PR01 / Empirically Grounded Policy Measures for India to Navigate its Role in the Global Order

Topic : Practice

Chair : Pooja Ramamurthi (Centre for Social and Economic Progress)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) Foreign Policy and Security vertical, led by Constantino Xavier under the guidance of Ambassador Shivshankar Menon, conducts policy-relevant research on India's role in a changing regional and global order. The team examines how today's evolving geopolitical competition reshapes India's international cooperation across sectors and geographies. The team's scholarship identifies policy strategies for India to create robust diplomatic engagement, particularly focussing on South Asia, climate diplomacy, critical minerals, and Global South partnerships, with a particular emphasis on Africa.

This panel introduces the Foreign Policy team's current priorities through four linked papers authored by scholars. The session connects CSEP's field-driven empirics to Indian government priorities that span Neighbourhood First, resilient and transparent connectivity, supply chain security for the green transition, and the strategic diversification of partnerships across the Indo-Pacific and Africa. CSEP's model prioritises fieldwork, case studies, and on-the-ground interviews that capture how policy actually functions across borders, ports, ministries, and markets. This kind of grounded academic research helps Indian policymakers separate signal from noise, anticipate implementation bottlenecks, and translate strategic ambition into reforms and partnerships that can be executed. In that vein, the panel asks four linked questions:

1. How can India accelerate South Asia connectivity while protecting sovereignty and delivering shared growth?

2. How can India use climate diplomacy to expand its development partnerships and deliver cost-effective, bottom-up climate solutions domestically and in the Global South?

3. What institutional and diplomatic models can help India scale climate and critical-minerals partnerships, especially with Africa and other Global South regions?

4. How can the India Middle East Corridor (IMEC) be shaped into a practical geoeconomic project that complements India's regional commitments and energy security needs?

These questions will be addressed through four complementary studies. Together, the papers highlight why cooperation among these actors is driven not only by strategic competition but also by converging interests in infrastructure, investment, technology, and development. In short, the dialogue models how CSEP approaches policy dialogue, distilling rigorous empirical evidence into doable policy.

CALL FOR PAPERS

This is a not a call for papers. We are proposing to showcase four of our papers at the panel:

Dr. Constantino Xavier, The Sambandh Connectivity Initiative
Dr. Pooja Ramamurthi, Framing India's China Strategy on Climate and Energy

Dr. Veda Vaidyanathan, India, Africa and Critical Minerals: Towards a Green Energy Partnership
Mr. Abhishek Agarwal, Concept to Corridor: India, Europe, and IMEC