks must also quickly result in greater access to raw materials and greater sharing of technology and knowhow at the global level, including on those related to mRNA vaccines, according to experts.

They were of the view that the governments should invest in

ramping up production facilities, facilitate transfer of technology and knowhow and support collaborative efforts in R&D and innovation. They also said that there is an urgent need for a special global fund to facilitate ramping up of production of affordable medical products (including vaccines, therapeutics, medical masks, diagnostic kits, other personal protective equipment, and ventilators) in developing countries through greater access to raw material and technology in this regard.

This development comes even as most of the 164 WTO members have indicated their support for

the proposal of India and South Africa at the global trade body on the temporary waiver from certain TRIPS Agreement provisions. Experts have also urged all the negotiators to expeditiously arrive at a consensus on the issue by addressing it on humanitarian and public health grounds, and not swayed by powerful commercial interests.

“South Africa, India and the African Union (AU) are strongly committed to pushing for the waiver, and we have enormous support of over 100 countries,” Ambassador Xavier Carim, Deputy Director General, Department of Trade,

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Issues and Challenges for Africa

G7 countries should facilitate an early successful conclusion of the TRIPS waiver negotiations at the WTO in a manner that would help boost production of COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics in developing countries including those in Africa, according to experts. They also wanted the G7 to ensure financial support, technology transfer, and ease access to raw materials in this regard and oppose any conditionalities that could encumber effective implementation of the TRIPS waiver provisions. According to them, subsequent urgent amendments in the related domestic laws that enable using the waiver are also vital in this context. Similarly, addressing issues in logistics, value chains and building capacity in pharmaceutical sector in Africa is crucial.

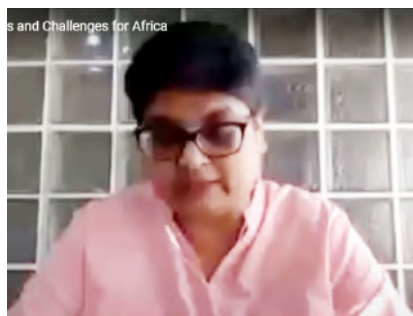
This development comes amid the G7 agreeing to a health declaration and to utilise their resources to prevent a repeat of the pandemic. It also comes in the backdrop of the WTO members agreeing to a text-based process to take up the proposal submitted by 60 delegations including India and South Africa for a temporary waiver from certain provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19. Incidentally, the initiative taken by India and South Africa on the TRIPS waiver proposal has received the backing of the UN Secretary General



Prof Carlos Correa



Prof Sachin Chaturvedi



Ms Sanusha Naidu
Antonio Guterres.

Speaking at a webinar on 'TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges for Africa' on 12 June 2021 co-hosted by the think-tank RIS and the Geneva-based South Centre, Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director, South Centre, said the outcome of the TRIPS waiver negotiations at the WTO should not have any cumbersome conditions on its implementation. He said the temporary waiver should free WTO members from complaints on patent infringement. Prof Correa said developing countries including Cuba, India and Thailand have shown the capability to produce vaccines, and therefore, developing country-cooperation can help in expansion



Prof Faizel Ismail
of production in the Global South. He said, that the G7 should ensure greater financial allocation for increasing production capacities in the developing world.

Ms. Sanusha Naidu, Institute for Global Dialogue, Pretoria, said investor-state dispute settlement provisions in trade pacts and national laws should be reviewed to prevent the Big Pharma from using them to make any WTO agreement on TRIPS waiver ineffective. She also said intra-African value chains and production capabilities should be enhanced, adding that the institutional architecture in this regard will have to be strengthened.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, expressed concern regarding the 'strong'

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Issues and Challenges for Latin America

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SOUTH CENTRE

TRIPS Waiver
Issues and Challenges for Latin America

Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan
Science Diplomacy Fellow, RIS

Welcome Remarks

Professor Carlos Correa
The Executive Director,
South Centre, Geneva

Dr André de Mello e Souza
Coordinator of International
Cooperation at Institute for Applied
Economic Research (IPEA),
Government of Brazil

Professor Oscar Lizarazo-Cortés
National university of Colombia

Dr Henrique Zeferino de Menezes
Associate Professor, Federal University
of Paraíba, Brazil

Mr. Felipe de Carvalho
Country Advocacy Coordinator
Médicos Sem Fronteiras Brasil (MSF)

Dr Viviana Muñoz Tellez
Coordinator. Health, Intellectual
Property and Biodiversity Programme
South Center, Geneva

Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas
Senior Fellow & Consultant, RIS

WEBINAR
Saturday, 19 June 2021
5.00 pm (IST)

Latin America - suffering tremendously on account of the world's highest COVID-19-related death rate as well as a low vaccination rate on account of shortages and distribution disruptions - must resist pressure from the Big Pharma and certain advanced economies, and then strongly support the TRIPS waiver negotiations at the WTO, according to experts.

Countries in the region with vaccine manufacturing capabilities need to collaborate among themselves and with other leading developing economies having similar strengths to enhance production and distribution to boost the vaccination rate, they said. They warned that the EU's proposal at the WTO with an emphasis on clarifications on Compulsory Licensing provisions in the TRIPS agreement (in response to the

TRIPS waiver proposal by over 60 members including India and South Africa) would delay the discussions.

Speaking at a webinar on 'TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges for Latin America' organised by RIS and South Centre, on 19 June 2021, Mr Felipe de Carvalho, Country Advocacy Coordinator, Médicos Sem Fronteiras Brasil (MSF), said strangely there was not much buy-in for the TRIPS waiver proposal initially submitted to the WTO by India and South Africa due to pressure from pharma majors and rich countries. Latin America was relying on the COVAX facility for affordable access to vaccines, but the facility was unable to meet the demand, he said. Negotiations with pharma companies for vaccines also proved to be tough due to the difficult conditions related indemnifying the companies (against compensation for any adverse effects) and delays,

he added. Citing support for the TRIPS waiver proposal from over 100 countries and hundreds of civil society organisations, he said this is a good opportunity for Latin American countries to get rid of pressure from Big Pharma and some developed nations. He said the EU proposal in this regard was only a distraction that would create delays in TRIPS waiver negotiations. The capabilities that Latin American countries such as Brazil, Argentina and Cuba have in vaccine production as well as the strategies used by them to improve quality standards must be extended across the region and other parts of the world with the help of other developing countries including India, China and Thailand that also have similar strengths, he said.

Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director, South Centre cautioned against the thinking

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Issues and Challenges for South East Asia

Notwithstanding the nascent vaccine manufacturing capacity and potential seen in countries such as Thailand and Vietnam, ASEAN economies hit by the COVID-19 crisis face challenges including difficulties in getting access to finance, technology and raw materials that prevent them from expanding or setting up facilities for production and distribution of vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics.

In this regard, there is a need to strengthen political will in ASEAN countries to help them withstand pressures from the Big Pharma and certain developed countries, and then ensure their support for the TRIPS waiver proposal at the WTO, experts said at a webinar on 'TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges for South East Asia' jointly organised by RIS and South Centre on 26 June 2021. These efforts need to be supplemented with policy coherence to ensure the adoption of the TRIPS waiver proposal and its local implementation, they said. Also, the TRIPS waiver provisions should have an over-riding effect in case of any conflicts with the norms in various trade agreements that the countries in ASEAN and other regions are party to, they added.

Professor Philips J. Vermonte, Executive Director, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta, said TRIPS waiver should not be seen as a charity as it is an important part of the solution in the current context to help increase the availability of vaccines in the developing world. He expressed concern over the lack of adequate support for COVAX global platform for ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.



Professor Philips J. Vermonte



Professor Carlos Correa



Dr Amitendu Palit



Mr Tony Salvador

Dr Amitendu Palit, Senior Research Fellow & Research Lead (Trade & Economics), Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, referred to the slow and uneven rate of vaccination in the region and said ASEAN countries are finding it difficult to negotiate a reasonable deal with vaccine manufacturers. Therefore, it is important to build and sustain a multilateral vaccine pool as well as address the logistics

challenges faced by developing countries, he said, adding that these initiatives can be taken forward with the help of 14-15 economies belonging to OECD and G20 that are dominant players in COVID-19 vaccine production. In this context, he said 'vaccine nationalism' needs to be subdued and these big economies need to come to an understanding keeping in mind the larger objective.

Dr Tran Kien, School of Law,

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Fishery Subsidy and the Discussions at WTO: Issues, Prospects and Way Forward

Saturday, 29 May 2021
5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. (IST)



WEBINAR



Mr Mukesh Bhatnagar
Professor, Centre for
WTO Studies, IIFT



Dr Tarun Sridhar
Former Secretary,
Dept. of Animal Husbandry,
Dairying and Fisheries
Govt. of India



Professor S. K. Mohanty
RIS



Ms Ranja Sengupta
Senior Researcher
Third World Network



Mr P. Jayaprakash
Akhil Bharatiya Matsya
Mazdoor Mahasangh



Professor Sachin Chaturvedi
Director General, RIS
Welcome Remarks



Mr Rajeev Kher
Distinguished Fellow, RIS and
former Commerce Secretary,
Govt. of India
Chair

Fishery Subsidy and the Discussions at WTO: Issues, Prospects and Way Forward

Ahead of the WTO's July 15 deadline for its member countries to come up with a 'clean and complete' fisheries negotiation text to be presented to trade ministers to help them reach an agreement, experts asked developing countries including India to ensure that the interests of low-income and resource-poor fisherfolk are protected.

Speaking at a webinar on 'Fishery Subsidy and the Discussions at the WTO: Issues, Prospects and Way Forward' held on 29 May 2021, Dr Mukesh Bhatnagar, Professor, Centre for WTO Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, said India is aiming to use the Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) mechanism to make sure that low income, resource-poor fishers, or livelihood fishing as well as fishing-related activities of developing countries in their respective territorial waters (12 nautical miles from the shores of the coastal state) are protected through an exemption from the ban

on subsidies for unreported and unregulated fishing.

