



Policy Planning & Research Division
Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India



EGROW
Foundation for Economic Growth and Welfare

India Dialogue with Neighbours



INDO-SRI LANKA ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

May 28, 2026



CONFERENCE REPORT



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INDIA DIALOGUE WITH NEIGHBOURS

Indo–Sri Lanka Economic Conference

Thursday, 28 May 2026

1. Executive Summary

At a time of significant economic and geopolitical transformation in the Indian Ocean region, the Indo–Sri Lanka Economic Conference on Fostering Deeper Economic Ties explored pathways for building a more integrated, resilient and future-oriented bilateral partnership. Anchored in India's Viksit Bharat @2047 vision and Sri Lanka's development aspirations, the Conference examined opportunities arising from economic recovery, supply-chain realignments, digital transformation, energy transitions and evolving regional economic architectures.

A central theme throughout the Conference was the need to move the India–Sri Lanka relationship from dialogue to delivery. While the two countries share deep civilisational, cultural and people-to-people ties, participants emphasised that the next phase of engagement must be driven by implementation-oriented cooperation supported by institutional trust, policy predictability and stronger coordination mechanisms.

Participants recognised the important contribution of the India–Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) in strengthening economic engagement over the past two decades. However, the bilateral relationship has evolved considerably and now requires a broader framework encompassing services, investment, digital trade, innovation and resilient supply chains. Key priorities identified included reducing non-tariff barriers, operationalising Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs), improving trade facilitation and strengthening regulatory cooperation.



Investment, innovation and industrial collaboration emerged as important drivers of future cooperation. Discussions highlighted the need for a predictable business environment, effective investment facilitation and stronger technology partnerships. Opportunities for collaboration were identified across manufacturing, infrastructure, logistics, tourism, pharmaceuticals and emerging technologies, with innovation-led growth and entrepreneurship recognised as critical enablers of competitiveness and long-term investment.

The Conference also highlighted the growing importance of energy connectivity, digital transformation and tourism in shaping the next phase of bilateral cooperation. Renewable energy, Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), interoperable digital ecosystems, critical minerals, healthcare, wellness and tourism were identified as sectors with significant potential for generating growth, employment and deeper economic integration.

Discussions on MSMEs, agriculture and fisheries underscored the importance of developing integrated value chains and production partnerships. Opportunities were identified in agro-processing, dairy cooperation, climate-smart agriculture, precision farming and nano-fertiliser technologies. Sustainable fisheries management, technology transfer, capacity building and climate finance were recognised as essential for strengthening resilience, sustainability and inclusive growth.

The Conference concluded that India and Sri Lanka are uniquely positioned to build a resilient, integrated and future-ready partnership that contributes not only to bilateral prosperity but also to regional stability and economic security across the Indian Ocean region. By leveraging their complementary strengths and deepening cooperation across strategic sectors, both countries can emerge as key partners in advancing shared growth and regional prosperity.

Way Forward: From Dialogue to Delivery

The Conference recommended a shift from discussion to implementation through a structured, time-bound cooperation framework, underpinned by a Joint Implementation and Monitoring Mechanism to track progress on agreed priorities and ensure accountability.

Looking ahead, India and Sri Lanka should position their partnership within the broader framework of Indian Ocean cooperation and regional economic security. Greater collaboration in maritime connectivity, port-led development, blue economy initiatives, resilient supply chains and disaster preparedness can support both economic growth and regional stability. Aligning bilateral initiatives with the Neighbourhood First policy, MAHASAGAR vision, BIMSTEC priorities and wider Indian Ocean cooperation frameworks will help both countries strengthen their role in building a secure, connected and prosperous Indian Ocean region.



2. Introduction

2.1 Rationale

EGROW Foundation is attempting to create an ecosystem in India and its neighbourhood, leading to regional cooperation and development through academic diplomacy. In this context, since inception in October 2018, EGROW Foundation has conducted various online webinars with academicians and policymakers from neighbouring countries especially Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. We have noted that neighbouring countries are keen to take advantage of India's growth story and learn from Indian experience. EGROW successfully completed the Conference on Indo-Nepal Economic Relations on December 20, 2024. Encouraged by the results, EGROW foundation is exploring similar exercise with other neighbouring countries.

India and Sri Lanka share a time-tested relationship rooted in over 2,500 years of civilizational, historical, cultural, and religious ties. As close maritime neighbours, their geographic proximity has nurtured a deep, multidimensional, and forward-looking partnership, encompassing political dialogue, economic engagement, infrastructure development, and defence cooperation.

