

BIMSTEC Cooperation in Post COVID-19

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BRIEF BIOS OF SPEAKERS



H.E. Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam, Secretary General, BIMSTEC Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh

H.E. Ambassador M. Shahidul Islam is the honorable Secretary General of the BIMSTEC Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Earlier, he was the Ambassador to South Korea, Embassy of Bangladesh, Seoul, Republic of Korea in 2008 and Ambassador to France, Embassy of Bangladesh, Paris France in 2012.



Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia is a Distinguished Fellow, Foreign Policy Studies Programme at Gateway House and Member, Governing Council, Asian Confluence. He is Chair of FICCI's Core Group of Experts on BIMSTEC and its Task Force on the Blue Economy. He is a founding member of the Kalinga International Foundation. As Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) from 2012-15, he played a key role in strengthening India's Track-II research and outreach activities. During a 37-year innings in the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), he served as Ambassador to Myanmar and Mexico and as High

Commissioner to Kenya and South Africa. He dealt with a part of South Asia, while posted as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. A prolific columnist, who has also written a critically acclaimed book, *India-Myanmar Relations: Changing Contours* (Routledge), he is a frequent speaker on foreign policy issues in India and abroad. He was Senior Visiting Research Fellow during 2011-13 at the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore. He holds a master's degree in political science from Allahabad University.



Dr. Prabir De is a Professor at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). He is also the Coordinator of ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at RIS. De works in the field of international economics and has research interests in international trade and development. He was a visiting Fellow of the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADB), Tokyo; and visiting Senior Fellow of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Bangkok. He has been conducting policy research for the Government of India and several international organisations. He has a Ph.D. in Economics from the Jadavpur University, Calcutta. He has contributed several research papers in international journals and written books on trade and development. He is the Editor of *The South Asia Economic Journal*, published by Sage.



Mr. Sabyasachi Dutta is founder Executive Director of the Asian Confluence, India East Asia, Center headquartered at Shillong, Meghalaya in North East India. The “Asian Confluence”, is a pan regional initiative to promote an open space for cultural and intellectual exchanges towards creating better understanding of the Eastern and North Eastern region of India in the larger context of India as an emerging power in South East and East Asian geopolitics. Through research, training and advocacy programs, the Asian Confluence provides an opportunity for civil society to enhance people to people contact between India and her neighbours and also encourage a better understanding of the cultural and socio-political issues of the region that actually are the driving force behind India’s “Act East Policy”. At the heart of the project are initiatives that encourage people to people exchange such as, promoting research and interest in the region through research, advice, training programs. The Asian Confluence also promotes 5 educational tourism, creation of “out of the box” livelihood generation by promoting leadership and entrepreneurship programs, eco-friendly products and services and impetus to green industries aimed at economic development by forging a network of businesses and civil society organizations working on similar objectives. Sabyasachi continues to facilitate research programs, exchange programs, talks, discussions and symposia with scholars and leaders of culture and thought, from India and abroad and The Asian Confluence has established itself as a premier organisation in India with several successful initiatives to its credit.



Deepankar Tiwari has over 24 years of experience in the Automotive / Mobility space. He spent 22 years with the Tata Group. Post acquiring his Engineering degree in Metallurgy & Material Science, in 1995, he began his career with the Tata Group joining as a management trainee with Tata Motors Limited at their commercial vehicle division. Subsequently, he joined the prestigious Tata Administrative Services (TAS) and spent a year getting experience across different operating companies of the Group, across different sectors. He spent a year at Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad perusing

an executive management program.

Deepankar currently is the Managing Director, India & South East Asia, for Area9 Lyceum, a company building Artificial Intelligence Induced Adaptive Learning platform headquartered at New York & Copenhagen. He is also an investor and is on the Board of Zoomcar Inc, India's largest self-drive mobility platform and BYD India JV, which has a play in the Electric Vehicles manufacturing & retail.



Dr. Khondaker Golam Moazzem is the Research Director at CPD, Bangladesh. Dr. Moazzem is industrial economist by profession. His major area of interests includes development of industrial enterprises, entrepreneurship development, private investment including FDI, competition policy and trade related issues at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. Dr Moazzem holds a PhD from the Kyoto University, Japan. He was a visiting fellow at the Centre for South East Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University. He worked as a member of various committees at both the national and international levels. Dr

Moazzem has published numerous articles in international peer-reviewed journals and several book chapters and co-authored books published by CPD.



