



# THE ROUND TABLE

The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs and Policy Studies

June 2026

## FROM THE JOURNAL : SOUTH ASIA FOCUS ISSUE : WHITHER SAARC ?

**Smruti Pattanaik** kicks off the South Asian focus of the June issue with an article on *The Geopolitics and Geo-economics of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)*, and how that defines the rise and decline of the regional organisation.

Since its formation in 1985, she observes, SAARC has generated both hope and despair. An organisation that had the potential to transform the regional economy became hobbled by nationalism (seeing co-operation through a zero-sum lens) and by bilateral relations with geopolitical undertones. While SAARC has stagnated, China is engaging the SAARC countries in several forums.



## SOUTH ASIAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, CLIMATE, SECURITY, & AI



- **Rajnish Saryal** analyses India's climate diplomacy and *the role of ideational dimensions and material structures for climate leadership*, while **Sudheer Singh Verma, Arpanpreet Kaur, and Davinderpal Singh** look at *India's climate diplomacy in transition from Paris to Baku*.
- **Sreshtha Chakraborty** examines *Intellectual Tradition and India's place in Post-Western International Relations*, while **Amrita Jash and Don McLain Gill** study *India in the South China Sea, and the quest for strategic relevance*
- *India-EU co-operation in critical and emerging technologies* is unravelled by **Amrita Jash and V Anand**, while *reimagining teacher education in the age of generative AI* is the focus of Sri Lankan **Shironica P. Karunanayaka's** article.
- Also taking the focus beyond India, **Alamgir Khan and Christian Kaunert** look at *the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) challenge in Pakistan* and resistance to securitisation efforts, while **Roshni Kapur** analyses *divergent trajectories in a comparative study of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh*

## COMMONWEALTH OPINIONS – INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

**Biyon Sony Joseph** asks why a middle-power minilateral turn could influence India's Indo-Pacific influence.

**Talha Latief Tantray** examines the doctrinal reorientation of India's maritime strategy in 2025, "from peace to 'no-war, no-peace'".

**Sheetal Arya** looks at the challenges facing India as chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

**Ramnath Reghunadhan** reviews India's strategic recalibration in the Afghanistan-Pakistan war.



## COMMONWEALTH OPINIONS: MORE FROM SOUTH ASIA

- **Neenu Anna Ninan and Subin Thomas** highlight the curse of sex selection in India.
- **Shaoni Guha Mazumder and Objia Borah Hazarika** appraise the elections in Myanmar and Bangladesh and their implications for India.
- **Subin Thomas and Smita Satapathy** argue that it is time to align India's reservation policy with the realities of the twenty-first century.
- **Haobijam Brijesh Singh and Sudipta Garai** look at Manipur's crisis of inclusion, and why ignoring smaller tribes undermines peace.
- The Paniyan tribal community's intergenerational, social-economic and digital challenges are the focus of an opinion piece by **Roseliya Thomas** and **Lakshmi Karlekar.**
- **Subir Jamwal** and **Pampa Mukherjee** focus on digital nationalism and the peripheral reality, with voices from Jammu and Kashmir
- **Geeta Kashyap, Nirmala MN, and Manish Sachan** examine the social, cultural, and technical limits of AI fact-checking in India



## BOOK REVIEWS : SRI LANKA AND INDIA

**Derek McDougall** reviews The Colombo Plan: Development Internationalism in Cold War Asia (2025), by David Lowe.

**Bhawna Sharma** and **Misbahuddin Yousufzai** review Sardar Patel: An Icon of India's Unity (2025).

Aditi Malik's Playing with Fire: Parties and Political Violence in Kenya and India (2024) is reviewed by **James Manor.**

For a round-up of the latest Commonwealth-related books, see Commonwealth Bookshelf on the Round Table website.



## ROUTLEDGE/ROUND TABLE STUDENTSHIP AWARDS



A new round of **Routledge/Round Table Commonwealth Studentship Awards** has been announced, with a **deadline of 31 July**. These are aimed at PhD/DPhil students in the humanities and social sciences and are designed to enable them to add a Commonwealth dimension to their research. There are two awards, each worth £5,500, one for a student at a UK university and one for a student at a university in another Commonwealth country. The award is linked to a mentorship, and successful applicants will be required to write an article for the journal based on their research and make a podcast for the website. *More details of awards and previous winners, pictured left, Maria Muli and Sandeep Hegade, can be found [here](#).*

## EVENTS: THE COMMONWEALTH AND GEOPOLITICS

On 27 November 2026, the Round Table will be co-sponsoring a conference on 'The Commonwealth and Geopolitics', at St Mary's University, Twickenham, the third in a series of interdisciplinary conferences on the Commonwealth. These are set against a background of the decline of multilateralism and fragmentation of the broader international system. It will aim to bring together academics with politicians, policy advocates, and diplomats to examine potential roles for the Commonwealth. More details [here](#).



## FROM THE ARCHIVE – 50 YEARS AGO: 'FORCE AND MIDDLE EAST OIL'



Oil crises in the 1970s, including the 1973-4 embargo imposed in response to Western support for Israel during the Yom Kippur war, disrupted the global economy, and prompted talk in 1976 of a possible US military intervention to secure Western interests. In [this article](#) from 1976, international historian Peter Mangold examined the history of military intervention in the Middle East to protect oil supplies – including the Suez operation of 1956. He concluded that 'Oil and the Middle East...are potentially among the disruptive issues in the Western alliance'.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



The Round Table's LinkedIn site continues to grow.

To join the conversation, follow the link [here](#).



The Round Table is also on X (formerly Twitter) [@CWRoundTable](#).