



**Reframing South Asian
Regional Cooperation
in the New Context**
National and Global Dimensions

4-5 November 2023, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Fourteenth South Asia Economic Summit (SAES XIV)

Reframing South Asian Regional Cooperation in the New Context
National and Global Dimensions

*4-5 November 2023
Dhaka, Bangladesh*

Programme

(As of 2 November 2023)

Organised by



Co-Organisers

Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Sri Lanka
Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India
South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal
Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan

DAY 1: SATURDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2023

INAUGURAL

9:30 am - 11:30 am

9:00 am - 9:30 am	Registration and Reception
9:30 am - 9:35 am	National Anthem
9:35 am - 9:45 am	<i>Welcome Address</i>
	Dr Fahmida Khatun Executive Director Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
9:45 am - 10:05 am	<i>Brief Remarks by Co-organisers</i>
	Dr Dushni Weerakoon Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Sri Lanka
	Dr Paras Kharel Executive Director, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal
	Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan
	Professor Sachin Chaturvedi Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India
10:05 am - 10:35 am	<i>Remarks by Distinguished Speakers</i>
	Ambassador Durga Bhattarai Former Foreign Secretary Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal
	Dr Ishrat Husain Former Governor, State Bank of Pakistan Former Advisor to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity
	Dr. P. Nandalal Weerasinghe Governor Central Bank of Sri Lanka
10:35 am - 10:50 am	<i>Address by the Special Guest</i>
	Mr M. A. Mannan, MP Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Planning Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh
10:50 am - 11:10 am	<i>Address by the Chief Guest</i>
	Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP Hon'ble Speaker, Bangladesh Parliament, Bangladesh
11:10 am - 11:30 am	<i>Closing Remarks by the Chair</i>
	Professor Rehman Sobhan Founding Chairman, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	Refreshments

DAY 1: SATURDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2023

<p>Plenary 1 12:00 pm – 1.30 pm</p>	<p>State of Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Revisiting Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) Report, New Context, Challenges, and Opportunities</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <p>Professor Mustafizur Rahman Distinguished Fellow Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Panellists</i></p> <p>Ms Mandakini Kaul (Online) Regional Coordinator South Asia Regional Integration and Engagement The World Bank</p> <p>Ambassador Farooq Sobhan Distinguished Fellow and Board Member Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) and Former Foreign Secretary, Bangladesh</p> <p>Dr Nagesh Kumar Director and Chief Executive Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (ISID), India</p> <p>Ms Irosha Cooray Director, Education Security and Culture South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)</p> <p>Mr Abdul Ghufuran Memon Federal Secretary, Ministry of Maritime Affairs Government of Pakistan, Pakistan</p> <p>Dr Posh Raj Pandey Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Government of Nepal, Nepal</p>
<p>1:30 pm – 2:30 pm</p>	<p>Lunch</p>

DAY 1: SATURDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2023

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: GROUP A
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm**

Parallel Session A1	Parallel Session A2	Parallel Session A3
Multi-modal Transport (Cross-border Logistics)	Macroeconomic Cooperation and the Possibility of a Common Currency	Towards an Integrated Energy Grid
<i>Chair</i> Dr Dushni Weerakoon Executive Director Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Sri Lanka	<i>Chair</i> Professor Sachin Chaturvedi Director General Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India	<i>Chair</i> Dr M Tamim Professor, Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Bangladesh
<i>Panellists</i> Professor Dr Govind Raj Pokharel Former Vice-Chair National Planning Commission Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Nepal Dr Selim Raihan Professor of Economics, University of Dhaka Executive Director, SANEM Bangladesh Mr Abdul Ghufuran Memon Federal Secretary, Ministry of Maritime Affairs Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Mr Chewang Rinzin Director (Dy. Chamberlain to His Majesty The King) Royal Institute of Governance and Strategic Studies, Bhutan Dr Prabir De Professor Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India	<i>Panellists</i> Dr Zahid Hussain Former Lead Economist The World Bank, Bangladesh Dr Posh Raj Pandey Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Government of Nepal, Nepal Dr Md. Habibur Rahman Chief Economist Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh Dr Priyadarshi Dash Associate Professor Research and Information Centre for Developing Countries (RIS), India Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri Executive Director Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan Dr Ahsan Habib Mansur Executive Director Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh (PRI), Bangladesh	<i>Panellists</i> Dr Shankar Shrestha Executive Director Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), Nepal Mr Richard Kaniewski Deputy Country Director, Friedrich- Ebert-Stiftung India Office, India Mr Alias Wardak Independent Regional Power Integration Expert, Afghanistan Mr Hartmut Behrend Project Manager Project for support of the Climate and Development Partnership Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Bangladesh Professor Badrul Imam Honorary Professor, Department of Geology, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh Mr Mbuso Gwafila Senior Energy Specialist The World Bank
Open Discussion	Open Discussion	Open Discussion
Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Refreshments	

