

COMMUNICATION ROADMAP BETWEEN INDIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS: AN INTERNET RESEARCH ANALYSIS OF ASEAN

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Abstract

Southeast Asian countries, or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and India used to have strong diplomatic, political, economic, and cultural ties and grew phenomenally. These two neighbouring regions share many common interests and ideas about increasing interregional cooperation. There are many examples of cross-connectivity projects, such as the "India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway," the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTP), the Mekong-India Economic Corridor (MIEC), and the "extension of the Trilateral Highway, the digital highway, and improving maritime connectivity," which are planned to be proposed. On 11th December 2017, the ASEAN-India Connectivity Summit (AICS) in New Delhi was held to accelerate major connectivity projects and envision new ideas and initiatives in various sectors, with the theme "Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century".

This research study consists of the analysis of the ASEAN website in the context of India and Southeast Asian nations. This research study aims to analyse the strength of relations and communication between India and Southeast Asian countries, also known as ASEAN nations, by considering various aspects and preparing a roadmap for future communication. This study explores the applied communication strategy between ASEAN nations and India, focusing on interactions related to various international issues, events, culture, and traditions, as well as the nature of content posted on websites. This paper reflects that Indian and Southeast Asian nations are working to maintain good

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international relations and plan a better communication roadmap through various connectivity projects related to cyber security, leisure and tourism activities, historical and cultural ties, foreign policies, cross-border transport and trade, fostering unity and inclusivity, and enhancing sub-regional multilateralism and security cooperation.

Keywords: Southeast Asia, ASEAN, India, communication. Nation, connectivity.

Introduction

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India upgraded their relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership on 12th November 2022. In 1992, after becoming the sectorial dialogue partner of ASEAN, strategic and economic engagement of India improved with regional associations. India's active participation in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) in terms of geopolitical and geo-economic development has made an impact on several ASEAN member states, and they also take this as a strategy to counter China's influence. An all-round potential relationship between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is replicated with deep trade and expanding security partnerships, which remain urgent tasks in India-ASEAN relations in a rapidly changing global context. All these elevations of relations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and India provide an opportunity for the nations to reassert the importance of their strategic ties, deepen connectivity and position themselves to expand their economic relations.

Review of literature

Huang, Z. A. (2024) described that both sides of stakeholders of China and ASEAN exhibited the degree of caution needed to have social media affordance and frame geopolitical relations and address the South China Sea issue. Velasco, J. C. (2023) stated that the primary focus of the ASEAN socio-cultural community is on environmental issues, disaster response and

management, and youth engagement. Hue, Q. T. (2022) said that the policy of India has always remained adjusted to pertaining goals and content to suit specific situations towards the southeast, with the focus on the look east policy. Manickam, S., Idris, S., & Nipo, D. T. (2021) highlighted that effective government initiatives by ASEAN nations may assist third-world countries in excelling and achieving the benefits of digital connectivity. Majumdar, S. K., Sarma, A. P., & Majumdar, S. (2020) clarified that Indian and ASEAN countries have boosted their e-commerce and digital markets, and the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace in Progress and Shared Prosperity 2016–2020 reflects its big role as an initiative between nations.

Research problem

What Communication Roadmap is followed by India and Southeast Asian Nations to maintain the connectivity and relations between these nations in various areas by studying ASEAN social sites ?

Objectives

- To study the key subjects of content posted on ASEAN social media handles in India's context.
- To explore the relations between India and southeast Asian nations through ASEAN social media posts.
- To study the social media engagement received by ASEAN social media posts in Indian aspect.

Methodology

This research study has used content analysis as a research methodology, where the content of the ASEAN social media website is analysed in the context of India and Southeast Asian nations. A sample size is taken of the last 6 months, from August 2024 to January 2025, which includes a total of 14 social media posts from this time frame from the Facebook account, Twitter or X handle and YouTube channel of ASEAN official social sites. The search

buttons of ASEAN social media websites employ three keywords, "India", "Indian", and "Bharat", to gather post data. National and international research papers provide the literature for the secondary data reviews.

