



## **FUTURE OF PARTNERSHIPS**

A FICCI- Eram Group Initiative



# KNOWLEDGE PAPER FUTURE OF INDIA-SOUTH ASIA 4TH IR PARTNERSHIPS

SEPTEMBER 14- 15, 2021

## SOUTH ASIA

FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (FICCI)  
FEDERATION HOUSE, TANSEN MARG, NEW DELHI, INDIA



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## SECTION 1

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### BACKGROUND

In this VUCA world, leadership is as much about innovation, as much as it remains to be an ‘art’, in an environment where change is the only constant. An environment wherein independence and interdependence will go hand in hand when we look at future global partnerships. Global leaders continue to strive for excellence while making their businesses resilient and adaptable. At the same time business leaders ought to focus on sustainability and gender diversity, as fundamental principles for their future partnerships. Challenges presided over by opportunities forced us to ‘reimagine the future’ of economic and development partnerships, that touch lives of millions around the world.

FICCI envisages that a platform needs to be created to reimagine business - **LEADS** (Leadership, Excellence, Adaptability, Diversity, Sustainability), which is an Annual International Flagship program of FICCI.

### CONTEXT

**LEADS 2021** is planned on **14-15 September, 2021**, in a **hybrid format** with an overarching theme of ‘**Future of Partnerships**’. It will facilitate full-day engagements aligned with time zone differences with East Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, ASEAN & Oceania, Europe, Africa, West Asia, Americas, and the Pacific.

The session on **South Asia Session: Future of India-South Asia 4<sup>th</sup> IR Partnerships** is scheduled on Day 2, **September 15, 2021** between **1130 – 1230 hrs (IST) / 0600 – 0700 hrs (GMT)**. The 4<sup>th</sup> IR could be a way of blurring of boundaries between the physical, digital, and biological worlds and hence reducing these disparities. 4<sup>th</sup> IR is a fusion of advances in artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, the Internet of Things (IoT), 3D printing, genetic engineering, quantum computing, and other technologies and is evolving at an exponential rather than a linear pace. This spotlight session will attempt to reimagine the future of Public Private Partnerships between India and South Asia in the 4<sup>th</sup> IR ecosystem. It also highlights the enhanced opportunity presented by digital and technology ecosystem to fast-track economic development and seamless governance. Developing digital infrastructure and knowledge, to promote sustainable regional economic growth, would be the key.



## SPEAKER PROFILES



**Hon. Mr. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister of Regional Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka**

Hon. Mr. Tharaka Balasuriya was appointed as State Minister for Regional Co-operation on the 12 August 2020. He has been elected as a Parliamentarian twice. He has had a career in the Corporate Sector in the insurance and banking sectors. He has previously held State Ministerial portfolio of Social Security, Member of the Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council.



**Mr. Subhrakant Panda, Vice President, FICCI & MD, IMFA, India**

Mr. Subhrakant Panda is a business leader who has an understanding of the nuances of government policies and their implications at the ground level. He joined IMFA Group in 1993. He was appointed Managing Director of Metals & Ferro Alloys Ltd in 2006. He was President of the International Chamber of Commerce - India Chapter, President, International Chromium Development Association (ICDA).



**Mr. Manoj Chugh, Chair, FICCI South Asia Regional Council; President - Group Public Affairs & Member of the Group Executive Board, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd**

Mr. Manoj Chugh is an ICT industry veteran has managed and led businesses to achieve pole position, across Technology & Services Domains. He has previously worked with HCL, Wipro, Cisco Systems and EMC and served on the Executive Board of the American Chambers of Commerce in India and as Chairman of Storage Networking Industry Association of India.



**Ms. Rekha Anil, Global CSS Leader, Microsoft India, India**

Ms. Rekha Anil is the World Wide developer leader & India CSS Site leader and has an experience in leading large Global R&D teams in hardware and software product development in various domains. Prior to Microsoft, she was VP & Head of Eaton India Innovation Center. She was invited by NASA for delivering talk on Spirituality and management.



**Mr. Niki Frank, Chief Executive Officer, DHL Global Forwarding, South Asia**

Mr. Niki Frank was Head of Global Business Strategy and Lead for DHL Global Forwarding's Certified Program. He was part of the DHL Global Forwarding Management Board and responsible for driving the key strategic initiatives and priorities. Prior to this, he was Head of Corporate Strategy for Deutsche Post DHL, responsible for Strategy 2020.