All based on mutual respect, shared values, and common regional aspirations. Sri Lanka is central to India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and the MAHASAGAR vision (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), while supporting Sri Lanka's vision for regional hub status and its Blue Economy objectives.

A significant milestone in this trajectory was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Cooperation during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Sri Lanka in April 2025. This marks a qualitative shift in bilateral defence relations, opening avenues for greater coordination in maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and regional stability in the Indian Ocean Region.

India continues to be Sri Lanka's leading trading development partner, and investor. Indian investments and lines of credit in priority sectors, including renewable energy, petroleum infrastructure, ports, logistics, railways, digital public infrastructure, banking, and tourism are aligned with Sri Lanka's development priorities and economic stabilisation efforts. Cooperation in energy connectivity, including grid interconnection and petroleum pipeline initiatives, along with port and maritime collaboration, reflects a strategic commitment to regional integration. Cooperation in culture, education, health, capacity-building, and community development continues to reinforce the enduring people-to-people bonds of the partnership.

The conference was designed to harness the current momentum in bilateral ties between India and Sri Lanka, leveraging their rich history of engagement to chart innovative and evidence-based pathways for enhanced economic cooperation. Anchored in Sri Lanka's development aspirations and India's Viksit Bharat @2047 vision, the conference sought to advance a

resilient, inclusive, and future-oriented partnership grounded in shared prosperity and regional peace.

2.2 Overall Conference Objective

The overall conference objective was to strengthen and secure the long-term viability of the Indo-Sri Lanka economic partnership through evidence-based dialogue. This was achieved by analysing and formulating actionable strategies for sustained, inclusive, and resilient growth.

2.3 Specific Objectives

1. To identify actionable measures for deepening Indo–Sri Lanka trade and logistics integration by strengthening bilateral supply chain linkages, reducing trade frictions, and advancing regulatory and standards harmonization, including on Non-Tariff Measures.
2. To explore concrete pathways for scaling cross-border investments and fostering innovation by highlighting opportunities in infrastructure, technology, logistics, green energy, and advanced manufacturing, and by outlining enabling policy and regulatory frameworks.
3. To develop strategies for enhancing two-way tourism flows by improving connectivity, co-creating integrated tourism circuits, and promoting collaborative branding and service standards that support sustainable and inclusive tourism development.
4. To strengthen real-sector cooperation by promoting MSME partnerships and agri-value chain integration, with a focus on technology transfer, market access, and collaborative initiatives that support rural livelihoods and enterprise growth.
5. To synthesize insights from conference sessions into a forward-looking roadmap for Indo–Sri Lanka economic cooperation, outlining priority areas, timelines, and mechanisms for implementation in line with Sri Lanka’s development priorities and India’s Viksit Bharat @2047 vision.



3. Session-wise Proceedings

3.1 Inaugural Session

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Establishing the civilisational, strategic, and economic context for India–Sri Lanka cooperation.
- b. Identifying pathways to translate bilateral goodwill into actionable economic outcomes.

3.1.1 Session Summary

The inaugural session set the strategic context for the Conference by highlighting the deep civilisational ties, shared history, and growing economic partnership between India and Sri Lanka. Speakers emphasised that the relationship extends beyond conventional diplomacy and trade, drawing strength from centuries of cultural, religious, and people-to-people linkages across the Indian Ocean.

The session contextualised bilateral cooperation within a rapidly changing global economic environment marked by shifting supply chains, digital transformation, energy transitions, and evolving geopolitical dynamics.

Speakers highlighted the importance of leveraging complementarities between the two economies, strengthening connectivity, promoting investment and innovation, and building a future-ready partnership capable of serving as a model for wider regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

3.1.2 Session Highlights

I. Strengthen India–Sri Lanka Economic Integration Leverage the strong political and civilisational foundation of bilateral relations to expand trade, investment and economic cooperation, positioning the two economies as complementary partners in regional and global value chains.

II. Move from Dialogue to Delivery Adopt time-bound implementation mechanisms to translate bilateral commitments into measurable outcomes.

III. Enhance Connectivity Across Sectors Accelerate physical, digital, energy and maritime connectivity to deepen economic integration and strengthen Indian Ocean regional linkages in line with shared prosperity and stability objectives.

IV. Promote Investment, Innovation and Technology Partnerships Encourage collaboration in infrastructure, manufacturing, technology and emerging sectors to support long-term growth and competitiveness.