Tabulation and Analysis

Table-1 Theme and content reflecting international relations between India and southeast Asian nations

Date of post	Key theme of the posts	Key content of the posts showcasing ASEAN and India relations
1 August 2024	Trade, economic cooperation	Economic and trade relations meeting of secretary general of ASEAN Dr Kao Kim Hourn with Indian chief negotiator Mr. Rajesh Agarwal. Discussed the progress of AITIGA and Conversed about economic Cooperation.
2 August 2024	Cultural heritage, art and craft exhibitions.	ASEAN-India Artists' Camp Exhibition with the theme, "Oceans of Connectivity," was officiated by Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat, alongside the Ambassador of India to ASEAN, H.E. Jayant N. Khobragade, and Members and representatives of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN where paintings created by twenty artists from the ASEAN Member States and India under the ASEAN-India Artists' Camp 2022. And held Interface Meeting on Feasibility in the ddevelopment of ASEAN Cultural Heritage List and highlighted that transcending borders and languages artists are coming together.
11 September 2024	Strategic partnership, art and culture exhibition	Post says that Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr. Kao Kim Hourn witnessed the solo art exhibition, "A Nature's Symphony," of Ambassador of India to ASEAN Jayant N. Khobragade held at Artotel Jakarta, and followed a dinner hosted by ambassador exchanged views on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with India.

20 September 2024-1st post	Trade, movement of goods.	21st AEM-India Consultation held in Vientiane, Lao PDR led by Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, welcomed the progress of the Review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), focused on cross-border movement of goods and make AITIGA more effective, user-friendly, and trade facilitative
20 September 2024-2nd post	Economy and business	56 th AEM meeting held between Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Economic Community, Satvinder Singh, and Manmohan Singh, Head of AIBC-FICCI Mission discussed measures to fosterer business linkages between nations.
21 September-	Economy, challenges of global economic landscape, ASEAN-India connectivity	Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn met with H.E. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce, and Industry of India, for 56th AEM Meeting and Related Meetings in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Focus is to maintain connectivity, relations and participation in global value chains and navigate challenges in global economic landscape.
10 October 2024-1st post	Strategic Partnership for Peace, friendship, cooperation sustainable development, overcoming digital divide	During 21st ASEAN-India Summit held in Vientiane, Lao PDR attended by Prime Minister of India Sri Narendra Modi ji and Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn discuss future directions and progress of ASEAN-India cooperation, Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability and Prosperity with the Support of India's Act East Policy (AEP)
10 October 2024- 2nd post	peace, friendship, and cooperation	On the 2nd day of the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits and Related Summits, ASEAN aims to strengthen cooperation with several formal partners along with commitment to peace, friendship, including China, Republic of Korea, Japan, Australia, India, and Canada. Also signed the instruments of accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)
7 November 2024	Trade, energy and power, indo-pacific trade, investment energy security,	Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, during addressing the 8th Roundtable of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT), highlighted importance of deepening ASEAN-India partnership to adopt the ASEAN Vision 2045 and key areas of cooperation between

		nations which fosters mutual trust, respect, and benefit and geo strategic environment between nations and along with India.
25 November 2024	Socio-cultural sector, health, culture, youth, information, cultural exchange and bonds cooperation and collaboration.	Meeting on ASEAN-India collaboration for socio-cultural exchange program where deputy secretary general of ASEAN Sam Lwin welcomed Indian Ambassador to ASEAN Jayant Khobragade for deepening collaboration between nations and explored initiatives.
12 December 2024	Strategic partnership.	Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, met with Ambassador of India to ASEAN, Jayant N. Khobragade exchanged views to enhance the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
23 December 2024	Entrepreneurship, the dynamic startup ecosystems of ASEAN Member States and India.	This post says about the relation between two countries in terms of startup, entrepreneurship, and new innovation practices where Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for Economic Community emphasises that it is a testament of shared vision of ASEAN and India and both regions collectively can address regional challenges with new innovations.
17 January 2025	Digital Transformation, digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity.	5th ADGMIN + India Meeting held with Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, in Bangkok, Thailand. The Meeting acknowledged the adoption of the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation that looked forward and strengthened the partnership in implementation of ASEAN-India 2025 Digital public infrastructure, artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity.
9 January 2025	Culture exchange, art and music	SEHER's initiatives highlight shared heritage and foster meaningful connections, from the 2017 ASEAN-India Artists' Camp in Udaipur to the 2024 ASEAN-India Music Festival in Delhi and the Shillong Artists' Camp-themed Echoes of Ramayana. It emphasises the value of cultural exchange, build bonds, inspire ideas, and showcase unity and understanding often grow from shared stories and collaborative spaces.