**Mr. Prabhjeet Singh, President- India & South Asia, Uber India, India**

Mr. Prabhjeet Singh is responsible for leading the Mobility business in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. He is a passionate and innovative leader and has been instrumental in helping build Uber from the ground up and established Uber's category leadership in the ride-sharing market in the region.



**Mr. Nirpa Raj Rai, CEO, NGN Technologies, Bhutan**

Mr. Nirpa Raj Rai is known for building the largest and the best managed IT Company in Bhutan. He has served as Assistant Director of Business Income Tax, Department of Revenue & Customs, Ministry of Finance, Royal Government of Bhutan; Founding member and VP, Bhutan ICT & Training Association. He is also the Executive Committee Member of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



**Mr. Jashim Uddin, Chairman, Bengal Commercial Bank Ltd. & Desh General Insurance Ltd.; VC, Bengal Group of Industries, Bangladesh**

Mr. Jashim Uddin is a senior industry member in Bangladesh and President of FBCCI. He is also the Vice Chairman, RTV and sponsor for Meghna Bank. He has served as VP of FBCCI, President-Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers & Exporters Association and Chairman- Bangladesh Plastic Engineering & Technology. He is the Founder Chairman of Bangladesh Plastic & Rubber Foundation.



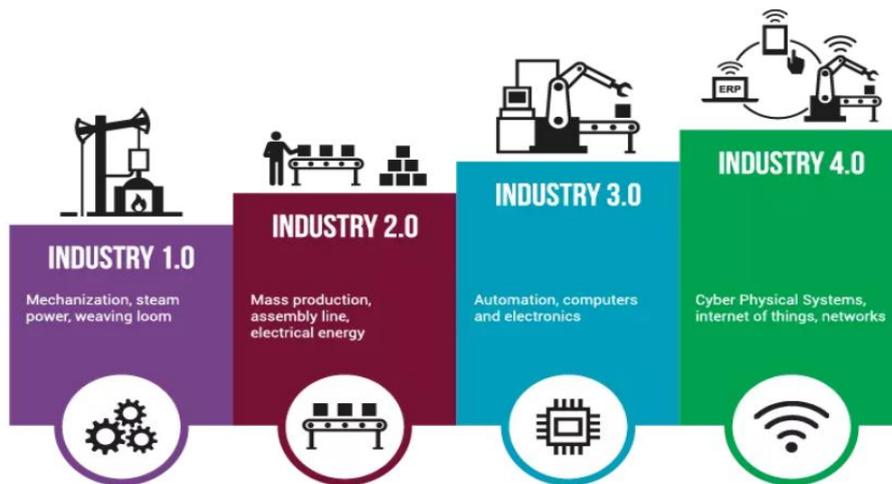
**Mr. Sandip Datta, IBM Sterling Supply Chain Country Leader, India & South Asia, IBM India, India**

Mr. Sandip Datta is an Innovator and Technology Strategist with 22 years of experience in IT across Sales, Pre Sales and Delivery with work experience in USA, UK, China, Hong Kong and India. He is an experienced Leader in Channel Management, Digital Transformation, Industry 4.0, IOT, Analytics, AI, Cloud, Enterprise Business Solutions across Manufacturing, Automobile, CPG and Retail.

## SECTION 2

### DISCUSSION AGENDA

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4<sup>th</sup> IR) has brought about technological changes which have transformed not only economies, but also societies. To look back at history, the 1<sup>st</sup> IR involved railroad building and steam engine introduction, the 2<sup>nd</sup> IR ushered in the age of electricity and the assembly line, the 3<sup>rd</sup> IR brought in the era of personal computers and the internet. The 4<sup>th</sup> IR includes the mobile internet, facilitated by affordable smartphones and tablet computers, integrated and networked advanced sensor technology, and machine learning partnered with artificial intelligence (AI). It further involves genetic engineering, 3D printing, renewable energy, and other ground-breaking technologies.<sup>1</sup>



Source: Simio<sup>2</sup>

South Asia with its young population well connected to new global technological developments, has the potential to develop 4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies and a large, create an educated labour market. Regional growth is set to increase by 7.2 percent in 2021 and 4.4 percent in 2022, climbing from a historic GDP decline of 5.4 percent in 2020. Per-capita income in South Asia is expected to revert to its pre-COVID levels by 2022.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/WP318.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.simio.com/applications/industry-40/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35274/9781464817007.pdf>



## Afghanistan

As much of the world is already and, indeed, ever-increasingly digitalized, technology has become an indispensable driver of economic development which empowers and enables economies and societies both directly and indirectly. Afghanistan also recognizes this and is eager to use the opportunities that have been created by the digital revolution and enhancement of information and communication technology to speed up its economic development, connect communities and geography.