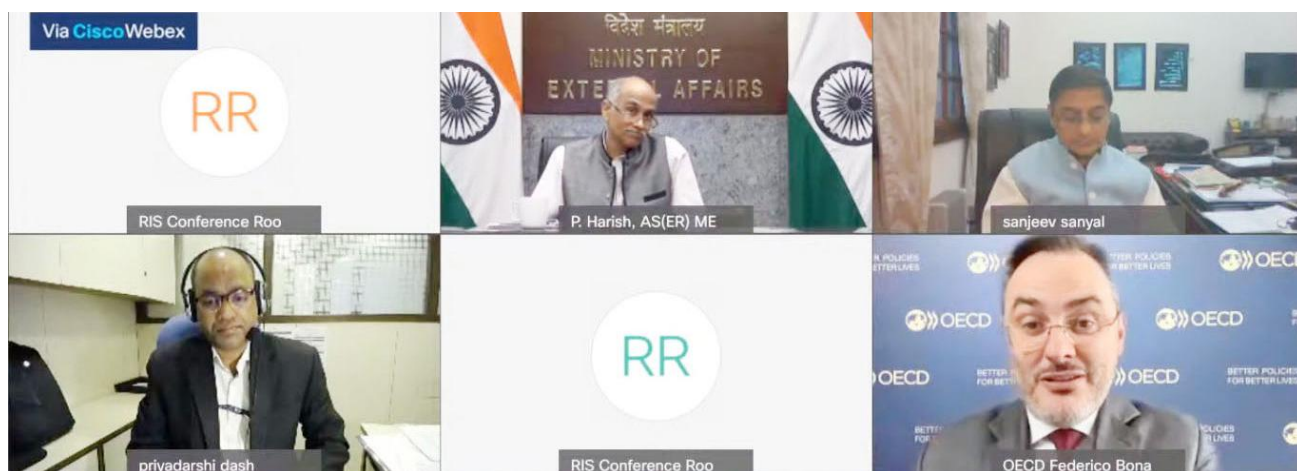
A recent draft text put out by the WTO Chair of the negotiations has proposed a two-year time period (from the date when the final agreement enters into force) for developing countries including LDCs to do away with the exemption from subsidies for Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing (for fishing-related activities of their poor fishers) within 12 nautical miles from the baseline.

According to the draft text, two years as the applicable time period can be a starting point for discussing this provision. However, experts said there are many points (including those related to this timeline for exemption from the ban on subsidies as well as the definition of what constitutes 'artisanal fishing') in the draft text that are yet to be agreed upon by the members. As per the WTO, "under the mandate from the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference held in

Buenos Aires in 2017 and the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 14.6, negotiators have been given the task of securing agreement on disciplines to eliminate subsidies for IUU fishing and to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, with SDT being an integral part of the negotiations."

Mr Tarun Sridhar, former Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, said it is questionable whether the WTO was the appropriate body for fisheries negotiation, especially on issues like what constitutes 'overfishing', when there are other specialised agencies for that purpose such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. WTO primarily looks at the issue of tariffs, he added. He also said developing countries including India have capacity constraints in complying with various notifications and in

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Screenshot of the event in progress

Priorities for Growth and Stability in Post-COVID World: Role of G20 Framework Working Group

India, a leader of the developing world, strongly opposed attempts from developed countries to prioritise climate change-related issues at the G20 discussions without a consensus within the influential bloc comprising 20 major global economies. New Delhi described such attempts pushing for a 'green recovery' with stringent conditionalities as one that will amount to a form of 'green colonisation' at a time when the developing world was vulnerable on account of the COVID-19 pandemic and was looking at somehow recovering from the aftermath of the global health crisis.

"We do have the Paris agreement (on climate change mitigation) and we need to adhere to that. The great danger of putting it in G20 and that too without a consensus (among G20 members), is actually diluting it. Far from helping the cause, it would instead be a diversion from what was agreed by everybody (in the Paris agreement) and would end up in a parallel track," said Dr Sanjeev Sanyal, Principal Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance, India. He was speaking at a webinar organised by RIS on "Priorities for Growth and Stability in Post-COVID

World: Role of G20 Framework Working Group" on 9 April 2021.

Climate change was a serious issue, but should not be confused with the immediate objective of economic revival post the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, Dr Sanjeev Sanyal said, adding, however, that some of the revival package could be directed towards meeting the climate change-related concerns. He said the link between climate change and the pandemic was far from established as pandemics happen from time to time whether or not climate change occurs. He added that the response to the pandemic should be science-based and not one filled with rhetorical flourishes. He said India was adhering to its climate change commitments and was willing to do more, adding that New Delhi was uncomfortable with certain efforts to bring climate change issues to the G20 forum as there was no agreement on the same.

Besides, there was an issue about "who decides what is green", Dr Sanjeev Sanyal said. The issue was important because once a system of rigid ideas (of what is considered as 'green') was established for the rating agencies

to be then seen as credit-worthy or not, there would be problems on account of mechanical application of that thinking process as seen in debt restructuring, he said. The pro-cyclicality of the ratings process "causes and worsens the shock from a crisis", he pointed out. "If you do the same thing here (on climate change issues), a rigid system with 'green-rating agencies' becoming the equivalent of credit-rating agencies, there is a danger of all kinds of unintended consequences being built into the system, not to mention the high likelihood that such agencies almost certainly will be emanating out of developed countries," he said. Unless there was a democratic spread of green rating agencies across the world, and a 'green' framework agreed by all the countries, there is a genuine danger that the world will end up with a form of 'green colonisation', Dr Sanjeev Sanyal said.

Speaking on the occasion, Amb. P. Harish, Additional Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs, India, said India was the only G20 country that has met the Paris climate change agreement commitments. Referring to the move to establish

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Coping with COVID: Experiences of Developing Countries in Vaccine Platforms and Rollout



Prof Sachin Chaturvedi



Amb Amar Sinha



Dr Sandeep Bhalla



Dr Ram Sewak Sharma

India is ready to share with other countries, especially those in Africa and the Global South, its experience and expertise regarding the COVID-19 vaccination programme rollout with the help of the digital platform called Co-WIN, Dr R. S. Sharma, CEO, National Health Authority, said at a Webinar organised by GDC at RIS on 'Coping with COVID: Experiences of Developing Countries in Vaccine Platforms and Rollout' on 19 May 2021. Significantly, Dr Sharma also said privacy protection and prevention of cyberattacks were given utmost importance while developing the national portal and when it was decided to make available Co-WIN Public APIs (for appointments and vaccine certificate downloads) for use by third party applications.

Speaking at a webinar Dr Sharma further said India's rich experience of vaccinating its huge population and the challenges

faced by the system - on account of the country's diversity in terms of multiple languages and dialects, as well as people who are educated, functionally illiterate, old and young, those 'with and without' adequate knowledge and information about the vaccine, and the rural and urban areas - could be shared with other countries, especially from the developing world.

He said Nigeria had requested India to share the Co-WIN platform and support the setting up of such a platform in that country, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already approved any such cooperation in jointly fighting COVID. "The Prime Minister has said India must help any country that asks for our help. India helped other countries with vaccinations, medicines and other support. We are ready to help any country from Africa or any other part of the world, that wants our help," Dr

Sharma said.

Countries including Morocco, and those in South East Asia such as the Philippines were keen on getting India's help regarding developing a digital ID programme similar to Aadhaar, he said. "We are absolutely open to sharing this experience with any country," he said.

Terming the issue of guarding the Co-WIN platform from cyberattacks as "very important", he said the government has adopted the principle of minimal data collection. Only a person's name, gender and year of birth and the personal identity document are required for registration on the platform, he said, adding that these are not very sensitive private data. "We don't have as such any sensitive private data. We have a robust system of encryption of that data. We also have provided all the necessary tools and are taking all precautions to ensure that we

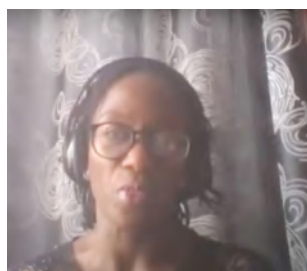
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Mr Hassan Sibomana (Rwanda)



Mr Aviral Gupta



Dr Rose Jalang'o (Kenya)



Dr Abdullahi Bulama Garba (Nigeria)

COVID-19: Need to Prepare for Medium and Long-term Implications

The 35th STIP Forum Lecture was delivered by Dr Amitava Banerjee, Associate Professor in Clinical Data Science, University College London (UK), Honorary Consultant Cardiologist, University College London Hospitals and Adjunct Associate Professor, Public Health, Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, India on 25 May 2021 via online platform. The topic of this public lecture was “COVID-19: Urgent Need Beyond The ICU, The Hospital and The Short-Term”. Professor K. Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), New Delhi chaired the session. Mr. Sunit Tandon, Director, India Habitat Centre and Dr. K Ravi Srinivas, Consultant, RIS made brief welcome remarks.

In his Chair’s remarks, Professor K. Srinath Reddy highlighted the need for data-driven decentralised decision-making to ensure effective response and resource allocation during the pandemic. Dr. Amitava Banerjee in his very insightful lecture elaborated on



Dr Amitava Banerjee

the importance of data science in helping devise timely and effective strategy for tackling COVID-19 pandemic. He illustrated this by providing instances from UK. Dr. Banerjee pitched for the need to think beyond ICU, hospitals and beyond the short-term measures and to prepare for medium and long-term implications as the pandemic is exposing serious social inequalities across the countries. He stated that beyond the short-term, the COVID-19 poses a threat of “Long COVID” and the potential collateral damage to public health through series of physical, mental

and functional impairments. He strongly stressed the imperative for healthcare system to prepare effective strategies and plans to address the challenge of “Long COVID”.

Dr. Banerjee argued that the current pandemic can be better termed as “syndemic” (a set of linked health problems involving two or more afflictions, interacting synergistically, and contributing to excess burden of disease in a population) and therefore better concerted integrated care pathways are required to address the challenges.

In his final remarks, Dr Amitava Banerjee clearly articulated that simple public health measures including following COVID-19 protocols and vaccination are the mainstay of the response and a proactive government, along with a strong public health system backed by the community participation will go a long way in effective handling of the pandemic. Dr. Amit Kumar, Assistant Professor, RIS proposed the vote of thanks. ■

Priorities for Growth and Stability in Post-COVID World: Role of G20 Framework Working Group

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a new goal post outside the Paris framework in the G20 or in some other framework, he said there was a developmental cost to taking on such new commitments outside the Paris framework. There was nothing on the table regarding what all would constitute the USD 100 billion climate finance for developing nations (by 2020 and set a higher annual goal by 2025), and whether every Official Development Assistance would be added to this number, as well as regarding technology transfer

commitments, he said. Even if carbon emissions peak at 2050, the net total of emissions of India will be less than that of China, the US and the European Union, he said. “It would not be correct to ignore the historic case load and the developmental situation, where India’s per capita GDP is 5 per cent of that of the G7 countries, and a fraction of the overall G20 per capita, and that India’s low per capita energy consumption,” he pointed out. Constraining India’s options at this point through other

extra conditionalities will impose a huge financial and developmental cost, Amb. P. Harish said.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, chaired the session, while Professor Kevin Gallagher, Professor of Global Development Policy, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, Mr Federico Bonaglia, Deputy Director, OECD Development Centre, Paris and Dr Priyadarshi Dash, Associate Professor, RIS, also spoke on the occasion. ■

Banks, Finance and Changing form of Technology: New Options with FINTECH

The concentration of a couple of third-party service providers in the Fintech-based retail payment space could lead to anti-competitive practices, a senior RBI official has cautioned and said that the challenge for regulators was to manage the entry of Big Tech companies into the financial space in a non-disruptive manner.