V. Support Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Transformation Facilitate capacity building and market access initiatives that strengthen resilience and ensure the benefits of growth are broadly shared.

3.2 Special Session: Reimagining ISFTA: Rules of Origin and a Modern Trade Architecture for India–Sri Lanka

Key Discussion Areas

Lessons from the India–Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) and the unfinished agenda of services, investment, and deeper economic integration.

3.2.1 Session Summary

The special session examined the evolution of ISFTA and its contribution to bilateral economic integration over the past two decades. As the first bilateral free trade agreement for both countries, the ISFTA played a catalytic role in expanding trade, promoting investment, diversifying exports, and strengthening regional value-chain linkages. The discussion highlighted how the Agreement contributed to deeper market integration and enhanced economic engagement between the two countries.

The session also recognised that the bilateral economic relationship has evolved significantly since the ISFTA was conceived.

3.2.2 Session Highlights

I. Modernise the Bilateral Economic Framework Build on the success of the ISFTA by developing a broader, future-oriented framework covering trade, services, investment, technology, digital cooperation and sustainable development.

II. Expand Services and Investment Integration Accelerate cooperation in services and investment to support growth, employment generation and economic diversification.

III. Improve Trade Facilitation and Market Access Address non-tariff barriers, streamline regulatory procedures and modernise trade rules to reduce transaction costs and improve market access.

IV. Strengthen and Future-Proof Value Chains Promote production linkages, joint ventures and cross-border industrial collaboration, leveraging logistics, digital technologies and innovation to enhance competitiveness and build supply-chain resilience.



3.3 Session 1: Deepening Trade and Logistics Integration

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Strengthening bilateral trade and supply chain linkages
- b. Addressing non-tariff measures and regulatory harmonisation

3.3.1 Session Summary

The session emphasised the importance of strengthening trade facilitation and logistics integration as key drivers of deeper India–Sri Lanka economic cooperation. Participants highlighted the need to, improve customs efficiency, and reduce regulatory frictions that increase the cost of doing business. Strengthening mutual recognition arrangements, enhancing digital trade facilitation, and improving connectivity between ports and logistics networks were identified as critical priorities. The discussions further highlighted the role of technology, digital platforms and sustainable logistics solutions in creating more efficient and resilient trade networks. The session concluded that faster implementation of trade facilitation reforms, stronger institutional cooperation and improved logistics connectivity will be critical to unlocking the full potential of India–Sri Lanka economic relations.

3.3.2 Session Highlights

I. Accelerate Trade Facilitation and Market Access Reduce non-tariff barriers and streamline customs procedures to lower transaction costs and improve market access.

II. Operationalise Mutual Recognition Arrangements Establish reciprocal recognition of testing, certification, accreditation and standards systems to facilitate smoother and more predictable trade flows.

III. Develop a Digital and Paperless Trade Ecosystem Promote interoperable digital platforms, electronic documentation and integrated customs systems to enhance efficiency, transparency and predictability.

IV. Strengthen Logistics and Connectivity Infrastructure Enhance port connectivity, multimodal transport networks and logistics infrastructure, particularly between Sri Lanka and Southern India, to improve trade competitiveness.

V. Establish Institutional Mechanisms for Trade Facilitation Create a bilateral platform involving government agencies, standards bodies and industry stakeholders to address operational bottlenecks and monitor implementation.

VI. Promote Sustainable and Resilient Supply Chains Encourage green logistics, clean mobility solutions and technology-driven supply-chain management to support sustainable and resilient trade networks.

VII. Expand Cooperation Beyond Trade Facilitation Promote collaboration in investment, technology, innovation and regional value chains to support deeper economic integration and long-term competitiveness.

3.4 Session 2: Cross-Border Investment and Innovation

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Expanding infrastructure investments and strengthening innovation ecosystems
- b. Opportunities in technology, logistics, green energy, and advanced manufacturing

3.4.1 Session Summary

The session focused on strengthening cross-border investment, industrial collaboration and innovation-led growth as key pillars of the India–Sri Lanka economic partnership. Participants highlighted that sustained investment flows require a predictable regulatory environment, transparent policies, efficient factor markets and a business-friendly ecosystem. The discussions emphasised the importance of investment facilitation, policy certainty and structural reforms in attracting long-term capital and enhancing investor confidence.

Significant opportunities were identified for deeper to strengthen bilateral value chains, promote technology partnerships, encourage entrepreneurship and expand industrial cooperation by leveraging the complementary strengths of the two economies. The session concluded that greater investment, innovation and private-sector collaboration will be critical to enhancing competitiveness, creating employment and supporting long-term economic growth.