## Bangladesh

Entrepreneurs are being inspired to adopt newer technologies to remain them up-to-date with concurrent market demands. Bangladesh is advanced in terms of transportation, banking, telecommunication, digital payments, e-commerce etc. Fintech industries are rising, private sectors are adopting technology faster than expected. Telecommunication has made it easier to access internet and Mobile Financial Services (MFS) has grown tremendously. E-commerce platforms, eKYC and digital banking apps are transforming Bangladesh. For a Digital Bangladesh, there is a need for economic proficiency and welfare of the society.<sup>4</sup>

## Bhutan

Bhutan is at a cusp of assuming a leading role in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and has been using 4<sup>th</sup> IR as an opportunity to add value to its traditional knowledge and happiness index, to diversify its economy and build its productive capacity with the use of global digital resources. The various stages of Industrial Revolution in Bhutan have helped the country progress. The 4<sup>th</sup> has focussed on the use of ICT to automate production and create a phygital interface.<sup>5</sup> The Thimphu TechPark is one such example of the onset of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR in Bhutan, which has been created to cater to the ICT needs of the people. But Bhutan has a long way to go in terms of digital transformation and 4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies.

## India

India has emerged as the leading sourcing destination for the global IT industry and the world's fastest growing e-commerce market, with the world's largest highly-skilled IT workforces and one of the largest technology start-up sectors, it is well positioned to benefit not only from the ongoing digital transformation but also the evolving Fourth Industrial Revolution. India's AI sector has grown over the past five years by a total of \$150 million, with private investment almost doubling from \$44 million in 2016 to \$73 million in 2017.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.finextra.com/blogposting/19312/bangladesh-to-face-4ir>

<sup>5</sup> <http://drukjournal.bt/how-can-bhutan-become-a-global-player-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>



As it prepares to embark on a massive digital transformation, India's ability to fully capitalise on the emerging technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution will be one of the leading drivers of global prosperity and peace in coming decades. The government has mandated the creation of a Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in India.<sup>6</sup>

### Maldives

The Maldives government launched the National Single Window programme for trade facilitation and paperless transactions for streamlining trade and ease of doing business as per the guidelines of UN, World Customs Organization, and the World Bank. In December 2018, A Joint Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in ICT and electronics was signed between India and Maldives.<sup>7</sup>

### Nepal

Nepal has embarked on a journey to strengthen its digital economy through initiatives such as the Digital Nepal Framework 2018, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) assessment of Nepal's e-Trade readiness in 2017 and launch of the e-commerce National Strategy. A Power Trade Agreement was signed in 2014 which was aimed at strengthening cross-border electricity transmission, grid connectivity and power trade.<sup>8</sup>

### Pakistan

The country and its government have adopted a top-down approach aimed at expanding its digital reach. The government has formed the Ignite National Technology Fund - a body that is responsible for promoting and assisting start-ups across the country. The Pakistani government introduced the first ever Pakistan Digital Policy in 2018, which aims at doubling its IT related exports by the year 2020. The presidential initiative of Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC), focuses on cloud and block-chain technologies in the world, with the aim of producing a new generation of IT and AI experts in Pakistan. The electoral process has also been digitalised. The right to vote in the general elections has been granted to overseas Pakistanis via the iVoting portal. However, there are issues of financial security, ease of payments and transparency in the transactions which need to be addressed in conjunction with the practices and dynamics of 4IR.<sup>9</sup>

### Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's economy is dependent upon manufacturing through medium hi-tech and hi-tech industries. ICT, BPO and professional services have become one of the fastest growing exports

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.weforum.org/centre-for-the-fourth-industrial-revolution-india>

<sup>7</sup><https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1391561420908078>

<sup>8</sup><https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1391561420908078>

<sup>9</sup><https://tribune.com.pk/article/91272/can-pakistan-reap-the-benefits-of-the-fourth-industrial-revolution>



in Sri Lanka, with great technological maturity. The importance of 4<sup>th</sup> IR and Sri Lanka's preparedness for it has gained growing prominence in policy discourse. Sri Lanka needs to focus on both technological preparedness as well as creating a complementary economic ecosystem. It needs to focus on critical pillars of 4<sup>th</sup> IR- digital readiness, human capital readiness, and economic agility. The country needs to address the disparities in IT literacy levels.<sup>10</sup>