Referring to the growing popularity of the Aadhar-based Unified Payments Interface (UPI) -- an instant payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) -- Mr T. Rabi Sankar, Executive Director, RBI, said "they (Big Tech companies) are obviously extremely helpful due to the client base of a couple of Big Tech companies. Look at the popularity of UPI because of the client base of a couple of Big Tech companies. But this process has to be managed."

Speaking at a webinar on 'Banks, Finance and Changing form of Technology: New Options with FINTECH' organised by RIS, India International Centre in collaboration with University of Essex, UK on 23 April 2021, Mr T. Rabi Sankar said, "the concentration of two or three third party providers in these retail payment space could give rise to competitive weaknesses. That is a challenge that we need to look at and solve going forward." He added that the overall theme of speeding up Fintech absorption in the financial space without undermining the integrity or stability of the financial system will remain the primary challenge for regulators in the next decade or so.

Mr T. Rabi Sankar, however, noted that there are not too many payment systems in India and that the number of players is currently limited. "There is a tendency to look at third party app providers in the UPI system, where roughly about 70 per cent is provided by two apps. Strictly speaking they are not providers as



Screenshot of the event in progress

such, as they are just the front-end and just onboard customers. They have no control on the entire UPI itself. In that sense, there is not so much a concern on anti-trust or monopolistic tendencies because there is hardly any pricing that happens there," he said.

In the UPI-based system, the NPCI has laid down path for a more even distribution of share of third-party app providers, the senior RBI official said, adding that apart from that there are apparently no such ex-ante anti-trust regulatory provision. The reason for such a regulatory approach was to ensure the development of the Fintech market. "If the UPI is gaining popularity, you will have to think twice about stepping in and controlling the market share of two or three popular apps because that could actually hurt absorption of this tech in the population," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Srinivas Yanamandra, Chief of Compliance, New Development Bank, Shanghai, said it was important to have a differentiated regulatory approach – one for start-ups with a view to promote innovation, and another for Big Tech players to ensure that there are no monopolistic and anti-competitive practices. Pointing out the recent anti-trust-related actions by the People's Bank of China against some leading Big Tech players in China, he said other countries were also looking at that approach and considering replicating it in their own jurisdiction.

Professor Thankom Arun, Director, Centre for Accountability and Global Development (CAGD), University of Essex, UK, said while the new technologies have the potential to reshape banks and other financial institutions, it was important to harness such technologies to the betterment of the entire population. He further stressed that Fintech should ideally reduce the cost of financial intermediation and ensure financial inclusion.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, said Fintech investments have grown globally following success stories like M-Pesa in Kenya and the UPI in India, adding that many developing countries were looking to emulate countries like India and Kenya in this regard. There is scope for replicating such models of cooperation through innovative development cooperation projects in Asia and Africa. However, he said it was important for regulators and the players to ensure safety and security of digital transactions.

Professor K.J. Joseph, Director, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Thiruvananthapuram, said finance was at the core of all development issues, adding that, therefore, to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, it was important to harness fintech in a manner that was inclusive. Dr Priyadarshi Dash, Associate Professor, RIS, also spoke on the occasion. ■



Screenshot of the event in progress

Role of Banking and Financial Sector: Overcoming Pandemic Challenges

The RBI in its upcoming June monetary policy will be faced with a “huge challenge” of doing a tightrope balancing act between growth and inflation, especially in view of Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation and core WPI inflation inching up as well as due to the need to maintain price stability with an eye on growth, according to former RBI Deputy Governor, Ms Usha Thorat.

Speaking at a webinar on the ‘Role of Banking and Financial Sector: Overcoming Pandemic Challenges’ organised by RIS and India International Centre on 21 May 2021, Ms Thorat said, “We are finding commodity prices pressure building up. We are finding that WPI and core inflation are inching up. We are also quite concerned about the impact of the (COVID-19) second wave and the supply and demand constraints that are being faced. So, I think this kind of a tight rope balancing will clearly come out in the next monetary policy deliberations (of the RBI).” Ms Thorat, who is currently the Chairperson, Foundation for Ecological Security, was responding

to a question on whether the RBI should rethink its inflation targeting stance given the current conditions. In April, the WPI-based inflation had touched a 11-year high of 10.5 per cent as against 7.4 per cent in the previous month on account of the price rise of certain food products, fuels, minerals and manufactured items, though the retail inflation had dropped to a three-month low of 4.3 per cent in April.

She pointed out that earlier there was a stance towards going back from the accommodative stance to start withdrawing the excess liquidity in the system. But the last monetary policy talked about the concerns regarding growth, she said. “One cannot completely avoid looking at the signals which are coming up from the global conditions and from the domestic conditions. So, we will clearly see this tightrope walking in the June policy. It also depends on how much you are going to change your GDP outlook, which has been retained at 10.5 per cent, as well as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) outlook,” Ms Thorat said, adding that both these outlook figures which

come out in every monetary policy will be looked upon very closely with the kind of information that RBI has.

Terming the task before the Monetary Policy Committee in June as a “huge challenge”, she said “while the growth concerns are significantly important, as a person who was there (in RBI) after the 2008 crisis, and where there was a huge fiscal stimulus and a huge monetary stimulus, (pumping in) huge liquidity into the system, unleashing the power of inflation really was something that you first remember, and the kind of impact that excess liquidity had on bad loans in the system. So, that is not something I want to revisit at this stage.” She further said there is a need to have a relook at the fiscal space both at the Centre and the state government levels. “We may again need to deal with lives and livelihood programmes through like the MNREGA through food grants, and all those kind of welfare measures which are absolutely necessary to avoid distress and then start looking at what else can we do.”

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Lecture on Resilient Financial System and Governance

18 June 2021, 4.00 to 5.30 p.m. (IST)

Resilient Financial System and Governance

Unless traditional financial firms adapt to the newer ways of doing business by adopting the latest technologies and showing technological resilience, they may be marginalised soon by the Big Tech and innovative FinTech players that are revolutionising financial transactions, according to Mr. Mahesh Kumar Jain, Deputy Governor, RBI.

Speaking at a webinar on 'Resilient Financial System and Governance' jointly organised by RIS and India International Centre on 18 June 2021, Mr Jain said, "Technology is revolutionising the competitive landscape of the financial system." He added that there is a "growing reliance of financial institutions on technology and technology resilience is now regarded as important as financial resilience, if not more important." However, Mr Jain underlined the importance of preserving heterogeneity in the financial system with entities following different business models, even while they adapt to the newer ways of doing business. "A homogenous financial system will be less resilient and prone to systemic crisis if the underlying economic conditions change," he said.



Dr Mahesh Kumar Jain, Deputy Governor, RBI

Referring to the growing importance of climate risks, he said while insurance companies directly face such risks, banks are also required to take them more seriously. "Increased frequency of natural disasters and climate extremes have a direct impact on the operational resilience of banks, especially in the context of increased reliance on centralised technology platforms and data centres. There is a constant need to assess the climate risk and mitigate the same," he stressed. Mr Jain said the financial system needs to move towards green financing, even

while taking into account the country's developmental requirements. RBI is discussing with central banks of other countries for developing guidelines on green finance.

Citing good governance framework as a major factor that enhances the resilience of an entity, he said governance quality depends on governance structures and culture. "While it is possible for the Government or RBI to enact laws/regulations to prescribe governance structures within a bank, appropriate culture is something that cannot be legislated. Banks and the Boards have to develop the desired culture within the organisations", he said.

On the importance of compensation policies in the context of governance framework, Mr Jain said, "a compensation structure which rewards short term risk taking, without consideration for long term risk or negative externalities, may endanger the resilience of the individual institutions as well as the systemic resilience. At the same time, inadequate compensation also has the effect of not sufficiently incentivising the top/senior

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Resilient Financial System and Governance

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management of financial institutions in developing the capacity of the financial institution to anticipate, absorb and adapt to various shocks.”

On the role of moral hazard, or its absence, in building a resilient financial system, Mr Jain said banks will not have any incentive to invest in building a robust risk management system if they know that taxpayers’ money would be used to rescue them. “Shareholders of a bank will have incentive to seek better governance and risk management capabilities from the management of the bank only if their investments are at risk. Privatisation of profits and socialisation of losses is antithetical for building a resilient financial system. Similarly, employees of a bank should also have skin in the

game,” he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rakesh Mohan, former Deputy Governor, RBI and Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress, stressed on the need for RBI to keep a close watch on the actual level of bad loans or the likely NPAs even as the current pandemic-triggered crisis has necessitated regulatory forbearance/loan moratorium. This will help in contingency planning for any situation once the regulatory forbearance/debt moratorium is lifted, he said. Dr Mohan also expressed concern over a likelihood of a flood of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code-related cases in the near future.

Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, and Governing

Board member, RBI said the RBI has launched a programme called ‘Utkarsh’ to bring in new initiatives on the regulatory side, and adopt new technologies. However, the challenges include the multiplicity of financial firms and FinTech, as well as the need to ensure a green recovery through greater access to green finance. Ashok Bhattacharya, Executive Director, *Business Standard* Group, spoke about the need for greater clarity on the relationship between the government and the financial system as well as the importance of strengthening the apex level Financial Stability and Development Council to address interconnected issues in the financial sector. Mr. N.N. Vohra, President, IIC, also spoke on the occasion. ■

Fishery Subsidy and the Discussions at WTO: Issues, Prospects and Way Forward

Continued from page 5

taking part in the negotiations effectively. Mr Sridhar pointed out the practical difficulties in implementation of norms such as determining whether a small fishing boat has crossed the 12 nautical mile distance limit for fishing.

Professor S. K. Mohanty, RIS, proposed certain alternatives with greater flexibilities for developing countries. For instance, he said there could be a complete exemption for LDCs from the ban on providing subsidies for small scale fishing within the 12 nautical mile distance limit, and a longer time period for developing countries (say 7-10 years) to end such subsidies. Ms Ranja Sengupta, Senior Researcher, Third World Network, said there are attempts by developed countries to cripple the SDT mechanism meant for developing countries, even though the UN SDG Target 14.6 comes

with a SDT mandate (it specifies that ‘by 2020, members should prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing; eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective SDT for developing countries and LDCs should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation).