3.4.2 Session Highlights

I. Strengthen the Investment Environment and Accelerate Reforms Promote regulatory certainty, policy stability and ease of doing business to attract long-term investment, improve project implementation and enhance investor confidence.

II. Develop Integrated Bilateral Value Chains Expand collaboration in textiles, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, tourism, services and emerging industries through deeper production linkages and cross-border supply chains.

III. Promote Industrial Partnerships and Technology Collaboration Encourage joint ventures, technology transfer and business partnerships to strengthen industrial cooperation and market access.

IV. Foster Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems Support collaboration in research, start-ups, digital technologies and innovation-driven sectors to create new opportunities for growth and competitiveness.



3.5 Session 3: Digitisation, Energy and Tourism

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Strengthening digital connectivity, fintech, digital public infrastructure, and regional cooperation in renewable energy
- b. Developing smart tourism ecosystems and jointly promoting heritage, coastal, and cultural tourism

3.5.1 Session Summary

The session focused on strengthening India–Sri Lanka cooperation in energy, digital transformation, tourism and emerging strategic sectors through faster implementation and stronger institutional coordination. Discussions highlighted the importance of energy security, renewable energy partnerships, digital connectivity and Digital Public Infrastructure in supporting deeper economic integration. Participants also identified opportunities for collaboration in critical minerals, technology-driven solutions, healthcare, wellness and tourism, supported by policy stability, regulatory cooperation and investor confidence.

The session highlighted the growing importance of connectivity, technology and sustainable development in shaping the next phase of bilateral cooperation.

3.5.2 Session Highlights

I. Accelerate Energy Connectivity and Clean Energy Cooperation Fast-track collaboration in energy infrastructure, renewable energy, petroleum logistics, green hydrogen and other low-carbon technologies to enhance energy security and support the green transition.

II. Strengthen Cooperation in Critical Minerals and Strategic Resources Promote partnerships in the exploration, development and value addition of critical minerals and strategic resources to support industrial growth and future technologies.

III. Advance Digital Public Infrastructure and Technology Innovation Leverage Digital Public Infrastructure and interoperable digital ecosystems to strengthen financial connectivity, digital inclusion and service delivery, while encouraging collaboration in emerging technologies, telemedicine and innovation-driven sectors to support cross-border integration, productivity and people-to-people connectivity.

IV. Expand Tourism, Healthcare and Wellness Partnerships Develop integrated tourism, healthcare and wellness offerings by leveraging the complementary strengths of both countries and promoting sustainable, high-value tourism.



3.6 Session 4: Real Sector - MSME, Agriculture and Fisheries

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Strengthening MSME linkages in agriculture, fisheries, agro-processing, and rural value chains
- b. Promoting climate-smart agriculture, sustainable fisheries, and AI-enabled technologies to enhance productivity, market access, and incomes

3.6.1 Session Summary

The real-sector session focused on strengthening India–Sri Lanka economic cooperation through deeper integration of agriculture, MSMEs and fisheries. The central theme was a shift from a trade-centric relationship towards integrated cross-border value chains, leveraging Sri Lanka's agricultural strengths and India's scale, processing capabilities and market access. Discussions emphasised improving agricultural productivity, promoting agro-processing, dairy cooperation, rural tourism and GI products, while advancing climate-smart agriculture through precision farming, nano fertilisers and climate-resilient technologies.

3.6.2 Session Highlights

I. Strengthen Agriculture and MSMEs as Drivers of Inclusive Growth Promote agriculture and MSMEs as key pillars of employment generation, rural development, value addition and economic inclusion.

II. Develop Integrated Agricultural Value Chains Strengthen cross-border value chains in agriculture, dairy and allied sectors through investment, technology transfer and market integration.

III. Enhance Agricultural Productivity and Competitiveness Promote precision farming, efficient resource utilisation, improved market linkages and technology adoption to increase productivity and farmer incomes.

IV. Advance Climate-Smart and Sustainable Agriculture Accelerate the adoption of climate-resilient crops, nano fertilisers and sustainable farming practices to strengthen food security and resilience.

V. Strengthen Sustainable Fisheries Cooperation and Governance Enhance cooperation in fisheries management through scientific research, data sharing, resource conservation and effective implementation of bilateral frameworks, while pursuing sustainable solutions to the bottom-trawling issue.

