



SPEAKERS' PROFILES

Day 1: 28 October 2025

Opening Session



BAMBANG BRODJONEGORO

Dean

Asian Development Bank Institute

Bambang Brodjonegoro, an Indonesian national, is the Dean and CEO of the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI). Before joining ADBI in April 2025, he was Special Advisor to the President of the Republic of Indonesia for Economic Affairs and National Development. He served the Government of Indonesia in several senior leadership roles from 2011. He was Indonesia's Minister of Finance (2014–2016), Minister of National Development Planning (2016–2019), and Minister of Research and Technology (2019–2021). Besides government and academic, he also served as Director General of Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) (2009–2010).

Dean Brodjonegoro holds a doctorate and master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a bachelor's degree in economics from the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Indonesia, where he was full Professor and serving as Dean during 2005–2009.



ABDUL ABIAD

Deputy Chief Economist

Economic Research and
 Development Impact Department
 Asian Development Bank

Abdul Abiad is Deputy Chief Economist and Director of Macroeconomic Research at the Asian Development Bank in Manila. He helps lead and provide strategic guidance for ADB's economic research, and oversees the ADB's flagship publication, the Asian Development Outlook. From 2000 to 2015, he was with the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC, where he worked on the World Economic Outlook. His research has focused on financial sector development, international financial integration, fiscal policy, monetary policy, exchange rates, trade, economic resilience, and infrastructure. A Philippine national, he has a BS in Mathematics from the University of the Philippines and a PhD in Economics from the University of Pennsylvania.



TSHILIDZI MARWALA
Rector
United Nations University (UNU)
Under-Secretary General
United Nations, Tokyo, Japan

Tshilidzi Marwala is the Rector of the United Nations University and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Visit the [UNU Rector page](#) to learn more about Prof. Marwala's recent activities and outreach.

Prior to taking up the role of UNU Rector on 1 March 2023, Prof. Tshilidzi Marwala served as Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg (South Africa) from January 2018 through February 2023. He had previously served as that university's Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Internationalization (2013–2017) and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (2009–2013).

From 2003–2008, Prof. Marwala progressively held the positions of Associate Professor and Full Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa); from 2001–2003 he was Executive Assistant to the Technical Director at South African Breweries; and from 2000–2001 he was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Imperial College (then University of London).

Prof. Marwala has been a visiting scholar/professor at universities in the USA, the UK, China, and South Africa. He has extensive academic, policy, management, and international experience, and is a co-holder of five patents. His research has been multi-disciplinary, involving the theory and applications of artificial intelligence to engineering, social science, economics, politics, finance, and medicine. He has served on a variety of global and national policymaking bodies, and has worked with such United Nations entities as UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and WIPO.

He holds a PhD degree from the University of Cambridge (UK), a Master of Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Pretoria (South Africa), and a Bachelor of Science degree (magna cum laude) from Case Western Reserve University (USA). He also completed management and leadership programmes at the Columbia Business School and Harvard Business School.

Prof. Marwala is, inter alia, a member of the UN Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, The World Academy of Sciences





(TWAS), the Academy of Science of South Africa, and the African Academy of Sciences.

Prof. Marwala is the author of more than 25 books, including *Leadership Lessons from Books I Have Read* (2021) and *Leading in the 21st Century: The Call for a New Type of African Leader* (2021); dozens of book chapters, journal papers, and conference papers; and more than 250 magazine articles and newspaper op-eds.

Among the awards that Prof. Marwala has received are the Order of Mapungubwe (South Africa's highest honour) and the Academy of South Africa's Science-for-Society Gold Medal. He was named the "2021 IT Personality of the Year" by the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa, and one of the "100 Most Influential Africans of 2024" by NewAfrican Magazine.



SHUJIRO URATA
Professor Emeritus,
Waseda University and
Chairman Emeritus,
Research Institute of Economy,
Trade, and Industry

Shujiro Urata is Professor Emeritus, Waseda University. He is also Chairman Emeritus of the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry (RIETI), Specially Appointed Fellow at the Japanese Centre for Economic Research (JCER), Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO), and President of the East Asian Economic Association (EAEA). Professor Urata received his PhD in Economics from Stanford University. He is a former Research Associate at the Brookings Institution, and an Economist at the World Bank. He specializes in international economics and has published a number of books and articles on international economic issues. His recent books include *Sustainable Development Disciplines for Society*, co-editor, Springer, 2022, *Political Economy of East Asian Economic Integration: The Process of the RCEP Negotiations and Beyond*, co-editor, Routledge, 2025





JONG WOO KANG
Director
 Regional Cooperation and
 Integration Division
 Economic Research and Development
 Impact Department
 Asian Development Bank