Mr P. Jayaprakash, Akhil Bharatiya Matsya Mazdoor Mahasangh, termed as “undemocratic” the “hasty” manner in which the WTO was conducting negotiations in a virtual format “without adequate transparency”, and “pushing” countries to conclude the negotiations soon, especially at a time when developing countries are finding it difficult to overcome the health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pointing out the constraints

being faced by developing countries in effectively participating in the virtual negotiations, he said the WTO should immediately suspend the fisheries negotiations till normalcy is restored after overcoming the pandemic.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, said the fisheries negotiations are important from the perspective of the usage of SDT provisions and the WTO’s governance of subsidies. Mr Rajeev Kher, Distinguished Fellow, RIS and former Commerce Secretary of India, said the fisheries negotiation gives the WTO an opportunity to revive multilateralism. He said it was also important to look at how the negotiation will attempt to make a distinction between certain developing countries with a high per capita GDP and the rest of the developing country members struggling due to resource constraints. ■

BRICS CIVIL FORUM 2021



Professor Sachin Chaturvedi



Ambassador Sanjay Bhattacharyya



Mr P. Harish

During the current India's Chairship of BRICS, RIS has been entrusted by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, to host the BRICS Civil Forum 2021 again (RIS hosted the BRICS Civil Forum in 2016 as well). The BRICS Civil 2021 process commenced with the Curtain Raiser on 16-17 April, 2021. Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director-General, RIS delivered the Welcome remarks, followed by remarks by Dr. Mohan Kumar, Chairman, RIS. Dr. Victoria Panova, Managing Director, Russian National Committee on BRICS Research and Vice President for International Relations, Far Eastern Federal University, Russia presented the report on last year's BRICS Civil Forum that was held in Russia. Amb. Pavel Knyazev, Russia's BRICS Sous-Sherpa and

Amb. Ben Joubert, South Africa's BRICS Sous-Sherpa delivered the Special remarks; wherein they appreciated the theme of "Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus" under India's BRICS Chairship this year and extended their full support in making BRICS Civil Forum successful.

The Inaugural address was delivered by India's BRICS Sherpa Amb. Sanjay Bhattacharyya. He acknowledged the importance of civil societies as they represent the collective conscience of our people. He stated that the Civil Forum also serves as an ideas bank for BRICS and offers essential inputs on relevant international economic issues. Amb. Bhattacharyya further expressed that since its inception, the Forum has helped BRICS to arrive at concrete policy

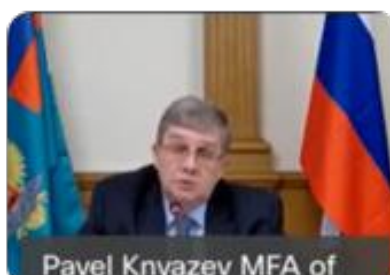
measures and commended it for the significant contributions over the years.

Following the Inaugural event, various thematic dialogues were organised by RIS as part of the BRICS Civil 2021 process in the months of May and June. Leading scholars/experts/practitioners from leading CSOs, think-tanks and academics from all the five BRICS member countries participated in these dialogues and shared their valuable insights on the topic.

Building on the outcomes of the thematic dialogues, RIS is going to host the BRICS Civil Forum 2021 on 28-29 July 2021 (in virtual format) to discuss the outcomes and draw a roadmap on the institutionalization of BRICS Civil Forum with due leadership coming from India.



Ambassador Mohan Kumar



Ambassador Pavel Knyazev



Ambassador Ben Joubert



Ambassador Lakshmi Puri



Dr Nagesh Kumar



Dr Manoj Nesari



Dr Rajesh Tandon

| BRICS Civil Thematic Dialogues | Dates |
|---|-------------|
| BRICS Civil Forum Curtain Raiser Dialogues on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reformed Multilateralism ■ Development Finance and Global Public Goods ■ Pandemic Response, Partnership and Role of Civil Society | 16-17 April |
| Dialogue on Wellness, Health and Traditional Systems of Medicines in BRICS | 24 May |
| Dialogue on BRICS Economies and Women's Participation: The Institutional Response | 4 June |
| Dialogue on Quality of Economic Growth and Inclusion: A Regional Development Perspective | 10 June |
| Dialogue on Future of Education and Skills: New Paradigm of Learning in BRICS | 21 June |



Mr K. V. Kamath



Dr Rukmani Banerji



Dr Samir Saran



Mr Atul Jain

Inaugural Address:

Ambassador Sanjay Bhattacharyya,
*India's BRICS Sherpa and Secretary (CPV
& OIA), Ministry of External Affairs,
Government of India*



India has dealt with the COVID pandemic with science and humanity both for her own citizens and also for the global community. Through the Vaccine Maitri initiative we have delivered 64 million doses of made in India COVID vaccines to more than 80 countries, demonstrating our willingness and capability to shoulder greater responsibility as a first responder in times of crisis. India has demonstrated that it is not only a pharmacy of the world for production of essential drugs but also a reliable provider to the world. We do believe that the global community has to work together in such situations.

Multilateralism, which had already been under pressure for not being able to represent the current realities of our times, again failed to rise to the occasion in handling the pandemic or its impact. While efforts have been made towards equitable vaccine distribution by the Covax facility, it has not been able to prevent the vaccine nationalism. While people in developing countries risk succumbing to the pandemic, some countries are finding reasons for not sharing the vaccines or their Intellectual Property Rights, to maximize their profits from vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for the pandemic. India and South Africa repeatedly made submissions to WTO to provide waivers to TRIPS for supply of COVID-19 vaccines to the global community. These appeals did not go through, despite wide support from developing countries. I was pleased to see the recent initiatives by certain countries in WTO, in this context. Science provided vaccines; humanity can provide its distribution.

The multilateral system aimed at promoting development and maintaining security did yeoman service in the early years after WWII. But over time, its inability to reform and adjust to evolving developments, exposed its fault lines, both on scope and efficacy of its decisions and delivery and on its representative nature. Together we have the responsibility to reshape our global institutions and how we look to the future. Those resisting reforms are clinging to an image of the past that is not the reality of the present and certainly not the hope of the future.

Recent developments demonstrate that multilateralism

is not just relevant but is also the need of the hour. It is the basis for any long-term solution to the challenges faced by the global community, current or future, solutions that benefit all. Multilateralism is a form of global governance based on common rules accepted by multiple stakeholders for our common good.

BRICS brings together five major emerging economies. BRICS as a grouping has found a life of its own, determined its directions and is now starting to show its promise in various domains. NDB, a Bank founded by BRICS countries, is now fully functional. The Bank, true to the BRICS philosophy, stepped forward in the fight against COVID-19 and offered emergency assistance to member countries in 2020. I am pleased that all BRICS members have been engaged in discussion regarding the importance of reform in the UN system, Bretton Wood Institutions, WTO, WHO and others.

BRICS has come a long way since it began as an economic grouping 15 years ago. The rapid changes in economic organisation, technologies, use of data and digital technologies and more importantly, in the nature of work itself has altered the socio-economic landscape. The balance of this landscape rests on the nature of our response to this transformation. In this period of turmoil, BRICS has been up to the task. It has not only been undaunted in the face of new challenges such as climate change, challenges encountered by multilateral trading system, demographic shifts, changing character of production and employment, technology-induced transformations, etc, but has also adapting itself to the times. We wish to see a BRICS that seeks to put the citizen in the center and evolve mechanisms that provide benefit to all BRICS citizens and indeed to the global community around us.

India's approach during the Chairship of BRICS is reflected in the theme we have selected: BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus. We have also identified four broad priority areas: (i) Reform of the Multilateral System (ii) Counter Terrorism Cooperation (iii) Using Digital and Technological Solutions for the achievement of SDGs and

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BRICS CIVIL FORUM 2021

Continued from page 15...

(iv) Enhancing People to People exchanges. In terms of deliverables, we hope to put forward a number of action plans on the key priority areas so that the impact and relevance of BRICS experience is expanded for its citizens and to the global community. The experiences, especially in the past year, tell us that use of technology and digital means enables us to reach out to more people and enhances efficiency of delivery and depth of impact. These should be harnessed effectively to aid in our efforts in the endeavor to implement SDGs.

Civil societies represent the collective conscience of our peoples. In these difficult times the role of our civil societies assumes greater relevance to raise the voice of the people and also to direct multilateralism in the right direction. In order to advance the objective of building an international order in which no one is left behind, participation of every actor, including individuals, civil society, states and multilateral fora, is required. It is in this context, that BRICS Civil Society Forum assumes importance.

The BRICS Civil Forum, which was initiated in 2015 with the aim of fostering constructive dialogue between Civil Society Organizations in BRICS countries, academia and businesses on a wide range of socio-economic issues, has the responsibility to ensure that the BRICS grouping does not lose its focus on people and development. You have made great progress in connecting civil society across BRICS partners and coming forth as the voice of the people. Your mission in these challenging times acquires even greater significance.

This forum also serves as an ideas bank for BRICS and offers essential inputs on relevant international economic issues. Since its inception, the forum has helped BRICS to arrive at concrete policy measures and must be commended for the significant contributions over the years. We look forward to the BRICS Civil Forum coming up with innovative ideas and suggestions for BRICS Leaders. I wish you a very successful and productive year and look forward to receiving valuable suggestions from the Civil Forum.

BRICS ACADEMIC FORUM 2021



Dr Rajiv Kumar



Dr Rajesh Kotecha



Dr Paulo Gadelha

During the current India's Chairship of BRICS, RIS and ORF have been entrusted by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, to host the BRICS Academic Forum 2021 again (RIS and ORF hosted the BRICS Academic Forum in 2016 as well). Number of Dialogues have been organised under the BRICS Academic Forum 2021 so far. RIS has taken lead in organising some of the Dialogues on the following topics so far:

- Traditional Medicine Cooperation (12 May 2021)
- SDGs and Strengthening the Means of Implementation (20-21 May 2021)

Dr. Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Government of India delivered the Inaugural address during the Dialogue on Traditional Medicine Cooperation on 12 May 2021. Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, Government of India

delivered the Inaugural address during the Dialogue on SDGs and Strengthening the Means of Implementation on 20 May 2021. Eminent speakers from leading academics and think-tanks from all the five BRICS countries participated and shared their valuable insights.

As part of the BRICS Academic 2021 process, more Dialogues are planned in the months of July and August 2021.

AI Ethics and Responsible AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) developers and policymakers need to address the dangers stemming from deepfakes and biases impacting privacy as well as the emerging technology's damaging geo-political implications and psychological consequences, according to experts.