### Adaptation of 4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies in the South Asian countries

The rise of emerging technologies like AI, blockchain and autonomous vehicles present interesting opportunities to tackle some of the large-scale systemic challenges in South Asia. But a lack of understanding of the technologies, unreliable existing systems, and the fear of the negative effects of these technologies are stifling their adoption. There is a need for:

- **Promoting innovation** : South Asian countries need to set up innovation clusters and industry-specific zones such as has been done in Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone in India.
- **Public- Private Partnerships: PPP** for developing 4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies. What are the measures required for ensuring safe and smooth technology transfer and enabling commercialisation? What role can the Industry play in the South Asian countries in creating a hub for new technologies and models for businesses?
- **Building trust in technology:** How can one create trust around the use of new 4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies? What steps can the government take to address the concerns of lower growth rates, unemployment and social unrest?
- **Investing in the future:** What measures can be taken to encourage companies to invest in high risk projects? What can the government and banks do to encourage industries and entrepreneurs to invest in goods and services related to the 4<sup>th</sup> IR?

### Conclusion

4<sup>th</sup> IR technologies can help a country transform its development objectives and create a new development paradigm. The South Asian economies need to invest in deep technology start-ups, ensure faster commercialisation of technologies, work with industry to build stronger ties to ensure skilled workforce and enhance the role of governments to create a favourable environment for a technological ecosystem.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2019/06/23/business/fourth-industrial-revolution-will-change-modern-way-life>



# LEADS 2021

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ADAPTABILITY DIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY

## REIMAGINE THE WORLD

### SECTION 3

## SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE

**SOUTH ASIA SESSION**  
FUTURE OF INDIA-SOUTH ASIA 4TH IR PARTNERSHIPS  
15 September 2021, 1130 - 1245 hrs (IST) / 0600 - 0715 hrs (GMT)

**FUTURE OF INDIA-SOUTH ASIA 4TH IR PARTNERSHIPS**  
15 September 2021, 1130 - 1245 hrs (IST) / 0600 - 0715 hrs (GMT)

REGISTER ON [WWW.FICCILEADS.IN](http://WWW.FICCILEADS.IN)  
@Ficcileads

South Asia and India collectively harbour the potential to become a hub of Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0) that seeks to curb the disparities in digital and tech domains. This spotlight session will attempt to mitigate the future of India-South Asia 4th IR Partnerships between India and South Asia, in the 4th IR ecosystem. Developing digital infrastructure and knowledge, to promote sustainable regional economic growth, would be key.

FICCI LEADS @FICCILEADS · Jul 11

The last 18 months have shown the importance of businesses being nimble & resilient; it is also imperative that global leaders maintain a sharp focus on sustainability and diversity while delivering value to all stakeholders -  
@subhrakantpanda, VP, @ficci\_india  
#LEADS2021

“The last 18 months have shown the importance of businesses being nimble and resilient; it is also imperative that global leaders maintain a sharp focus on sustainability and diversity while delivering value to all stakeholders. I look forward to deliberations on these important issues at #LEADS2021.”

FICCI and 9 others

FICCI LEADS @FICCILEADS · Jul 23

#LEADS2021 is a 2-day global thought leadership initiative, planned on 14-15 September 2021, curated as a strategic platform to imbibe leadership vision on the future of fundamental aspects of global economic prosperity. Register Now at [ficcileads.in](http://ficcileads.in)  
@on\_forwarding

“Partnerships have never been more important than in the last couple of months with unprecedented challenges for the entire world. For a successful future, we need to continue fostering such partnerships and collaboration. Join me at #FICCILEADS2021 on 14-15 September to discuss the future of IR Partnerships in South Asia.”

FICCI and 9 others

FICCI LEADS @FICCILEADS · Aug 2

“Looking forward to sharing my thoughts at #LEADS2021. The session would discuss Future of India-South Asia 4th IR Partnerships in a complex, interconnected & disruptive world.” - Ms Rekha Anil, Global CSS Leader, Microsoft India

#FICCILEADS@Microsoft

“Looking forward to sharing my thoughts on 15th September 2021 at 1130 - 1230 hrs (IST) / 0600 - 0700 hrs (GMT) at #LEADS2021. The session would discuss Future of India-South Asia 4th IR Partnerships in a complex, interconnected & disruptive world. #LEADS2021 is a global thought leadership initiative on 14-15 Sept. 2021, wherein global leaders from Asia, Europe, Africa, CIS, Americas & the Pacific will share their vision on 'Future of Partnerships'.”