VI. Mobilise Technology, Finance and Capacity Building for Resilience Facilitate access to climate finance, technology transfer and institutional capacity-building initiatives to support long-term sustainability, resilience and shared prosperity.

3.7 Special Session

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Synthesis of the day's observations and recommendations for Government
- b. Acknowledgements and the path forward

3.7.1 Session Summary

The special session synthesised the key findings and recommendations emerging from the Conference and highlighted the need to translate policy dialogue into tangible outcomes. Participants noted that the future of India–Sri Lanka relations will depend on stronger implementation mechanisms, deeper economic integration and sustained stakeholder engagement.

Participants concluded that closer cooperation in connectivity, innovation, services and regional integration can position the India–Sri Lanka partnership as a model for economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

3.7.2 Session Highlights

I. Move from Dialogue to Delivery Establish effective implementation mechanisms to translate bilateral commitments into measurable outcomes and tangible partnerships.

II. Institutionalise Trust and Policy Coordination Strengthen bilateral engagement through regular dialogue, stakeholder consultations and sustained policy coordination.

III. Deepen Economic Integration through Complementarity Leverage the comparative strengths of both countries to expand trade, investment, services and supply-chain linkages.

IV. Promote Connectivity as an Enabler of Growth Advance physical, digital and energy connectivity to strengthen economic integration and regional competitiveness.

V. Foster Innovation, Investment and Private-Sector Collaboration Encourage technology partnerships, entrepreneurship and private-sector engagement to drive long-term growth and competitiveness.

VI. Advance Inclusive and Sustainable Development Ensure that economic cooperation supports MSMEs, rural communities, women entrepreneurs and sustainable development objectives.



3.8 Valedictory Session: Forging a Shared Future for India and Sri Lanka

Key Discussion Areas

- a. Bilateral relations as a strategic investment and the road to long-term stability
- b. Regional integration in South Asia and anchoring growth in foreign demand

3.8.1 Session Summary

The valedictory session reflected on the key messages emerging from the Conference and underscored the importance of institutionalised trust, sustained policy coordination and deeper economic engagement as the foundations of the India–Sri Lanka partnership. Participants highlighted that Sri Lanka's long-term growth prospects will increasingly depend on greater integration with regional markets, stronger trade and investment linkages, and closer engagement with India as a major economic partner.

The discussions emphasised the importance of leveraging India's market, capital, technology and connectivity initiatives alongside Sri Lanka's strategic location and economic strengths to support export-led growth and regional competitiveness.

3.8.2 Session Highlights

I. Deepen Economic Integration and Connectivity Advance transport, energy and digital connectivity to support trade, investment and regional integration.

II. Leverage India's Market for Export-Led Growth Utilise opportunities arising from India's expanding economy, particularly the southern states, to promote exports, investment and value-chain integration, while addressing barriers to trade, investment and services to realise untapped opportunities.

III. Support Reform-Led Growth and Private-Sector Partnerships Advance structural reforms and competitiveness-enhancing measures, supported by stronger business collaboration and cross-border investment, to strengthen integration with regional and global markets

IV. Position the Partnership within the Indian Ocean Growth Framework Leverage Sri Lanka's strategic location and India's economic strengths to promote regional prosperity, connectivity and stability.



Members of the Board



Dr. Arvind Virmani, Chairman and Founding Director, EGROW, and former Member, NITI Aayog, is a distinguished economist and policy expert. He has served as Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India, Principal Adviser to the Planning Commission, Executive Director at the IMF, and Director & CEO of ICRIER, contributing significantly to India's economic reforms, trade policy, and financial sector development.



Dr. Charan Singh is CEO and Founder Director of EGROW Foundation and a member of the IRDAI Insurance Advisory Committee. He has served as Non-Executive Chairman of Punjab & Sind Bank, RBI Chair Professor at IIM Bangalore, Senior Economist at the IMF, Research Director at RBI, and board member of NHB and NABFINS.



Dr. Ashok Vishandass, Founder Director of EGROW Foundation, has served as the Chairman, CACP, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, New Delhi at the level of Secretary to Government of India and also the Chief Adviser (FAO), the United Nations Organisation (UNO). His areas of interest include Agriculture Economics, Food Security, Official Statistics, International Trade and Commerce.



Dr. Rattan Chand, Founding Director of EGROW Foundation, is a former Indian Statistical Service officer with over 35 years of experience in public policy, health systems, and official statistics. He has contributed to major health and population surveys, including HMIS, NFHS, Annual Health Surveys, and District Level Household Surveys, and has worked with leading international organizations.