Speaking at a webinar organised by the New Delhi-based research institute RIS on 'AI ethics and responsible AI' on 19 May 2021, Ms Renata Dessallien, UN Resident Coordinator in India, said AI increasingly has geo-political implications as the emerging technology is disrupting the current distribution of power between countries, adding that this important issue was not currently getting adequate attention. Ms Dessallien said, "There is no question that AI will throw up into the air the current distribution of power. It not only about power between different groups, but also between countries and we are talking geo-politics. It is also between countries and private sector as we now have technology companies bigger than the GDP of many countries."

Addressing the same event, Professor V. Kamakoti, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Madras, talked about the dangers of AI, including certain instances where the use of the technology was not fair and responsible. "In some of the earlier deployment of AI, there was a bias in identifying criminals based on colour. This was well reported to an extent that some of the major technology companies stopped selling their face recognition software to police. So, AI has to be fair. Also, there is software such as deep-fakes which started creating a methodology where criminals can create fake videos. So, AI has to be responsible," he said. Professor



Kamakoti emphasised that future of AI depends on making AI 'sane' and promoting responsible uses through interpretable and transparent AI systems. He also highlighted green AI and stressed the need to understand that AI can be localised and is an evolving technology.

According to Ms Dessallien, another crucial issue that should be given focus was how AI was dividing societies. "Look at the echo chambers that are eroding common grounds between people in the same country that used to be able to talk to each other and now hardly do so because AI algorithms are sent into these little camps and tribal groups are fed different kinds of diets in their groups and the end is a complete erosion of common ground and common ability to discuss and debate dispassionately issues of core importance to all of us," she said.

In addition, the AI also has psychological consequences, she said. "The attention economy is constantly working to try to grab and keep our attention on it as long as possible. It is making us distracted, leading to addictions not only in young people, but also in many other age groups as well," Ms Dessallien said. There are

beginnings of studies showing how young people are feeling isolated, depressed, suicidal or doing acts of self-harm, she said. Therefore, these bigger AI issues that go beyond privacy and bias are equally important, but on occasions, even more important, she said.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, said the access, equity and inclusion framework and the humanitarian value system are important while looking at the ethical aspects of AI that have an economic imperative for the developing world. Inclusive and responsible AI is vital to ensure that no one is left behind and to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, he added.

Professor Bernd Stahl, Director, Centre for Computing and Social Responsibility, De Montfort University, UK, said in order to get a handle on the ethics of AI, "it was important to not think about an individual technology, but conceptualise AI as a set of interlocking ecosystems which are driven and enabled to a certain degree by AI." He said the way to ensure that these technologies are conducive to human flourishing is to understand it from the nature of

the technology as well as from the cultural and legal context.

Mr Santosh K. Misra, IAS, CEO, Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency, said the government has an intertwining role of being the promoter of AI and also of being the regulator and user of AI. He said the state government has brought out a policy on ethical AI. It was probably the first in the country and even among the few government to do so, the official said. According to the policy, any entity rolling out AI solution in public domain will have to follow the principle of 'DEEPMAX', which stands for diversity, equity, ethics, privacy, misuse protection, accountability, and cross geography application and then decide whether it is safe to roll out, he added.

Dr Grace Eden, Assistant

Professor, Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi, Mr Ameen Jauhar, Senior Resident Fellow, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, Mr Rohit Satish, Consultant, NITI Aayog and Senior Fellow, Wadhvani Institute of Artificial Intelligence, Ms Vidushi Marda, Senior Programme Officer, Article 19 and Non-resident Research Analyst, Carnegie India, and Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas, Consultant, RIS, spoke on the occasion.

Various governments and intergovernmental organisations have developed/are developing certain set of AI principles which intend to address ethical issues around AI. OECD, G20, EU, UNESCO, IEEE, WEF and many national governments have either formulated frameworks related to ethics of AI or are in the process of finalising such a framework.

The NITI Aayog document on "Responsible AI #AIforALL: Approach Document for India", seven broad principles for responsible management of AI have been identified, viz. safety and reliability; equality; inclusivity and non-discrimination; privacy and security; transparency; accountability; and protection and reinforcement of positive human values. There are considerable convergences and divergences between responsible AI principles and the AI ethics principles, proposed/implemented by various other governments and intergovernmental organisations. For example, the EU has proposed a set of regulations to govern AI and in this EU is trying to balance core values espoused by EU with applications of AI and to develop a trustworthy AI in/for Europe. ■

Issues and Challenges for Latin America

Continued from page 3

that TRIPS flexibilities including compulsory licensing are sufficient and made a strong case in favor of the TRIPS Waiver. Professor Oscar Lizarazo-Cortés, National University of Colombia, said it has become clear that the companies holding Intellectual Property rights to COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics alone cannot cater to the global demand and therefore there was a need to expand production through various types of collaborations by using the TRIPS flexibilities relating to public health. He added that such an approach can help poor people in the developed countries as well. Dr Henrique Zeferino de Menezes, Associate Professor, Federal University of Paraíba, Brazil, said the TRIPS waiver proposal is an opportunity to put public health at the centre

of regional governance and international cooperation agenda in order to address the inequalities including with regard to access to vaccines. He said Latin American countries need to coordinate their political agenda with other developing countries in this context by building a strong coalition at the WTO.

Dr Viviana Muñoz Tellez, Coordinator, Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity Programme, South Center, said Latin America's huge reliance of imports has given more power to pharma firms. She said the Compulsory Licencing mechanism was too complicated and time-consuming to address the urgent needs in a crisis situation like in the ongoing pandemic. There was a need to also focus on competition

laws to counter the anti-competitive practices of the Big Pharma, she said.

Dr Bhaskar Balakrishnan, Science Diplomacy Fellow, RIS, spoke about the need for political will for an early conclusion of the TRIPS waiver talks as well as the requirement for alternative mechanisms to TRIPS for rewards for invention on the basis of health impact. Dr. André de Mello e Souza, Coordinator of International Cooperation at Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), Government of Brazil, spoke about the importance of transfer of technology including those related to mRNA vaccines to augment production. Dr. Krishna Ravi Srinivas, Senior Fellow & Consultant, RIS, spoke on the occasion. ■

Tapping Solar Energy: Sharing India's Experience

India is keen to ensure that solar energy tops the political and economic agenda across all countries through the efforts of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in greater capacity building programmes, reduction of per unit price and creation of markets, according to Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, ISA. In this regard, the ISA, launched by India and France, is aiming to channel USD one trillion in the solar energy sector by 2030 across the world, facilitate universal energy access as well as enable green economic recovery of growth along with climate change mitigation and adaptation, he said.

Dr Mathur was speaking at a webinar on 'Tapping Solar Energy: Sharing India's Experience and Forging Partnership with Asia, Pacific Island Countries' organised by RIS and Global Development Centre (GDC) on 17 June 2021.

Mr Chandra Kishore Mishra, Former Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India, who chaired the panel discussion said it is important for countries to not only reduce carbon emissions but also increase the carbon sink to ensure more carbon dioxide absorption than releases. He said that this effort should be fortified by reducing the dependence on fossil fuels and transitioning to renewable energy. He emphasized that the fall in renewable energy costs will also increase its adoption and usage. The ISA wanted a global collective effort help each other to tap solar energy through transfer of technology and exchange of best practices including energy and resource efficiency, he said. This needs to be done in a manner without any conflict between development and environment, he said, adding that 'responsible development' and



'sustainable consumption' are the keys in this regard.

Dr Mathur explained that the foray into energy efficient lighting using LED lights through a multi-pronged strategy of aggregating demand, repeated bulk procurement and asking the customer to pay in installments (to make sure that the monthly payment was less than the benefits), has been successful as the price of LED bulbs has dropped now by almost a tenth from around Rs 300 in January 2014. However, he said expensive technologies can pose a huge challenge to developing countries, he added.

Ambassador Amar Sinha, Chairman, Advisory Committee, GDC and Distinguished Fellow, RIS, said India has been proactive in its efforts to go green, rely on solar energy and push the 'One Sun, One World, One Grid' initiative. He amplified that the most crucial aspect is the interconnected problems of climate change, global warming and the rising sea levels poses existential threat to the mankind. The dangers of climate change have also found reflection in the statement of the recent G7 summit.

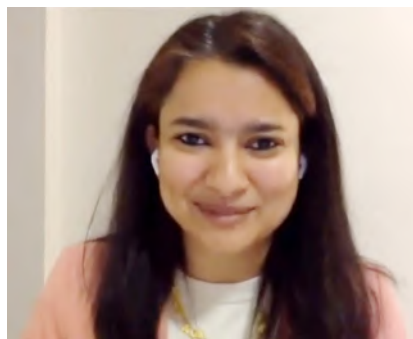
Dr Christopher Vehe, Permanent Secretary of the Solomon Islands – Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, spoke about the need for strengthening capacity building and skill through effective management of human and financial resources. He mentioned about the limited electrification in most of low-income households of the Pacific Island Countries due to higher tariffs. He emphasised the need for renewable energy to address climate change issues, energy security and achieve tariff reduction. Furthermore, he pointed out on the requirement of strong institutional set up as well as the crucial need of having a legal and regulatory framework in place for adjudicating effective policies and incentives as PICs are highest per capita users of the solar grids in the world. Ms Sadhana Relia, GDC Fellow, gave vote of thanks and spoke on the need for tangible partnerships and future collaborations with PICs as collective global south.

The webinar saw a discussion on stimulating renewable energy deployment across the Pacific Island Countries, especially since the islands are endowed with natural resources like sunlight and wind. The challenges faced by the islands include lack of private sector investment, poor capacity to operate and maintain renewable energy systems, particularly for off-grid installations on remote islands, as well as the difficulties in grid integration. There were also discussions on the scope of India's support and partnerships in solar energy demand assessment plan development, creation of governmental enterprise, capacity building of personnel and help in accessing global finance to build solar power for Pacific Island Countries. ■

FISD Lecture on Climate Diplomacy

The Forum for Indian Science Diplomacy (FISD) organised an online lecture by Dr. Vyoma Jha, J.S.D, Stanford Law School on 'Climate Diplomacy' on Tuesday 29 June 2021. Amb. Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan, Science Diplomacy Fellow, RIS and Former Ambassador of India gave the introductory remarks. Setting the context, he identified climate change and human health as two key emerging areas of science diplomacy. He emphasised that climate change is a defining challenge of the century. There is a need to balance inequity in emission between developing countries (termed as large emitters) and high per capita emissions in developed economy. Issues and challenges of countries like Brazil, South Africa, India and China, which are doing more than their share and are under increasing pressure, should be addressed. The efforts to meet zero net emissions by 2050 need to be strengthened and finance and technology must be provided to developing countries. He added that longer-term goals could be negative net emission to bring down CO2 levels for a better planet in future.