Jong Woo Kang is Director of Regional Cooperation and Integration Division at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As director, he plays a role as an interface between ADB's internal and external stakeholders on regional cooperation and integration. He is a seasoned economist with extensive knowledge and experience on policy and strategic issues. He was Principal Economist at ERDI, Senior Advisor to the Managing Director General of ADB and Senior Economist at Strategy and Policy Department at ADB. He leads the annual publication of Asian Economic Integration Report. Areas of his research interest include regional integration, inclusive growth, macroeconomic policies, international trade and finance, and aid effectiveness. He published articles in economics journals such as Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Applied Economics, and World Economy. Before joining ADB, he was director at Ministry of Finance and Economy of Korea until 2006. He had got his BA in economics and MA in public administration from Seoul National University, and PhD in economics from University of Washington.



RUPA CHANDA
*Director of Trade, Investment
 and Innovation Division*
 Economic and Social Commission for Asia
 and the Pacific

Rupa Chanda is Director of Trade, Investment and Innovation Division at UN ESCAP. Earlier, she worked as a Professor of Economics at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore and was an Economist at the IMF in Washington, DC. She holds a PhD from Columbia University and BA from Harvard University. Her research interests include the WTO, international trade in services, regional integration, health services, and migration. She has served on national and international committees and advisory boards in these areas and has undertaken research for several international organizations and think tanks, including the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), OECD, European Commission, World Bank, and ICRIER. She has published extensively in the form of authored and edited books, journal articles, book chapters, reports, and popular media articles. She frequently presents in national and international forums.



**KAORI HITOMI**

Media and Partnership Consultant
Asian Development Bank Institute

Kaori Hitomi joined the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) as a Media and Partnership Consultant in February 2020.

She joined ADBI after more than 20 years as a field journalist and editor at Associated Press (AP). She covered various disasters, coups and conflicts across Asia, and coordinated coverage of summit and ministerial level meetings of fora such as APEC, ASEAN, G7, and G20. She also managed AP's editorial activities and budget for Asia and the Pacific as Asia Deputy Planning Editor.

Kaori has an MA in Communications from Leeds University in the United Kingdom and a BA in Arts from Keio University in Japan.



**Special Session: Harnessing Digitalization for Good****ABDUL ABIAD**

Deputy Chief Economist
Economic Research and
Development Impact Department
Asian Development Bank

Abdul Abiad is Deputy Chief Economist and Director of Macroeconomic Research at the Asian Development Bank in Manila. He helps lead and provide strategic guidance for ADB's economic research, and oversees the ADB's flagship publication, the Asian Development Outlook. From 2000 to 2015, he was with the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC, where he worked on the World Economic Outlook. His research has focused on financial sector development, international financial integration, fiscal policy, monetary policy, exchange rates, trade, economic resilience, and infrastructure. A Philippine national, he has a BS in Mathematics from the University of the Philippines and a PhD in Economics from the University of Pennsylvania.

**SHU TIAN**

Principal Economist
Economic Research and
Development Impact Department
Asian Development Bank

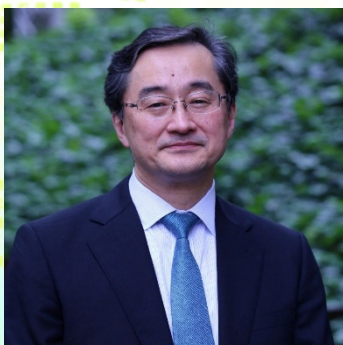
Shu Tian is a Principal Economist at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Prior to joining ADB, she was an Associate Professor of Finance at Fudan University in China. Her main working area is financial sector development, sustainable and climate finance, and digitalization. Her work has been published in the Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis, Journal of Banking & Finance, Journal of Corporate Finance, Financial Management, Finance and Accounting.




DIL B. RAHUT

*Vice Chair of Research and Senior
 Research Economist*
 Asian Development Bank Institute

Dil B. Rahut is the Vice-Chair of Research and a Senior Fellow at the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI). His research expertise lies in development microeconomics, agricultural economics, and environmental and natural resource economics. He is currently conducting experiments and field research focused on agriculture, natural resources, and climate across Asia. Before joining ADBI, Dr. Rahut was a senior global program manager of the socioeconomic and sustainable intensification programs and served as the chair of the staff committee at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT). He has also held key positions at various institutions, including the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, where he worked in the Research and Statistics Department; the WorldFish Centre as a research fellow; the Indian Council for Research in International Economic Relations as a senior fellow and Japan chair; and the Bank of Bhutan Ltd, where he was the chief of research, planning, and monitoring, as well as Visa/Mastercard director. He also served as an assistant professor of development economics at South Asian University. Dr. Rahut has an extensive publication record, with over 200 publications appearing in Scopus-indexed journals. He has also guest-edited several special issues for various international journals. He serves on the editorial boards of journals such as the *Asian Development Review* and *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change*. Additionally, he lectures on contemporary issues in development economics at the University of Tokyo and Hitotsubashi University in Japan.