Mr. Achyut Bhandari, presently works as a Freelancer and has research interests in trade, connectivity and regional integration with special focus on the Bay of Bengal region. Mr. Bhandari is formerly with Asian Development Bank, Thimphu, Bhutan.



Dr. Sreeradha Datta is Centre Head & Senior Fellow, Neighbourhood Studies, Vivekananda International Foundation. With a PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, her research focus is on India's foreign policy, with emphasis on relations with India's neighbourhood and South Asian regional security. Formerly, director, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, she has also been a Fellow with Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. Her publications include books, *Caretaking Democracy: Political Process in Bangladesh, 2006-08*, *Bangladesh: A Fragile Democracy*, *The Northeast Complexities and its Determinants*, *Changing Dynamics in Southeast Asia*, *Drug menace in South Asia: Pakistan connections*, an *Occasional Paper*, and co-edited volumes on *Political Economy of India's North-East Border*, *Changing Security Dynamics in South East Asia* besides, over 100 articles in journals, edited volumes and newspaper and academic websites. Amongst other distinctions, she has been recipient of international fellowships including at German Institute of Global Affairs, Distinguished Indian Scholar Series University of Taiwan, International Leadership Visitors Programme, at USA, awarded the Shelton Kodikara Award for South Asian Strategic Studies.



Dr. Zaw Oo is Executive Director of the Centre for Economic and Social Development, an independent think-tank dedicated to inclusive development in Myanmar. Previously, he was the Presidential Economic Advisor from 2012-2016, serving as a principal advisor on finance, industry, commerce and labour issues. In 2012, Zaw Oo contributed to the Framework of Economic and Social Reform, a strategic policy framework that guided comprehensive reforms in Myanmar and he was subsequently assigned to negotiate a historic decision of Paris Club in cancelling US\$6 billion or 60% of Myanmar's debt.

He is presently a member of National Minimum Wage Setting Committee as well as an independent advisory member in several inter-ministerial committees such as pulses, rubber, fishery and a few other taskforces. He holds graduate degrees from Columbia University and American University in international development, finance and banking, and political economy and certificates from Harvard University and Turin University. He also taught at Chiang Mai University from 2006 to 2011.



(Penguin).

Mr. Sujeev Shakya is Chair of Nepal Economic Forum, an institution listed in Go To Think Tank List. He is CEO of beed, an international management consulting firm based in Nepal and also Senior Advisor – Bhutan and Nepal for Bower Group Asia a pan Asia advisory firm based in Washington DC. He writes a regular column ‘The Other View’ in The Kathmandu Post and written many books. His latest book is Unleashing The Vajra – Nepal’s Journey Between India and China



undergraduate degree at Johns Hopkins University and an MSc in International Public Policy at University College London (UCL).

Mr. Kithmina Hewage is a Research Economist at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) and a member of the World Economic Forum’s Expert Network. His research interests include international political economics, foreign direct investment, international trade policy, and private sector development, with a focus on regulatory reforms. He is a member of government taskforces in relation to domestic economic policy reforms and is a national consultant to the International Trade Centre (ITC). He has published articles in several international journals and other national and international outlets. Kithmina completed his



Microeconomics for bachelor and master degree students at Chulalongkorn University since 2002. He has been Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the Centre for European Studies from 2010 to 2012 and Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the ASEAN Studies Center in 2012, both at Chulalongkorn University, before he became Director of the Center in 2013. He has published several papers in journals and books e.g. on the economic development in Southeast Asia, on trade in services among ASEAN member states, on regional economic integration of ASEAN and of the European Union, on the economic reform and SME development in Thailand, on ASEAN-India relations.

Dr. Piti Srisangnam is the Director for Academic Affairs, ASEAN Studies Center, Chulalongkorn University. He is an Assistant Professor of Economics, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University. Dr. Piti Srisangnam holds a Ph.D. degree in Economics from the University of Melbourne (Australia), and an M.A. degree in International Economics and Finance from Chulalongkorn University (Thailand). He has been teaching International Economics and