Amb. Manjeev Singh Puri, Distinguished Fellow, TERI chaired the session and set forth two questions to be explored by the speaker primarily, what were the objectives for setting up the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and to what extent it has achieved its objectives. He stressed that equity is very important. Dr. Vyoma Jha, J.S.D, Stanford Law School lecture focused on 'Channelising the Sun: Ideas, Institutions and India's New Climate Diplomacy'. She emphasised that there is a 'climate turn in India's Science Diplomacy'. The creation of ISA marks the integration of India's climate and science diplomacy, setting the



Dr Vyoma Jha, J.S.D, Stanford Law School



Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Distinguished Fellow, TERI



Ambassador Dr. Bhaskar Balakrishnan, Science Diplomacy Fellow, RIS and Former Ambassador of India



Prof T. Jayaraman, Senior Fellow, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)

background for India's role in climate governance and future climate negotiations in COP26. ISA was set-up to address concerns of energy accessibility and affordability for energy starved parts of the world. She drew the context for its creation in November 2015, which became a legal entity as a treaty-based international organisation in 2017. She emphasised that ISA was actualisation of the idea of India's political leadership and personal ambition of Prime Minister Modi on climate action, both domestically and internationally. He was an early proponent of renewable energy. There has been a dramatic change in India's climate mitigation targets, which saw ramping up of domestic targets on renewable and especially, solar energy – changing face of solar energy in India. Dr. Vyoma added that there is a subtle shift from energy security to energy diplomacy. Climate change became

a driver of India's strategic interests. It demonstrates India's commitment to climate action as well as to assert its global power by creating an international organisation. ISA illustrates emergence of a new kind of India's economic diplomacy and also helps in building diplomatic ties and strategic partnerships across Global North and South. ISA is a deliberate instrument of India's foreign policy on climate change.

The discussants included Prof. T. Jayaraman, Senior Fellow, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and Dr. Dhanasree Jayaram, Assistant Professor, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE, Manipal. Prof. Jayaraman emphasised that it is important to contextualise ISA with a wider background and understand the complexities of India's position. ISA is part of a package and there are various issues that co-exist. For example,

India's insistence to continue to use coal and coal to remain a part of India's energy mix going forward. ISA needs to be seen along with various other initiatives taken by India in this direction. Dr. Dhanasree Jayaram also held that there is a need to locate ISA within various paradigms and also contextualise it historically. It is important to understand the idea of how climate justice, associated with affordability and accessibility in developing countries is featured in the ISA. Mr. Deepak Gupta, Former Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), presently Honorary Director General, National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) highlighted that solar sector in India and India's position requires a deeper and a wider discussion. There is a need to take note of various issues and challenges, including manufacturing capacity, problems of large-scale utility plants. In his concluding remarks, Amb. Puri said 'climate is going to be one of the most defining issues of our times.' ■

Lectures on India and International Development



AIC at RIS organised a week-long online public lectures on India and International Development during 14 - 19 June 2021. A total 12 lectures were delivered by Dr Prabir De, Coordinator, AIC at RIS on various aspects of foreign policy, trade and regional integration. Over 250 participants attended this lecture series.

Coping with COVID: Experiences of Developing Countries in Vaccine Platforms and Rollout

Continued from page 7

are not subjected to cyberattacks or become victim to such attacks," he said.

On the scalability of the system, he said the Co-WIN platform had opened the registration for people aged 18-45 on April 28 at 4 pm, and till midnight of that day there were 13.7 million registrations on the platform. "We were clocking 55,000 concurrent users per second on the platform. So, the scale that the platform was able to sustain is also very important (to note)," he said.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, said the rise of 'ABCD' (Artificial intelligence, Blockchain, Cloud computing and Data analysis) was influencing and facilitating access to technology. "India's efforts have in a way created new platforms for sharing vaccines for their equitable distribution and facilitating access, equity and inclusion with this framework," he said.

Ambassador Amar Sinha, Chairman, Advisory Committee-GDC and Distinguished Fellow, RIS, pointed out that representatives from four important African countries - Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda - participated in the webinar to share their experiences and challenges relating to their vaccine programmes. He said like in the case of water where every drop is precious, regarding vaccines too every dose/jab is important to ensure that everyone gets access to stay healthy and safe.

Dr Sandeep Bhalla, Associate Vice President-Projects, ECHO India moderated the discussion. Experts who also spoke on the occasion included Mr Hassan Sibomana, Director, Vaccination Unit, Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), Dr Abdullahi Bulama Garba, Director (Planning, Research and Statistics), National Primary

Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Nigeria and Dr Rose Jalang'o, Strategic Information Management and Communications Officer, National Vaccines and Immunisation Program (NVIP), Kenya.

The issues that were on the table for discussion during the webinar included how South-South Cooperation can inspire developing countries to help each other in co-creating digital platforms needed for vaccine management, the challenges faced in supply chain management and training for vaccine production and distribution, how developing countries can overcome vaccination hesitancy, the mechanism that can be developed to share learning amongst developing countries, vis-à-vis handling of COVID-19 and how South-South Cooperation can help in rapid vaccination in developing countries. ■

Issues and Challenges for Africa

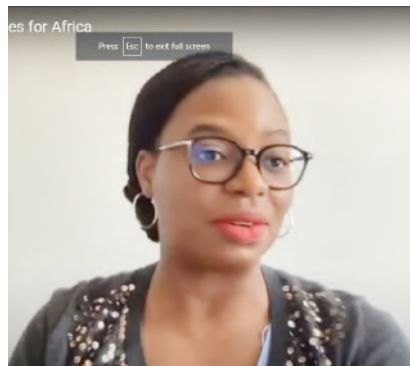
Continued from page 2

position taken by Germany against the TRIPS waiver proposal and the 'non-cooperative' response of the EU, adding that the G7 should support TRIPS waiver without conditionalities. He said it was important to look beyond solutions such as Compulsory Licensing and enhance the capacity of developing countries for negotiations on the issue at the WTO as well as providing special financing window to ramp up production capacity in the developing world.

Professor Faizel Ismail, Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town, said global health should be treated as a systemic issue and a human right. He pointed out that investments by major pharma companies have gone mainly into profit-making drugs and to address the health concerns of the rich countries, and as a result the poor countries had to suffer. He said it was important to review the TRIPS Agreement and IPR laws including those on patents at the national level to correct imbalances and review provisions favouring the Big Pharma. The pandemic has shown that no one is safe unless everyone is safe, Prof Ismail said. Citing Africa's huge imports of vaccines and medicines as well as aid dependency, he said it was crucial, therefore, to promote technology transfer and joint ventures in R&D as well as expansion of local manufacturing. Developing countries including India and South Africa, along with China should work together with the support of institutions such as the New Development Bank to boost production capacities in the



Prof Yousuf Vawda



Dr Amaka Vanni

developing world including in Africa, he said. Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance and RIS should facilitate discussions and research on all these issues, he added.

Professor Yousuf Vawda, School of Law, University of KwaZulu-Natal, said most African countries lack the legal and technological expertise on TRIPS-related issues. He added that even if there is an agreement on the TRIPS waiver at the WTO, the crucial aspect will be to address the challenges regarding implementing the waiver provisions at a national level through amendments in domestic laws.

Dr. Amaka Vanni, School of Law, Leeds University, referred to the transition period given to LDCs under TRIPS Agreement to protect intellectual property



Dr Kirti Narsai

(i.e, exemption accorded to LDCs from TRIPS obligations) by taking into account their financial and administrative constraints, and noted that the transition period will be coming to an end on July 1 this year. She said it is important for the WTO members to agree to extend this transition period, adding that countries in Africa, including LDCs, will need financial assistance, and a mechanism to access trade secrets and the relevant data. Dr Vanni said African nations will have to amend local laws and bring out innovative policies to create local markets, increase their domestic production capacity as well as to help their companies move up the value chain.

Dr. Kirti Narsai, HealthValue Consulting, said it is crucial for African countries to increase their R&D spending, prevent brain drain, ensure technology transfer including those related to mRNA vaccines, and support local MSMEs in meeting the standards set by larger companies in the value chain. She said such strategies can help in breaking the cycle of external dependency in the health sector. Dr. Krishna Ravi Srinivas, Senior Fellow & Consultant, RIS, also spoke on the occasion. ■

TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges

Continued from page 1

Industry and Competition, of South Africa, said speaking at a webinar co-hosted by RIS and the South Centre (the Geneva-based intergovernmental organisation of developing nations) on 'TRIPS waiver: Issues and Challenges' on 5 June 2021.

India and South Africa, the AU, the LDC Group (least developed countries) and 14 other members on May 25, in a revised text (to the one originally submitted by India and South Africa in October 2020), had stated that the revision of the text had reflected "the concern of continuous mutations and the emergence of new variants and consequently the many unknowns with respect to SARS-COV-2 and its variants and the global need for access as well as the importance of diversifying production and supply."

Amb. Carim said it is important to remove all the legal impediments that come in the way of transfer of technology and know-how, and eliminate the hurdles that are troubling the expansion of production of affordable medical products as well as their swift and easy access. He said this issue was important not just during this pandemic but also from the perspective of preparation for future pandemics. Amb. Carim said despite the complications involved in negotiations at the WTO and for the 164-member body to arrive at a consensus, the proposal (of India and South Africa) has become a catalyst for a greater discussion on the TRIPS Agreement. He added that the talks so far indicate that the TRIPS Agreement, as it stands now, is not suited for the WTO and the member countries to respond as they need to in the event of such an unprecedented global crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director, South Centre, said the provisions relating to Compulsory Licensing (CL) were "too cumbersome and time-consuming" to be used quickly in a global health crisis

situation like the one now during the COVID-19 pandemic where "urgency is the essence". CL refers to flexibility in the TRIPS Agreement, and is defined as the act of a government permitting 'someone else to produce a patented product or process without the patent owner's consent or plans to use the patent-protected invention itself'. CL is "not workable" and "not the right instrument to address this situation", Prof. Correa said. He said developing countries are capable of producing mRNA vaccines and diagnostics and therapeutics, but needed access to technology and finance in this regard.

Ms Leena Menghaney, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Access Campaign, said it was important for the WTO discussions and negotiations to address not only vaccines but also therapeutics, adding that there must be talks with greater focus on treatment. She said governments must also do more on ensuring transparency and disclosure on their decision-making exercise.

Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, said the issue concerns not only the developing countries but also several people in the developed world who are finding it difficult to get timely access to vaccines, medicines and other medical products at an affordable price. He pointed out that the BRICS bloc (comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) had recently supported the proposal originally submitted by India and South Africa, and had called for access and equity in production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics. Prof. Chaturvedi added that a consensus on the issue will reflect a wider relevance of the WTO and a 'reformed multilateralism' approach.

Chairing the session, Ambassador Jayant Dasgupta, Member, RIS Governing Council and General Body and former Ambassador of India to

WTO, said it was important for the WTO member countries to enter into a text-based negotiation process, and if that is not allowed, then it will be difficult to ensure an outcome by the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) that is slated to be held in Geneva from 30 November to 3 December 2021. He said if there is no decision on the issue latest by the MC12, it would be a setback to the WTO as a multilateral forum at this crucial time of global health crisis. He added that the Big Pharma was spending tens of millions of dollars on lobbying efforts to advance their interests and on either preventing the temporary waiver from taking effect or on diluting its effectiveness.

Professor Graham Dutfield, Leeds University, said 'technology transfer' is an "unkept promise" of the TRIPS Agreement and is an aspect that has not been taken seriously so far. Referring to a World Bank study, he said it will be economically rational to spend what is required to scale up vaccine delivery than to do nothing and let the global economy suffer. Dr. Siva Thambisetty, Associate Professor, London School of Economics, said the issue under discussion has various implications including from the point of view of competition law and public health. She said along with the temporary waiver, it was important for governments to bring out incentives to start regional collaborative agreements. She added that various departments of the developing country governments must not send confusing signals of supporting and opposing the waiver, and instead must align their internal and external positions. Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas, Consultant, RIS, also spoke on the occasion. The webinar is the first of the four-part series on the issue, and, will cover the various regional dimensions of the issue, beginning with those related to Africa (June 12), followed by Latin America (June 19) and South East Asia. ■

Issues and Challenges for South East Asia

Continued from page 4

Vietnam National University, Hanoi, said getting global support for TRIPS waiver should be a priority, adding that developing countries need to come together to ensure the usage of compulsory licensing whenever needed. Mr Tony Salvador, Third World Network, Philippines, referred to the reluctance within the Philippines government in supporting the TRIPS waiver proposal and the role played by the civil society organisations in drafting a resolution in support of the waiver with a view to get it passed by the lawmakers in that country.

Professor Carlos Correa, The Executive Director, South Centre, Geneva, said ASEAN countries like Thailand and Vietnam have demonstrated their capability to develop sophisticated and advanced facilities to produce high-quality vaccines and medicines. Cooperation between developing countries is important to expand such facilities as well as to ensure that the WTO members reach a successful conclusion on the TRIPS waiver discussions, he said. Prof Correa pointed out that the pharma companies developing the vaccines and medicines have benefited from



government subsidies and incentives for research and development, and therefore, in an emergency situation like the current one, TRIPS waiver provisions must come into effect so that the common man has affordable access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics.

Mr Chalernsak Kittitakul, the Executive Director of AIDS Access Foundation, Thailand, said only 3.5 percent of the population of Thailand have received COVID vaccines so far, adding that the country is facing a shortage of vaccines due to reasons including Intellectual Property Rights barriers. Mr Nirmalya Syam, Senior Programme Officer, Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity Programme at South Centre, Geneva said safeguard provisions need to be incorporated in the TRIPS waiver norms to ensure that they have an over-riding effect if and when they come in conflict with



provisions in free trade agreements that prevent its implementation at the local level.

Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas, Senior Fellow & Consultant, RIS, said there is a need to develop a holistic framework at the WTO and at national levels to not only help set up 'tech commons' and 'patent pools' to ensure tech transfer but also to ensure access to finance and raw materials related to COVID-19, so that the developing world can build manufacturing and distribution facilities of vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics. Platforms such as the one coming up in South Africa using mRNA technology needs to be supported and expanded to other developing countries for boosting tech transfer and production, he said. Prof Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, also spoke on the occasion. ■

Role of Banking and Financial Sector: Overcoming Pandemic Challenges

Continued from page 10

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, and member, Board of Governors, RBI, said the inflation target (of 4 percent, with a leeway of +/- 2 percentage points) "would be a means towards the end, which is growth and development." He also referred to the RBI's recent announcement of a Rs 50,000 crore liquidity package to help boost the country's healthcare infrastructure and the efforts that Ministry of Finance is making to bring down inflationary tendencies.

Mr Manish Sabharwal, Chairman, Board of Directors, Team Lease Services Ltd, said availability of credit is more important than the cost of credit. "There is really less dispute between the government and RBI (on addressing inflation). Inflation is a really important election issue in the long run. It is the biggest tax on the poor. This fight (between the government and the RBI) is overdone, that somebody likes inflation and somebody doesn't. Nobody likes inflation. It is only

people who live in the weather of the moment who obsess about this," he said. Ms Dakshita Das, Additional Member, Railway Board and former, Managing Director, National Housing Bank and Mr Sangram Singh, EVP & Head (Commercial Banking Coverage Group), Axis Bank touched upon the critical role that credit would play in the post-pandemic recovery especially to the MSME sector and desired path of lending, the banks and NBFCs are expected to embark on. ■

Prof Sachin Chaturvedi

Director General

- Made a presentation on at the webinar on "Beyond the Great Powers: The EU, Partnerships and Inclusive Multilateralism", organised by the European Think Tanks Group (ETTG) on 21 June 2021.
- Chaired the Discussion on book "Dancing Towards The \$5 Trillion Economy on a Holistic Beat" authored by Aruna Sharma, organised by IIC on 19 June 2021.
- Delivered inaugural address on 'Revisiting Indian Development Models and Contemporary Connects' at the 3rd National Integration Conference on Self-reliant India: Towards Svarajya in Ideas organised by Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla on 18 June 2021.
- Participated in the High-level closed-door workshop "Boosting the Role of Least Developed Countries in the G20 policy agenda", jointly organised by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and UNCTAD on June 14, 2021.
- Presentation on Promoting Financial Innovation and Cooperation at the 2021 BRICS Think Tank International Symposium on the theme 'Building the Innovation Center Together to Create a Paradigm for BRICS Cooperation' organised jointly by China Council for BRICS Think Tank Cooperation and Xiamen Municipal People's Government on 10 June 2021.
- Panelist at the virtual side-event on "Triangular Cooperation post BAPA+40: a multi-stakeholder partnership for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda" organised by the High-level Committee (HLC) on South-South Cooperation and Permanent Mission of Portugal to the UN on 3 June 2021.
- Discussion meeting on UNDP's next Strategic Plan organised by UNDP on 25 May 2021.
- Made a presentation on 'Indian Philosophy and Global Commitments: Context of Sustainable Development Goals' at the Conference on Sustainability, Simplicity and Spirituality: the 3S

organised by University of Utah on 23 May 2021.

- Discussion meeting on New experiences of multilateralism/new IC - 3Is meeting organised by OECD Development Centre on 7 May 2021.
- Discussion Meeting on future collaboration beyond triangular cooperation organised by OECD on 27 April 2021.
- Made a presentation on 'Impact of the Pandemic on Economic, Social and Environmental Pillars of SDGs in India' at the Launch of the 2021 Theme Study "Beyond the Pandemic: Building Back Better from Crises in Asia and the Pacific", organised by UN ESCAP on 20 April 2021.
- Made a presentation on 'Future Challenges in Development Ecosystem and Preparedness' at the: 7th International Sewa Baithak organised by Sewa International on 15 April 2021.
- Delivered opening remarks at the Discussion Meeting on 'Technology Cooperation and Supply Chain Security' held during Second India-France-Australia 1.5 Trilateral Dialogue organised jointly by Observer Research Foundation, the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, and National Security College at the Australian National University on 14 April 2021.
- Made a presentation on Recommended projects for India-ASEAN Cooperation in Digital Connectivity at the Brainstorming Session on Establishment of Digital Connectivity with ASEAN including through Creditline organised by Ministry of External Affairs on 7 April 2021.
- Discussion meeting on 3Is potential meeting organised by OECD Development Centre on 7 April 2021.
- Discussion Meeting of Experts Working Group on 'The Future of International Cooperation' organised by OECD on 6 April 2021.

Prof S. K. Mohanty

- Participated in the meeting organised by Ministry of AYUSH and made a presentation on

AYUSH Sector in India: Prospects and Challenges, New Delhi on 25 June 2021.

- Participated in the 2nd Meeting of the Working Area 2 on 'Building partnerships and enhancing maritime cooperation with Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) member States and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)' organised by IMU Chennai Campus, on 27 May 2021.
- Delivered a lecture on "Blue Economy" to the Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees of 2020 Batch & Bhutanese Diplomats, organised by Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi on 6 May 2021.
- Participated in the First India-Korea 2+2 Dialogue as a Speaker on Re-contextualising India-Korea Economic Partnership in the Post-COVID International Economic Order organised by Center for ASEAN-India Studies, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, The Korean National Diplomatic Academy, Seoul, Korea, 29 April 2021.
- Participated in the India-France-Australia 1.5 Trilateral Dialogue 2021 organised by Observer Research Foundation, the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, and National Security College at the Australian National University, and made a presentation on Marine Global Commons, Connectivity, and the Geopolitics of Fisheries dated 14 April 2021.

Mr Rajeev Kher

Distinguished Fellow

- Participated in the Book Discussion on "Forgotten Kashmir - The Other Side of the Line of Control" organised by Indian Council of World Affairs on 30 June 2021
- Participated in the Policy Roundtable on Leveraging FDI Flows for Sustainable Recovery: World Investment Report 2021 organised by ISID-UNCTAD on 29 June 2021.

Contributions to Outside Policy Dialogues

- Participated in the Webinar on India Versus China: Why they are not friends organised by The Centre for Social and Economic Progress on 29 June 2021.
- Participated in the Indo-Pacific Experts Group meeting organised by Vivekananda International Foundation on 28 June 2021.
- Participated in the Disciplinary Committee – Bench-II Meeting organised by Institute of Accountants of India on 6 April, 26 April, 13 May, 14 & 25 June 2021.
- Participated in the discussion on Beyond the Great Powers: The EU, partnerships and inclusive multilateralism organised by European Think Tanks Group on 21 June 2021.
- Participated in the Webinar on Neighbourhood First Series - Afghanistan Post US Withdrawal organised by India International Centre 16 June 2021.
- Participated in the 5th Meeting of the Steering Committee constituted for IPRS 2.0 organised by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industry on 4 June 2021.
- Participated in a meeting on Trade Remedies organised by NITI Aayog on 3 June 2021.
- Participated as a Discussant in the webinar on Envisioning India organised by Institute of International Economic Policy and Sigur Center for Asian Studies, George Washington University on 2 June 2021.
- Participated as an Independent Director in a meeting organised by Goodyear India Limited on 27 May 2021.
- Participated in a Conversation on “Transforming India's Economy: Lessons from Global Experiences” organised by Pune International Centre on 27 May 2021.
- Participated as an Independent Director in a meeting organised by Kirloskar Brothers Limited on 24-25 May 2021.