DAY 1: SATURDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2023

**PLENARY SESSION: 2
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm**

Plenary 2
4:30 pm – 6:00 pm

**Identifying New Opportunities and New Modalities for Fostering Regional
Cooperation in South Asia**

Chair

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya

Distinguished Fellow

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh

Guest of Honour

Mr Md. Jashim Uddin

President

SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Bangladesh

Panellists

Dr P. Nandalal Weerasinghe

Governor

Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

Dr Shekhar Shah

Vice Chairman

Academic Advisory Council, Indian School of Public Policy (ISPP), India

Dr Ishrat Husain

Former Governor, State Bank of Pakistan

Former Advisor to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity, Pakistan

Dr Yuba Raj Khatiwada

Former Finance Minister and Former Governor

Nepal Rastra Bank, Nepal

DAY 2: SUNDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2023

9:00 am - 9:30 am Registration and Reception

**PLENARY SESSION: 3
9:30 am - 11:00 am**

<p>Plenary 3 9:30 am - 11:00 am</p>	<p>Geo-strategic Factors Underpinning Contemporary Trends in South Asian Cooperation</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <p>Professor Rounaq Jahan Distinguished Fellow Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Panellists</i></p> <p>Dr Swarnim Wagle Member Federal Parliament of Nepal, Nepal</p> <p>Professor Md Shahidul Haque Professor, South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) and Former Foreign Secretary, Bangladesh</p> <p>Dr Syed Kaleem Imam Former Federal Secretary Government of Pakistan, Pakistan</p> <p>Dr Amena Mohsin Professor, Department of International Relations University of Dhaka, Bangladesh</p> <p>Dr Praveen Jha Professor Centre for Economic Studies and Planning School of Social Sciences Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), India</p> <p>Brig. Gen. (Retd.) Dr Sakhawat Hussain Former Election Commissioner, Bangladesh</p>
11:00 am - 11:30 am	Refreshments

DAY 2: SUNDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2023

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: GROUP B
11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

Parallel Session B1	Parallel Session B2	Parallel Session B3
Climate Change and Resilience	Cross-border Labour Market Management	Value Chains and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
<i>Chair</i> Dr M Asaduzzaman Former Research Director Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Bangladesh	<i>Chair</i> Mr Madhu Raman Acharya Former Foreign Secretary Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal	<i>Chair</i> Dr N. R. Bhanumurthy Vice-Chancellor Dr B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics (BASE) University, India
<i>Special Guest</i> Mr Florian Höllen Head of Cooperation Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany <i>Panellists</i> Mr Md. Anisur Rahman Senior Urban Planner (Consultant) CRISC Project, GIZ Bangladesh Dr Sabyasachi Saha Associate Professor Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India Mr Kshitiz Dahal Senior Research Officer South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal Dr A Atiq Rahman Executive Director Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Bangladesh Professor Dr Babar Shahbaz Professor and Director Institute of Agricultural Extension, Education and Rural Development University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan	<i>Panellists</i> Ms Dikshya Singh Programme Coordinator South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal Mr Raghav Chakravarthy Senior Research Associate JustJobs Network, India Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha Professor, Department of Economics University of Dhaka Research Director, SANEM, Bangladesh Dr Syed Kaleem Imam Former Federal Secretary, Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Dr Praveen Jha Professor Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), India	<i>Panellists</i> Dr Priyadarshi Dash Associate Professor Research and Information Centre for Developing Countries (RIS), India Mr Shams Mahmud Former President Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) Honorary Consul, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Engineer Abdul Jabbar Memon Vice President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Pakistan Dr Biswash Gauchan Executive Director Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS), Nepal Ms Huma Fakhar Founder and Chairperson MAP Capital Holdings, Pakistan Dr Ch Priyoranjan Singh Professor Manipur University, Imphal, India Mr Buwaneka Perera Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/ Secretary General, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Sri Lanka
Open Discussion	Open Discussion	Open Discussion
Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch	