This table reflects that posts on Facebook and twitter account of ASEAN nations Social media handles in regard to India from last six month is highly published in the month of September and on an average 2 posts are published per month. Highest impression and focused topic are economy, trade, cultural exchange, art and strategic partnership. In a very few posts talked about energy, power, entrepreneurship and innovative practices, health, youth, and sustainable development. About 2 posts is baaed digitalization and AI, digital security, peace friendship and cooperation.

When it is discussed about relations and communication strategies between India and southeast Asian nations, it is shown that usually events, festivals, exhibitions, summits, and meetings are organized by ASEAN and organization of southeast Asian nations time to time to discuss various developmental, innovative, peace and cooperation plans and initiatives. All these meetings are mainly headed and lead by the ASEAN secretary general or deputy secretary general and from India all these are mainly represented by India's Ambassador to ASEAN. Sometimes during major events ministers and prime ministers are used to represent India too in ASEAN nations. All these international relations appear to be maintained with very holistic communication strategies. These posts showcased that ASEAN nations appears to promote an effective collaboration and relation with India in all sectors.

Table-2 Social Media engagement posts get on ASEAN Facebook and Twitter Accounts in nos. having “India” as keyword

Date of post	Facebook reaction s	Facebook comments	Facebook shares	Twitter comments	Twitter retweets	Twitter likes	Twitter views
1 August 2024	39	2	5		9	21	1400
2 August 2024	37	4	7		4	16	1600

11 Septemb er 2024	23	3	3		3	15	1120
20 Septemb er 2024- 1st	17		5	2	4	1	903
20 Septemb er 2024- 2nd	10	3	3		10	11	1100
21 Septemb er 2024	21	1	3	2	6	14	1200
10 October 2024-1st	90	14	27	5	33	57	3800
10 October 2024-2nd	46	5	18	15	11	33	2800
7 Novembe r 2024	18	1	4		5	11	1060
25 Novembe r 2024	37	4	5		5	18	1074
12 Decembe r 2024	39	2	5	4	4	19	1000
23 Decembe r 2024	35	3	3		2	12	1100
17 January 2025	25	2	7	1	6	13	855
9 January 2025	17	3	2	NA	NA	NA	NA

This table presents the social media engagement metrics for posts on ASEAN's Facebook and Twitter accounts, including quantitative data on Facebook reactions, shares, comments, and Twitter likes, comments, retweets, and views. It says that the latest post of 9th January is shared only on Facebook. The highest number of views is gained by the post published on 10th October – the 1st post – and the least, 855 views, by the 17th January post. The same 10th October post got the highest 57 Twitter likes and 33 retweets, and the least, only 1 like, by the 20th September-1st post, and the least, 2 retweets, by the 23rd December. In terms of comments on Twitter, they are gained by very few posts only; at least 1 is by 17th January, and the highest, 15, is by 10th October – 2nd post. The 90 Facebook reactions, 14 comments, and 27 shares were gained on the same 10th October post. The fewest Facebook reactions were received by the 20th September 2nd post. And the least FB comments were gained by the 21st September and 7th November posts, while the least shares were gained by the 9th January post.

Findings and Conclusion

This study implies that Southeast Asian nations have maintained a good relationship and strategic communication roadmap with India, whether it is in the economy, trade, cultural exchange, art, energy, power, entrepreneurship, innovative practices, health, youth, sustainable development, digitalisation, AI, digital security, peace, friendship, cooperation, strategic partnership, or some other sector. Usually events, festivals, exhibitions, summits and meetings are organised by both India and Southeast Asian nations within India and in ASEAN nations from time to time to discuss various developmental, innovative, peace and cooperation plans and initiatives and to showcase each culture and talent. Mostly these meetings are headed by the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Kao Kim Hourn, and the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN of various departments accordingly. On the other side, it is led by the Indian Ambassador to ASEAN, Jayant Khobraghade, and sometimes at major events by GOI ministers, the Prime Minister, and the Indian chief negotiator. Regarding social media engagement, a post from 10th October 2024 achieved the highest levels of engagement, reach, and impressions because it featured

the Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi ji, attending the event in person. “It was the 21st ASEAN-India Summit held in Vientiane, Lao PDR. This meeting reviewed the progress of ASEAN-India cooperation and discussed its future direction, with a view to advancing an ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that is meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial. Leaders of ASEAN and India adopted the joint statement on strengthening the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability, and Prosperity in the Region in the context of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) with the support of India's Act East Policy (AEP). On that day, the leaders of ASEAN and India also adopted the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation.

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