FUKUNARI KIMURA

President

Institute of Developing Economies Japan
 External Trade Organization
 (IDE-JETRO)

Fukunari Kimura was appointed as President of IDE-JETRO on 1 April 2024. He is Senior Research Fellow for Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

He received his Bachelor of Laws from the Faculty of Law, University of Tokyo in 1982. He then received Master of Science and PhD titles from the Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1990 and 1991, respectively. He worked for the Department of Economics, State University of New York at Albany as Assistant Professor in 1991–1994, and in the Faculty of Economics of Keio University as Associate Professor in 1994–2000. In particular, he has recently been active in writing academic/semi-academic books and articles on international production networks and economic integration in East Asia.



ALADDIN D. RILLO
Managing Director
for Policy Design and Operation
Economic Research Institute
for ASEAN and East Asia

Aladdin D. Rillo is currently serving as Managing Director for Policy Design and Operations for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). Prior to that he served as the Senior Economic Advisor for ERIA from 2021–2024, after he has worked in various positions at the ASEAN Secretariat for many years. His last position in ASEAN Secretariat was as the Deputy Secretary-General for the ASEAN Economic Community (2018–2021). During this period, he provided the overall leadership in the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025 and ASEAN's economic integration agenda. He also held positions at the Asian Development Bank Institute in Tokyo as Senior Economist (2013–2018) and PricewaterhouseCoopers in Toronto as Senior Manager Transfer Pricing (2006–2007).

Dr. Rillo has written and published extensively on the ASEAN economy and on the broader economic and trade and financial integration issues. He holds PhD and MA degrees in economics from the University of Hawaii, and a BA in economics from the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines.



CASSEY LEE
Senior Fellow
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute

Cassey Lee is a Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Regional Economic Studies Programme at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. Prior to joining ISEAS, Dr Lee held academic appointments at the University of Wollongong, Nottingham University Business School (Malaysia) and University of Malaya. His research interests include competition policy, industrial policy and structural change.





Session 1: State and Trend of Digital and E-Commerce



SANCHITA BASU DAS
Economist
Regional Cooperation and
Integration Division
Asian Development Bank

Sanchita Basu Das is an economist at the Regional Cooperation and Integration Division of the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). She contributes to the division's flagship publication, namely the Asian Economic Integration Report, and other knowledge products. She also supports the ASEAN regional forum. Her core research interests include regional cooperation and initiatives related to them, such as trade, logistics, industrial corridors, tourism, digital economy, institutions, and others. Sanchita joined ADB in November 2018 and served as an economist in the South Asia Department, processing loans/grants, implementing technical assistance projects, and leading operationally relevant analytical studies.

Prior to joining ADB, Sanchita was the lead researcher for economic affairs at the ASEAN Studies Centre of ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. She was concurrently a fellow of the Regional Economic Studies Program, coordinator of Singapore APEC Studies Centre and a co-editor of Journal of Southeast Asian Economies (JSEAE), all housed under the same institute. Sanchita has published in international journals including the Singapore Economic Review, Journal of World Trade and Asia Pacific Economic Literature, authored/edited books and book chapters, and wrote for media. Sanchita earned her PhD in international political economy from Nanyang Technology University, Singapore, and her masters in economics and business management from the University of Delhi and the National University of Singapore, respectively.



SHANDRE MUGAN THANGAVELU
*Head-Jeffrey Cheah Institute
on Southeast Asia*
Sunway University

Shandre M. Thangavelu is currently the Head (President) of Jeffrey Cheah Institute for Southeast Asia and Senior Fellow at Jeffrey Sachs Centre for Sustainable Development at Sunway University, Malaysia. He also holds a joint appointment at the Institute of International Trade, University of Adelaide, Australia. In October 2021, Professor Shandre was appointed as Trade Advisor to Minister of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce, Kingdom of Cambodia under the Royal Degree. He was awarded (with Jeffrey Cheah Institute for Southeast Asia, Sunway University), the Award of the Royal Order of Sowathara by the Royal Government of Cambodia on 31 January 2023 for his contribution to economic development and trade of Cambodia. Currently, Shandre Thangavelu is the Editor for Asian Economic Journal (AEJ). Previously, Professor Shandre



Thangavelu was appointed as the Head of Research at Ministry of Manpower under the Economist Service at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore from 2001 to 2009.