DAY 2: SUNDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2023

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: GROUP C
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm**

Parallel Session C1	Parallel Session C2	Parallel Session C3
Role of Knowledge Actors in Advancing a New Political Settlement in South Asia	Cooperation in Public Health	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
<i>Chair</i>	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Chair</i>
Dr Swarnim Wagle Member Federal Parliament, Nepal	Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman Chairperson, BRAC Executive Chairman, Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) Former Advisor to the Caretaker Government, Bangladesh	Dr Beena Pandey Assistant Professor Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India
<i>Panellists</i>	<i>Panellists</i>	<i>Panellists</i>
Professor Sanjib Baruah Andy Matsui Distinguished Professor of the Humanities Asian University for Women, Bangladesh Professor Imran Rahman Vice Chancellor University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), Bangladesh Mr Felix Kolbitz Resident Representative Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Bangladesh Mr Rinzin Wangchuk JAB Member Journalists Association of Bhutan (JAB), Bhutan Professor Dr Babar Shahbaz Professor and Director Institute of Agricultural Extension, Education and Rural Development University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan Dr Sabyasachi Saha Associate Professor Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India	Dr Ganga Tilakaratna Research Fellow and Head of Poverty and Social Welfare Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Sri Lanka Dr Syed Abdul Hamid Professor Institute of Health Economics University of Dhaka, Bangladesh Dr Prabir De Professor Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India Ms Sabina F Rashid, PhD Professor, Mushtaque Chowdhury Chair in Health and Poverty BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health BRAC University, Bangladesh Dr Rudra Suwal Lead/Coordinator, Economic Development Programme Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), Nepal	Ms Dikshya Singh Programme Coordinator South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal Dr Faria Sultana Head of the Department Department of Economics American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), Bangladesh Ms Neeru Rayamajhi Immediate Past President Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' Associations, Nepal Barrister Rashna Imam Managing Partner Akhtar Imam & Associates, Bangladesh Ms Huma Fakhar Founder and Chairperson MAP Capital Holdings, Pakistan
Open Discussion	Open Discussion	Open Discussion
Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair	Summing up by the Chair

DAY 2: SUNDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2023**CLOSING SESSION****4:00 pm - 5:30 pm**

Venue: Grand Ballroom, Sheraton Dhaka

4:00 pm – 4:10 pm	<i>Remarks by the Moderator</i> Dr Fahmida Khatun Executive Director Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
4:10 pm – 4:25 pm	<i>Presentation of the Conference Summary</i> Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem Research Director Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
4:25 pm – 4:40 pm	<i>Remarks by Distinguished Speakers</i> Dr Dushni Weerakoon Executive Director Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Sri Lanka Dr Paras Kharel Executive Director South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal
4:40 pm – 5:05 pm	<i>Guest of Honour</i> Ms Irosha Cooray Director, Education Security and Culture South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Mr Jan Janowski Deputy Head of the Mission Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bangladesh Mr Stefan Liller Resident Representative United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh
5:05 pm – 5:20 pm	<i>Closing remarks by the Chair</i> Professor Rehman Sobhan Founding Chairman Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh
5:20 pm – 5:30 pm	Vote of Thanks by the Moderator
5:30 pm	Refreshments