Col. Mohinder Pal Singh, Founder Director of EGROW Foundation, is a decorated Indian Army veteran with over 30 years of service. He is Senior Fellow at CLAWS, Adjunct Faculty at MAHE, and Director of AMAS Training. A Ph.D. in International Relations, he is an expert in national security, defence studies, strategic affairs, and regional security dynamics.

Chief Guest



Amb. Taranjit Singh Sandhu, is a distinguished Indian diplomat and currently serves as the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. A 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, he has over three decades of experience in diplomacy, international relations, and public policy. He previously served as India's Ambassador to the United States and High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, playing a key role in strengthening India's strategic and economic partnerships. During his diplomatic career, he also held several important assignments at the Ministry of External Affairs and India's missions abroad, particularly in Washington, D.C. He is widely Sandhu recognized for his expertise in foreign policy, diplomacy, and strategic affairs.

Guests of Honor



Ms. Mahishini Colonne is the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India H. E. and a senior career diplomat with over 25 years of experience in multilateral affairs, economic diplomacy, and regional cooperation. Since joining the Sri Lanka Foreign Service in 1998, she has served in key diplomatic assignments including Sri Lanka's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, Deputy High Commissioner in India, and Director at the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka. She has also held several senior positions at Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Additional Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Director General of Economic Affairs. Ms. Colonne has represented Sri Lanka at major international forums including the UN, SAARC, and BIMSTEC, contributing significantly to regional and international engagement.



Ms. Aparna Ray (IFS: 2008) is the Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs for the Centre for Contemporary China Studies (CCCS); and, the Policy Planning & Research (PP&R) Divisions. Previously, she served as the Counsellor to the Permanent Mission of India to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva; and, has also held positions at High Commission of India in Islamabad and Embassy of India, Beijing. She has a B.A from the National Law School of India University, Bangalore; and, MPP from the School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University. She speaks English, Hindi, Bengali and Chinese.

Session Chairs



Session 1: Deepening Trade and Logistics Integration

Dr. Nishan de Mel is an economist and public policy expert, currently serving as Executive Director of Verité Research, a leading Sri Lankan think tank. He has contributed significantly to policy discourse on economic reforms, governance, and development. He holds an MPhil and DPhil in Economics from Oxford and a BA Honours in Economics from Harvard.



Session 2: Cross – Border Investment and Innovation

M. Raghuraman, President of the Indo Lanka Chamber of Commerce & Industry, is a senior apparel industry leader with over 35 years of experience in marketing, branding, manufacturing, and global sourcing. He is Consultant to Brandix Apparel, Senior Advisor to AlixPartners, and Director at Luxasia SL, with extensive experience in regional business collaboration.



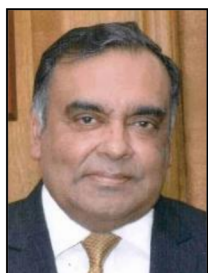
Session 3: Digitisation, Energy and Tourism

Mr. Saliya Wickramasuriya, former Chairman of BOI Sri Lanka, is an experienced leader in energy, infrastructure, logistics, and investment. He has chaired CPC, CPSTL, Trinco Petroleum Terminals, and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, and held senior roles in petroleum development. He is recognized for his contributions in energy, logistics, and investment sectors.



Session 4: Real Section - MSME, Agriculture and Fisheries

Prof. Ramesh Chand is a distinguished Indian agricultural economist & policy expert and former Member of NITI Aayog, with over 30 years of experience in agricultural policy, food security, rural development, and reforms. He has served as Director of NIAP and held senior academic roles. He has authored several books and over 100 research papers.



Valedictory Session

Shri Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha is a senior Indian diplomat and former High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, with over 37 years in the Indian Foreign Service. He has served as Ambassador to Venezuela, High Commissioner to the UK, and Chief Information Commissioner of India, contributing significantly to India's diplomatic and bilateral relations.

Brief profile of speakers



Dr. Rajan Sudesh Ratna is an expert in international trade, economic policy, and sustainable development, with nearly four decades of experience. He serves as Coordinator of DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence, Ministry of External Affairs. He has held senior roles at UN ESCAP, DGFT, and IIFT, contributing to trade policy, WTO issues, and regional cooperation.



Mr. Afaq Hussain is an expert in strategic affairs, economic policy, and industry research. He is Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council under the N7 Initiative and Co-Founder and Director of BRIEF, New Delhi. His work focuses on economic strategy, regional cooperation, international relations, policy dialogue, and market research.



