

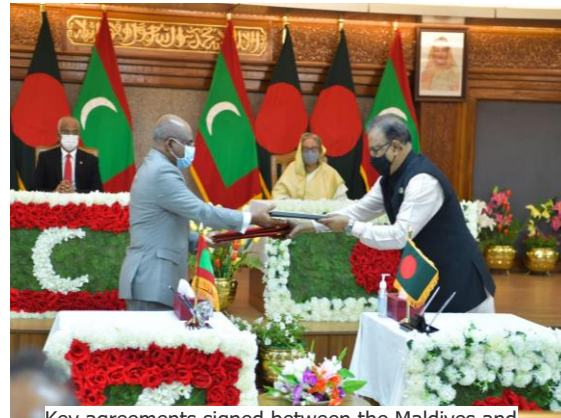
# South Asia Seminar Series 2024

## Bangladesh and the Maldives: Trade, Politics, Security, and the India factor

Tuesday 14 May 5pm for 5.30pm – 7:00 pm (AEST) Level 13, 356 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000

In partnership with the **Australia India Institute, Asialink, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Victoria State Office, and Confederation of Indian Industry**, AIIA Victoria welcomes both new and returning South Asia Series attendees to the 2024 edition of the series.

This seminar, the first of three, will focus on Bangladesh and the Maldives, in a time of profound political change including dealing with an assertive neighbour. The relationship between these countries and Australia will also be examined within the trade and security concerns of the region.



Key agreements signed between the Maldives and Bangladesh 2021. Photo credit: The President's Office, Republic of Maldives.

The seminar panellists are:



***The Hon. Lisa Singh** is a trailblazing former Australian Senator, recognised as the first woman of South Asian heritage to hold a seat in the Australian Parliament. She served as a Tasmanian state member of parliament and a Minister in the Tasmanian Government. Currently, Lisa is the CEO of the Australia India Institute, driving research and policy initiatives to foster strong Australia-India relations. Lisa's exceptional contributions have been honoured with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman from the President of India in 2014. With her extensive experience, she has actively strengthened Australia's ties with the Indo-Pacific region, including representing the nation at the United Nations General Assembly in 2016. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honors) and a Master of International Relations, amplifying her expertise in the field.*

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**In-person:** AIIA Premium and Young Professionals members free. AIIA Members \$20. Non-Members \$30. Student Non-Members \$10.

**Webinar:** Free for all AIIA members. Student Non-Members \$5. Non-Members \$10.



*interviewed by many leading newspapers, including the Sydney Morning Herald.*

**Reshad Ahsan** is an Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Melbourne. His interests are at the intersection of International Trade and Development Economics. His research explores the labour-market effects of trade in developing countries, with a focus on understanding the impact of trade on inequality and workplace safety. He also studies the link between trade and firm innovation and productivity in developing countries. His research has been published in leading academic journals such as the *Journal of International Economics* and has been funded by major local and international funding bodies. He has written for and been



**Dr David Brewster** is one of Australia's leading experts on the Australia's security relationships in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region. Dr Brewster's books include *India as an Asia Pacific Power* (Routledge 2013), *about India's strategic role in the Asia Pacific and India's Ocean: the story of India's bid for regional leadership* which examines India's strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean. His latest edited volume is *India and China at Sea: Competition for Naval Dominance in the Indian Ocean* (OUP 2018). He regularly works on security issues in relation to Bangladesh and Indian Ocean island states. Dr Brewster is a Senior Research Fellow with the National Security College, Australian National University



**Prakash Mirchandani** (Moderator) has many years of business experience in Sri Lanka and the USA and currently runs an international trade and marketing strategy practice (with a focus on South Asia) in Melbourne. He is a Council Member of AIIA Victoria and a Commissioning Editor for *Australian Outlook*, the Institute's online weekly journal of International Affairs. Prakash holds a Bachelors Degree in Economics from Columbia University (New York City) and an MA in International Affairs from the Fletcher School at Tufts University (USA).

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**Mohammad Chowdhury** (Q&A Moderator) is the Founder and CEO of Long Street Advisors, a Council Member at AIIA Victoria and a Visiting Fellow at UTS. Mohammad has worked in over 80 countries and advises clients on meaningful digitisation of society, economy and nation. He is a Trustee of the UK's Institute for the Future of Work, has written for Forbes, the Sydney Morning Herald and the FT. He has advised on digitisation in Bangladesh, was based in India from 2011-2015 and also undertaken major digitisation projects in Pakistan and Myanmar. His book Border Crossings: My Journey as an Outsider (NewSouth Books) was published in July 2023.

### Program:

- 5 pm for 5.30pm start.
- 5.30-6.30pm: Panellist presentations.
- 6.30pm-7pm: Q and A.
- 7 pm: Event concludes.

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