

Strategic Communication Practices Between India and Southeast Asian Nations: An Analysis of ASEAN Website

Dr. Anshula Garg

Assistant Professor (Former), Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Jammu

ABSTRACT: Southeast Asian countries or Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India used to have strong diplomatic, political, economic, and cultural ties and grown phenomenally. These two neighbouring regions share many common interests and ideas to increase inter-regional cooperation. There are many examples of cross connectivity projects such as “India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multi-Modal, Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP), Mekong-India Economic Corridor (MIEC)” and “extension of Trilateral Highway, digital highway and improving maritime connectivity” projects are planning to be proposed. On 11th December 2017 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 themed as “Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century,”.

This research study consists of the analysis of ASEAN website in context to India and southeast nations. Through this research a researcher has tried to analyse the strength of relations and communication between India and southeast Asian countries or ASEAN nations considering various aspects and preparing a roadmap for further communication. In this study applied communication strategy between ASIAN nations and India, interaction considering various international issues, events, culture, and traditions along with the nature of content posted on website is explored. This paper reflects that Indian and southeast Asian nations are working to maintain good international relations and planning a better communication roadmap by various connectivity projects related to cyber security, leisure & tourism activities, historical and cultural ties, foreign policies, cross-border transport, and trade, fostering unity and inclusivity, enhancing sub-regional multilateralism and security cooperation.

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

INTRODUCTION

On 12th November 2022 relations of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India got upgraded to such a comprehensive strategic partnership. In 1992 after becoming the sectorial dialogue partner of ASEAN strategic and economic engagement of India has 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. All-round potential relations between India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), is replicated with deep trade, expanding security partnerships which remain urgent task in India-ASEAN relations in a rapidly changing global context.

All these elevation of relations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and India provide an opportunity to 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 side stakeholders of China and ASEAN exhibited that degree of caution is needed to have social media affordance and frame geopolitical relations and address the South China Sea issue. Velasco, J. C. (2023) defined that prime focus of the ASEAN socio-cultural community is on environmental issues, disaster response and management, and the youth. Hue, Q. T. (2022) said that policy of India has always remained adjusted to pertaining goals and content to suit specific situation towards south east with the focus on look east policy. Manickam, S., Idris, S., & Nipo, D. T. (2021) highlighted that effective government initiatives of ASEAN nations may assist 3rd world countries in exceling and achieving the benefits of digital connectivity. Majumdar, S. K., Sarma, A. P., & Majumdar, S. (2020) cleared that Indian and ASEAN countries has boosted their e-

Strategic Communication Practices Between India and Southeast Asian Nations: An Analysis of ASEAN Website

commerce and digital markets and 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 research methodology, where content of ASEAN Social media website is analysed in context to India and southeast nations. Sample size is taken of last 6 months from August, 2024 to January, 2025 which includes total 14 social media posts of this time frame from Facebook account, Twitter or X handle and YouTube channel of ASEAN official social sites. 3 keywords are "India" "Indian" "Bharat" are used in search buttons of ASEAN social media websites to collect the data of posts. For the secondary data reviews of literature is studied from national and international research papers.

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 Conversated 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 development 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 2024-1 st 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 2024-2 nd 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 foster 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,

Strategic Communication Practices Between India and Southeast Asian Nations: An Analysis of ASEAN Website

		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 baad 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

Strategic Communication Practices Between India and Southeast Asian Nations: An Analysis of ASEAN Website

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 reactions	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 September 2024	23	3	3		3	15	1120
20 September 2024-1st	17		5	2	4	1	903
20 September 2024-2nd	10	3	3		10	11	1100
21 September 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 November 2024	18	1	4		5	11	1060
25 November 2024	37	4	5		5	18	1074
12 December 2024	39	2	5	4	4	19	1000
23 December 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 tells about the Social Media engagement posts get on ASEAN Facebook and Twitter Accounts in quantitatively includes Facebook reactions, shares, no. of comments and Twitter likes, comments, retweets and views. It tells that latest post of 9th January is shared only on Facebook. Highest no. of views is gained post published on 10th October-1st post and least 855 views by 17th Jan. post. Same 10th October post got highest 57 twitter likes and 33 retweets and least only 1 like by 20th September-1st post and least 2 retweet by 23 December. In terms of comment on twitter is gained by very few posts only least 1 is by 17th January and highest 15 by 10th October-2nd post. Highest 90 Facebook reactions, 14 comments, 27 shares gained the same 10th October post. Least Facebook reactions received by 20th September 2nd post. And least FB comments gained by 21st September and 7th November post, while least share is gained by 9th January post.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study construes those southeast Asian nations has maintained a good relationship and strategic communication roadmap with India whether it is economy, trade, cultural exchange, art, energy, power, entrepreneurship and innovative practices, health,

Strategic Communication Practices Between India and Southeast Asian Nations: An Analysis of ASEAN Website

youth, sustainable development, digitalization and AI, digital security, peace, friendship, cooperation and strategic partnership or some more sectors. Usually events, festivals, exhibitions, summits and meetings are organized by both India and southeast nations within India and in ASEAN nations time to time to discuss various developmental, innovative, peace and cooperation plans and initiatives and to showcase each culture and talents. Mostly these meetings are headed by Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn and Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN of various departments accordingly. On the other side it is led by Indian Ambassador to ASEAN Jayant Khobraghade, sometimes on major events by GOI ministers, Prime Minister, and Indian chief negotiator. In terms of social media engagement 1 post of 10th October 2024 received the highest social media engagement, reach and impressions where Prime Minister of India Sri Narendra Modi ji itself attended the event. "It was 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 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.

REFERENCES

- 1) Hossan, M. A. (2023). Social Media a Concern for Foreign Relationships with Neighbor Countries. *International Journal of Applied Research and Sustainable Sciences*, 1(4), 295-306.
- 2) Huang, Z. A. (2024). @ China vs.@ ASEAN on X: Their Digital Mediated Diplomacy Involving the# SouthChinaSea.
- 3) Hue, Q. T. (2022). India's foreign policy towards Southeast Asia before Prime Minister Narendra Modi. *Jindal Journal of International Affairs*, 10(1), 20-35.
- 4) Manickam, S., Idris, S., & Nipo, D. T. (2021). International Trade And The Impact Of Information And Communications Technology (ICT) Access And Use: A Study Of Southeast Asian Nations. *Journal of Technology and Operations Management*, 16(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.32890/jtom2021.16.2.1>
- 5) Mohan, C. R. M. (2025). India and ASEAN in a Changing World. Nus.edu.sg. <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/india-and-asean-in-a-changing-world/>
- 6) Rankawat, V. Modi's digital diplomacy: A comprehensive analysis of social media as a political communication and governance tool.
- 7) Sevea, I. S. (2024). ASEAN and India: Deepening Strategic Ties, Connectivity and Economy Relations. Nus.edu.sg. <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/asean-and-india-deepening-strategic-ties-connectivity-and-economy-relations/>
- 8) Tjiptono, F., Khan, G., & Yeong, E. S. (2022). Analyzing the use of social media communication strategies in Indonesia and Malaysia: Insights and implications. *Marketing Communications in Emerging Economies, Volume II: Conceptual Issues and Empirical Evidence*, 247-275.
- 9) Velasco, J. C. (2023). Southeast Asian regionalism: An examination of the progress and priorities of ASEAN through its joint communiqués. *Journal of ASEAN Studies*, 11(2), 245–265. <https://doi.org/10.21512/jas.v11i2.9402>



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.