- Participated in the Director Power e-Meeting organised by Asian Centre for Corporate Governance & Sustainability on 21 May 2021.
- Participated as an Independent Director in a meeting organised by Kirloskar Brothers Limited on 20 May 2021 at New Delhi.
- Participated as an Independent Director in a meeting organised by Airtel Bank on 18 May 2021, New Delhi.
- Participated in the Design Talk Series organised by CII in collaboration with World Design Organisation on 14 May 2021.
- Participated as a Member of the CII Core Group on China on 11 May 2021 at New Delhi.
- Participated in the ‘Future of India-EU Relations’ Key Takeaways from India-EU Summit 2021 organised by FICCI on 10 May 2021.
- Participated in the digital session on 'Strategic Patience and Flexible Policies: How India can rise to the China Challenge' organised by Confederation of Indian Industry on 29 April 2021 at New Delhi.
- Participated in the National Virtual Conference on Economics Dimensions in Judicial decisions organised by OP Jindal University and CUTS International on 27-28 April 2021.
- Participated in a Lecture organised by the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service on 23 April 2021.
- Participated in the Panel Discussion on Perspectives from the South Asia subregion organised by ESCAP South and South-West Asia Office (ESCAP-SSWA) on 20 April 2021.
- Participated in the UN Food Summit on 15 April 2021.
- Participated in the Virtual seminar to explore TRIPS and trade in knowledge organised by CUTS on 15 April 2021.
- Participated in a webinar on India - U.S. Trade Townhall: Strengthening U.S.-India

Pharma Cooperation and Vaccine Diplomacy organised by Confederation of Indian Industry on 7 April 2021.

Dr B. Balakrishnan

Science Diplomacy Fellow

- Participated in FISD Lecture on Climate Diplomacy, 29 June 2021 as opening speaker.
- Participated as speaker in a panel discussion on 21 June 2021, organised by the Warsaw Science Diplomacy School 2021 course for 34 participants from various countries.
- Participated in RIS-South Centre webinar on TRIPS Waiver: Issues and Challenges for Latin America, 19 June 2021 as opening speaker.
- Participated in RIS-ORF "Dialogue on International Security" held on June 15, 2021 as panelist from India.
- Participated in virtual Meeting on Sustainable Logistics and Transportation in North East, 23 April 2021, organised by Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati.

Dr Krishna Ravi Srinivas

Visiting Fellow

- Chaired the session on ‘RRI as an Integrated Approach to Research and Innovation Across Disciplines, Contexts and Countries’ at the NewHorizon Final Conference - Experiences with implementing RRI in Europe on 25 May 2021.
- Moderated discussion in the session on Asia/Pacific in the Regional Webinars of the Super MoRRI project organised by SUPER MoRRI on 15 April 2021.

Dr P. K. Anand

Visiting Fellow

- Participated in the T20 Roundtable Seminars/workshops organised by T20 Italy chairs during April-June 2021.
- Participated in the ERIA Webinar Series the ‘ASEAN on Point’ Public Forum #3 – ‘Preparing ASEAN Workforce for Post-COVID-19’, on 20 April 2021.

Contributions to Outside Policy Dialogues

- Participated in ERIA Webinar Series – Episode #4 ‘Entrepreneurship, Start-ups, Innovation (E-S-I) in ASEAN and East Asia for The Post-Pandemic Recovery’, on 27 May 2021.
- Participated in the Webinar on ‘Critical Partnerships for Success – Public, Private and People’ on 24 June 2021, organised by ERIA.
- Participated in a Webinar on ‘Resilient Financial System and Governance’, on 16th June 2021, organised by IIC. New Delhi.

Mr Krishna Kumar
Visiting Fellow

- Participated in the T20 Roundtable Seminars/workshops organised by T20 Italy chairs during April-June 2021.
- Participated in the ERIA Webinar Series the ‘ASEAN on Point’ Public Forum #3 – ‘Preparing ASEAN Workforce for Post-COVID-19’, on 20 April 2021.
- Participated in ERIA Webinar Series – Episode #4 ‘Entrepreneurship, Start-ups, Innovation (E-S-I) in ASEAN and

East Asia for The Post-Pandemic Recovery’, on 27 May 2021.

- Participated in the Webinar on ‘Critical Partnerships for Success – Public, Private and People’ on 24 June 2021, organised by ERIA.
- Participated in a Webinar on ‘Resilient Financial System and Governance’, on 16th June 2021, organised by IIC. New Delhi.

Dr Sabyasachi Saha
Associate Professor

- Delivered lecture at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, Ministry of External Affairs to IFS Probationers; Theme: “Dynamics of BRICS: Opportunities and Challenges for India” on 29 April 2021.
- Participated in 4th Annual Regional Conference themed “Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) in Enhancing the Delivery of the Big Four Agenda” organised by Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) on 24 June 2021 and made Presentation

on “Role of Technology and Innovation Hubs – Towards Southern Innovation Hubs.”

Dr Priyadarshi Dash
Associate Professor

- Made presentation as a panelist in RIS-ORF Panel Discussion on Digital BRICS held virtually on June 24, 2021.
- Made presentation on “Basel Regulations and Development Finance Flows to Developing Countries’ at BRICS Academic Forum 2021 Dialogue on SDGs and Strengthening the Means of Implementation on May 21, 2021 (Virtual).
- Made presentation on “Mainstreaming Digitalisation in Development: Initiatives and Lessons from Asia” at the Russian scientific and practical conference on “The Asian World in New Realities of the Cross-Borderland held on 28 April 2021 organised by Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Russia (Virtual).

Latest Publications

REPORTS

- **Public Policy and Economic Development Case Study of Indian Pharmaceutical Industry**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021
- **FinTech: New Technology for Future Banking and Finance**, RIS and IIC, New Delhi, 2021
- **Revisiting Economic Cooperation in BIMSTEC in Post-COVID-19**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021
- **Report on Fifth Meeting of BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks (BNPTT)**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021
- **FIDC Annual Symposium 2021: Development Cooperation Dialogue – Key Points in Brief**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021
- **FIDC Annual Symposium 2021: Development Cooperation Dialogue-Key Takeaways**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021
- **New-Generation DFI in India: Opportunities and Challenges**, RIS and IIC, New Delhi, 2021



- **Digitalisation and Development: Reflections from Asia**, RIS, New Delhi, 2021

RIS DISCUSSION PAPERS

- #266: **Intra-Industry Trade in Manufactured Goods: A Case of India** by Manmohan Agarwal & Neha Betai
- #265: **National AI Policy/Strategy of India and China: A Comparative Analysis** by Amit Kumar
- #264: **Fisheries Subsidy Issues before the MC12 Lessons from the May Text for the July Meeting** by S. K. Mohanty & Pankhuri Gaur

RIS POLICY BRIEFS

- #104 **Artificial Intelligence and Its Impact on Jobs in India** by Amit Kumar

Latest Publications

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by Dr Kapil Patil

#102 **Accelerating Universal Health Coverage through Technologies**
by Professor T. C. James

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- Volume: 1 No: 2, April, 2021

AIC AT RIS PUBLICATIONS

- Connectivity Cooperation for a Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific: Outcome Document
- Journal of Asian Integration, Vol. 3. No. 1, April 2021

AIC Commentary Series

- Digital Connectivity to Boost Post COVID-19 Recovery in ASEAN and the Role India Can Play, AIC Commentary No. 16, April 2021
- India-France-Australia Trilateral: Opportunities Galore for ASEAN, AIC Commentary No. 17, May 2021
- ASEAN-India Cooperation in Higher Education in the Post-Covid-19 Period, AIC Commentary No. 18, June 2021



Contributions to Outside Publications by RIS Faculty

- Anand, P. K. and Kumar, Krishna. 2021 "Measuring Distance to SDG Targets in India and South Asia Imperatives." Eria-Springer Volume
- Balakrishnan, Bhaskar. 2021. "A new road," *Monthly South Asia*. Karachi, Pakistan, May 3.
- Chaturvedi, Sachin. 2021. "Paradigm shift in times of pandemics: Decision of Biden administration can accelerate global supply of vaccines." *Financial Express*, May 6.

Chaturvedi, Sachin. 2021. "Why community efforts are essential for real change." *Indian Express*, May 25.

Chaturvedi, Sachin. 2021. "Teekon ka vaishvik vitaran" (Global distribution of vaccines). *Dainik Jagran*, 18 May.

De, Prabir. 2021. "Building Partnership with ASEAN and Korea's New Southern Policy: Views from India", *World Economy Brief* 21-13, KIEP Research Paper, KIEP, Seoul.

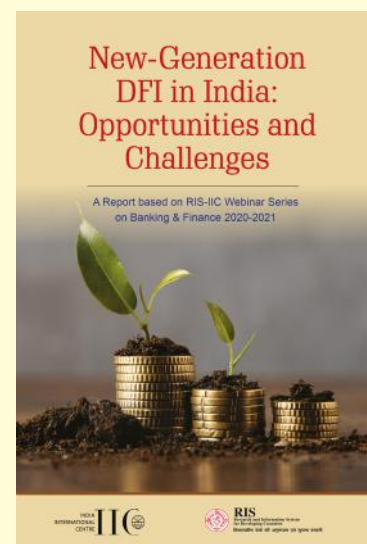
De, Prabir. 2021 "Dealing with Coronavirus Pandemic in the Bay of Bengal Region." *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, No. 560, East-West Center, Washington, DC.

De, Prabir and Durairaj Kumarasamy. 2021. "ASEAN-India Energy Cooperation: Current Status and Future Scope of Cooperation." in Sanjay K. Bhardwaj (ed.) *The Chinese Shadow on India's Eastward Engagement: The Energy Security Dimension*, Routledge India, New Delhi.

Mohanty, S. K. 2021. "Regional Economic Dynamics of BIMSTEC during the Global Recession: China factor in the Regional Caucus," in A.S. Raju and A. B. Roychoudhury (eds.) *New Future for BIMSTEC: Connectivity, Commerce and Security*, Routledge India, New Delhi.

Saha, Sabyasachi. 2021. "Digital divide in Covid-19 vaccination must be resolved strategically." *Business Standard*, 10 June.

Srinivas, K. R. 2021. Latest Edition of UNESCO Science Report Offers Overview of STI in India. *Science The Wire*, 12 June.



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