FICCI and 9 others

FICCI LEADS Retweeted

FICCI @ficci\_india · Jul 25

I am looking forward to engaging with global leaders at #LEADS2021 and shaping the future of partnerships in the new normal: Mr @prabheet\_s, President, @Uber India and South Asia.

#FICCILEADS

“The pandemic induced challenges have compelled the corporate world to come up with innovative solutions to flourish in the new normal. We at Uber believe this is the most opportune time for us to collaborate, offer better products and services, and rebuild consumer trust. Such partnerships will not only play a vital role in enhancing customer experience but also help rebuild the economy. I am looking forward to engaging with global leaders at #LEADS2021 and shaping the future of partnerships in the new normal.”

Uber India and 8 others

FICCI LEADS @FICCILEADS · Jul 24

#LEADS2021 is a 2-day global thought leadership initiative, planned on 14-15 September 2021, curated as a strategic platform to imbibe leadership vision on the future of fundamental aspects of global economic prosperity. Register Now at [ficcileads.in](http://ficcileads.in)  
#FICCILEADS

“I look forward to sharing my thoughts on Bhutan's perspective, aspirations and challenges to be an early adopter of the 4th IR which is going to be an infinite game changer. Join me on 15th September at 1130 - 1230 hrs (IST) / 0600 - 0700 hrs (GMT) at #LEADS2021 for the session on Future of India-South Asia 4th IR Partnerships.”

FICCI and 9 others

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SUPPORTING PARTNER: IRCON, AITI, Google, Jindal, Vivo  
CONTRIBUTOR: Ambuja, ITC, Tata, etc.

LOOK OUT FOR OTHER GLOBAL LEADERS AT THIS SESSION

FUTURE OF INDIA-SOUTH ASIA 4TH IR PARTNERSHIPS  
15 September 2021, 1130 - 1245 hrs (IST) / 0600 - 0715 hrs (GMT)

Mr. Subhrakant Panda, VP, FICCI  
Mr. Niki Frank, Chief Executive Officer, DHL Global Forwarding, South Asia  
Mr. Nirpa Raj Rai, CEO, IRCON Technologies, Bhutan  
Mr. Prabheet Singh, President, Uber India and South Asia  
Mr. Rekha Anil, Global CSS Leader, Microsoft India  
Mr. Sandeep Datta, CEO, Uber India and South Asia  
Mr. Subhrakant Panda, VP, FICCI

FICCI LEADS @FICCILEADS · Sep 8

Reimagine the World at LEADS (Leadership, Excellence, Adaptability, Diversity, Sustainability), a 2-day global thought leadership initiative on 14-15 September 2021. Register Now [ficcileads.in](http://ficcileads.in)  
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

PROGRAM PARTNER: Eram Group  
CONVENTION PARTNER: TCS  
SPONSOR: Ministry of External Affairs, Economic Advisory Council, TCS  
SUPPORTING PARTNER: IRCON, AITI, Google, Jindal, Vivo  
CONTRIBUTOR: Ambuja, ITC, Tata, etc.

Rajiv Kumar and 9 others



Established in 1927, FICCI is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. Its history is closely interwoven with India's struggle for independence, its industrialization, and its emergence as one of the most rapidly growing global economies.

A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. From influencing policy to encouraging debate, engaging with policy makers and civil society, FICCI articulates the views and concerns of industry. It serves its members from the Indian private and public corporate sectors and multinational companies, drawing its strength from diverse regional chambers of commerce and industry across states, reaching out to over 2,50,000 companies.

FICCI provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across sectors and is the first port of call for Indian industry, policy makers and the international business community.



**LEADS 2021** is a unique multi-faceted 2-day global thought leadership initiative curated as an engagement platform for insights into five fundamental questions that underlie the quest for global economic prosperity with sustainability, inclusivity and social wellbeing. This year, this programme shall be organised from 14-15 September, 2021. FICCI LEADS is an endeavour to evolve a shared vision among global leaders, to reimagine economic growth on the pillars of globalisation and 'Atma-Nirbhar' economy.

In the backdrop of self-reliance, economic resilience and multilateralism, the focus would be 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and giving a fresh meaning to global business value chains. This FICCI initiative is curated towards this objective at a time when we also need to reaffirm solidarity across borders with optimism for the future. FICCI LEADS 2021 will be a confluence of global leaders, influencers and opinion shapers across the spectrum of world economy. The program is open to select audience by special invitation only over 100 countries and India.