Dr. Arpita Mukherjee is Professor at ICRIER, New Delhi, with over two decades of experience in international economics, trade policy, services, and economic cooperation. She has served on Government of India expert committees and advisory groups. Her research focuses on international trade, services, digital economy, investment policy, and regional integration.



Mr. Talal Rafi, Consultant to the European Union in Sri Lanka, is an economist, policy advisor, and global consultant specializing in macroeconomics, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and economic policy. He is an Expert Member and Agenda Contributor at the World Economic Forum and has worked with the EU, ADB, IMF, World Bank, Deloitte, and EY.



Mr. Virender Bhardwaj is a senior business leader in the automotive and industrial sectors, currently serving as Chief Operating Officer – EV Division at Propel Industries Pvt. Ltd. With nearly three decades of experience, he has held leadership roles at JCB, Volvo, Mahindra & Mahindra, and SML Isuzu, focusing on EV growth and sustainable mobility.



Mr. Updeep Singh Chatrath, CEO (Odisha Projects) and Resident Director (Delhi), Welspun World, is a seasoned textiles and textile machinery leader with extensive experience in manufacturing, industrial development, and business transformation. He has held senior roles across leading textile organizations and actively promotes India's global manufacturing competitiveness, innovation, sustainability, and technical textiles.



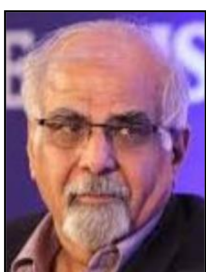
Mr. Debapriya Mukherjee is a logistics and supply chain professional and Head of International Business at Transport Corporation of India. With over 15 years of experience, he specializes in business development, EXIM operations, and multimodal logistics. He leads SAARC and EXIM support services, strengthening cross-border connectivity and international trade growth.



Dr. Anushka Wijesinha, Co-Founder and Director of the Centre for a Smart Future, Sri Lanka, is an economist and public policy expert specializing in trade, innovation, and private sector development. He serves on the Governing Board and Monetary Policy Board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and has worked with leading international organizations.



Mr. Dhananath Fernando is Chief Executive Officer and founding member of Advocata Institute, a Sri Lanka-based public policy think tank. He has worked in market research and is an Eisenhower Global Fellow. His work focuses on public policy, economic reforms, governance, and civic engagement, with active involvement in youth development and community initiatives.



Dr. Surjit S. Bhalla, former Executive Director at the IMF, is an economist, author, and policy expert. He has served on the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, as Economic Adviser to the Fifteenth Finance Commission, and as Chairperson of the High-Level Advisory Group on Trade. He is widely recognized for his work in economic policy and international finance.



Mr. Hasitha Premaratne is Managing Director of the Brandix Group, leading its global operations, strategy, and transformation initiatives. He previously served as Group Finance Director and Chief Strategy Officer. He is a Director of several Brandix subsidiaries and investment ventures, including Teejay Lanka PLC, and serves on boards of companies in Sri Lanka and internationally.



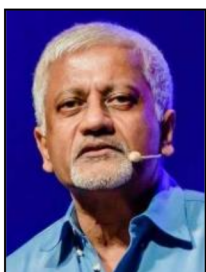
Prof. Biswajit Nag is Professor at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi, with extensive experience in international economics, trade policy, and econometrics. Associated with IIFT for over two decades, his expertise includes international trade, regional economic integration, trade negotiations, and quantitative economic analysis. He holds a PhD in Economics from JNU.



Dr. Nisha Taneja is Professor at ICRIER, New Delhi, and a leading expert in international trade, regional economic cooperation, and public policy. Associated with ICRIER for over three decades, her research focuses on trade policy, South Asian economic integration, connectivity, and regional cooperation. She holds a PhD in Economics from JNU.



Mr. Thilan Wijesinghe, former Chairman of the Board of Investment, Sri Lanka, is a prominent business leader, entrepreneur, and policy expert with experience in investment banking, real estate, and public policy. He has led major ventures, co-founded key institutions, chaired Sri Lanka's National Agency for Public Private Partnership, and currently heads TWC Holdings.



Prof. Rohan Samarajiva is a leading policy expert in telecommunications, digital infrastructure, and economic reform, and Chair of LIRNEasia, an Asia-Pacific policy think tank. With over three decades of experience, he has contributed to ICT regulation and digital reforms in Sri Lanka and the region, and has advised governments and international institutions.



Mr. Anuj Jain is Director (Finance) and CFO at Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., with over three decades of experience in finance, international trade, treasury, supply chain management, and corporate affairs. Former CFO of Lanka IOC PLC, he has held senior leadership roles within IOCL and serves on boards of Indian Oil subsidiaries and joint ventures.



Mr. Nimal S. Cooke is a senior business executive with extensive experience in finance, infrastructure, mining and minerals, renewable energy, and strategic business development. He serves as Executive Director of the Capital Maharaja Group, contributing to business development for over five decades. He has also served as Director of AmCham Sri Lanka.



Mr. Arvind Singh is a former IAS officer and former Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. He has held key positions in the Government of India and Maharashtra, including Chairman, Airports Authority of India, and Minister, Economic and Commercial, Embassy of India in Tokyo. He holds degrees in Economics from St. Stephen's College and Delhi School of Economics.



Prof. Ganesh Lakshmanan is Professor in the Strategy and Leadership Area at CHRIST University, Bengaluru, with over 28 years of academic and industry experience. His expertise includes strategic management, leadership, business analytics, design thinking, and health management. He has guided scholars, published in reputed journals, and contributed to accreditation, curriculum, and academic quality initiatives.



Mr. Srilal Miththapala is a tourism and sustainability expert with over three decades of experience in Sri Lanka's hospitality industry. He has held senior roles with leading hotel groups and led the EU-funded "Greening Sri Lanka Hotels" project. His work focuses on sustainable tourism, hospitality management, tourism policy, and environmental best practices.



Prof. B.C. Jayawardana is Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and a distinguished academic in animal science. His work spans agricultural education, animal science, meat science, poultry nutrition, food safety, and sustainable animal production. He previously served as Head of the Department of Animal Science and remains active in teaching and research.



Mr. Anil Bhardawaj, Secretary General of FISME, is an expert in MSME development, private sector growth, and trade policy with over 30 years of experience. He has led major MSME initiatives supported by international organizations and contributed to industrial policy, entrepreneurship development, SME promotion, and advisory committees linked to NITI Aayog and key ministries



Mr. V. Vivekanandan, Director of the Fisheries Management Resource Centre, is a fisheries expert with over four decades of experience in sustainable fisheries management and fisher livelihoods. He has worked extensively with small-scale fishers, community-based fisheries management, women fish vendors, and India–Sri Lanka dialogue on transborder fishing issues in the Palk Bay.



Ms. Chathurika Lakshi Zoysa is a lecturer and researcher at the Ocean University of Sri Lanka, specializing in fisheries and marine sciences, coastal geomorphology, and sustainable marine resource management. Her work focuses on fisheries ecology, coastal biodiversity, marine ecosystems, aquaculture, and the socio-economic conditions of fishing communities in Sri Lanka.



Mr. Siddhartha Doshi is CEO and Managing Partner of Ray Nano Science and Research Centre, and a business leader in nanotechnology. He has led the development of Nano Urea and nano-based solutions for agriculture, polymers, automotive, nutraceuticals, and animal husbandry. His work supports sustainable agriculture, nutrient delivery, and India's fertilizer security.



Prof. Buddhi Marambe is Senior Professor of Crop Science at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and Director of its Agriculture Education Unit. His expertise includes weed science, climate change adaptation, and food security. He has received several national and international honors and contributes to UNFCCC climate negotiations as part of Sri Lanka's government delegation.

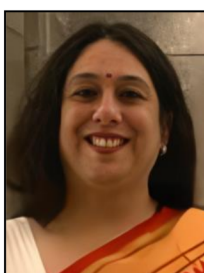


Dr. Indrajit Coomaraswamy is a distinguished Sri Lankan economist and former Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, with over four decades of experience in economic policy and public administration. He has held senior roles at the Commonwealth Secretariat and focused on institutional credibility, monetary policy, and economic stabilization as Central Bank Governor.



Prof. Sanjay Kathuria is a former Lead Economist World Bank, recognized for his work on South Asian economic integration and regional development. Over a 27-year World Bank career, he worked across South Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. He is associated with leading policy institutions and has taught at Georgetown and Ashoka University.

Conference Convener



Prof. Shalini Singh Sharma is an economist and policy expert with nearly 30 years of experience in academia, research, and policy studies. Currently heading Training and Research at EGROW Foundation, she has led studies for government and industry. A Ph.D. from Aligarh Muslim University, she has authored over 50 research papers and held leadership roles at leading universities.



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