Professor Shandre Thangavelu is an active researcher on human capital development, technology transfer, foreign direct investment, trade, government infrastructure investment, productivity and economic growth. He has written extensively in ASEAN integration, FDI, human capital development, technology transfer and economic growth and has published his research in major international journals. He has written several books on trade, investment, integration and outsourcing in Asia. In 2021, Professor Shandre has completed the book titled “Handbook of East Asian Economic Integration” (with Fukunari Kimura, Mari Pangestu, and Christopher Findlay) published by Edward Elgar. In 2024, he released the book titled “Services Global Supply Chains in ASEAN and East Asia: Implications and Opportunities for Regional Integration”, (with Fukunari Kimura, Christopher Findlay, Lurong Chen) published by Springer. Professor Shandre Thangavelu obtained his graduate degrees from Queen’s University, Canada.



JOHN PAOLO RIVERA
Senior Research Fellow
Philippine Institute for Development
Studies

John Paolo R. Rivera boasts a comprehensive research portfolio spanning the realms of macroeconomics, development economics, management, and tourism. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Economics, and his expertise is underscored by active participation in a spectrum of international and local academic and industry conferences, coupled with a prolific record of authoring scientific and technical publications, and teaching experience at the undergraduate, graduate, and executive levels. Not limited to academia, he is a subject matter expert engaged in diverse research and management consulting projects with both the private and public sectors. He was officer-in-charge executive director at the Asian Institute of Management – Dr. Andrew L. Tan Center for Tourism. His leadership extends to his role as the founder of Oikonomia Advisory & Research, Inc. He is currently senior research fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies where he is involved in the study areas of macroeconomics, tourism development, trade and industry. He is currently visiting research fellow at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan. He was awarded the 2024 Outstanding Young Scientist in the field of Economics by the Philippine Department of Science and Technology – National Academy of Science and Technology.



**CASSEY LEE***Senior Fellow*

ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute

Cassey Lee is a Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Regional Economic Studies Programme at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. Prior to joining ISEAS, Dr Lee held academic appointments at the University of Wollongong, Nottingham University Business School (Malaysia) and University of Malaya. His research interests include competition policy, industrial policy and structural change.

**DEEPARGHYA MUKHERJEE***Assistant Professor*

Indian Institute of Management Nagpur

Deeparghya Mukherjee is a faculty member of the Economics area at IIM Nagpur. His teaching and research interests include international trade and investment agreements; services trade, digital and sustainable trade.

Prior to joining IIMN, Prof. Mukherjee has been a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and a Research Fellow at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi. He has completed his doctoral studies, Fellow Program in Management [FPM (PhD)] from the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore in the area of Economics and Social Sciences with a minor in Finance. He is a certified Financial Risk Manager, FRM (GARP) and has also worked as a Business Analyst and Assistant Manager in the Advanced Analytics departments with HSBC and Citibank for over three years before pursuing his doctoral studies. Previously he had obtained a master's degree in economics from the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.





JONG WOO KANG
Director
Regional Cooperation and
Integration Division
Asian Development Bank

Jong Woo Kang is Director of Regional Cooperation and Integration Division at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As director, he plays a role as an interface between ADB's internal and external stakeholders on regional cooperation and integration. He is a seasoned economist with extensive knowledge and experience on policy and strategic issues. He was Principal Economist at ERDI, Senior Advisor to the Managing Director General of ADB and Senior Economist at Strategy and Policy Department at ADB. He leads the annual publication of Asian Economic Integration Report. Areas of his research interest include regional integration, inclusive growth, macroeconomic policies, international trade and finance, and aid effectiveness. He published articles in economics journals such as Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Applied Economics, and World Economy. Before joining ADB, he was director at Ministry of Finance and Economy of Korea until 2006. He had got his BA in economics and MA in public administration from Seoul National University, and PhD in economics from University of Washington.



HOMER PAGKALINAWAN
Climate Change Officer
Climate Change, Resilience, and
Environment Cluster
Asian Development Bank

Homer Pagkalinawan serves as the regional climate focal for the northern Pacific economies. A specialist in geospatial analytics, remote sensing, and climate science, he dabbles with big data of all sorts—from greenhouse gas emissions to satellite imagery, resolving complex challenges across climate change, agriculture, transportation, and economics.

He has worked as a technical consultant conducting research on satellite-based assessment of transportation projects, typhoon damage estimation through nowcasting, environmental justice analysis, and various sectoral evaluations. Adept with mapping and visualization platforms, he builds dashboards that transform geospatial datasets into accessible insights for climate action and sustainable development across the Asia-Pacific region.



**DINA AZHGALIYEVA**

Senior Economist (Climate Change)
Economic Analysis and
Operational Support Division
Asian Development Bank

Dina Azhgaliyeva is an expert on energy economics and climate change. Prior to joining ADB, she was Senior Research Fellow in the Asian Development Bank Institute (Japan). Previously, she worked as a Research Fellow in the energy economics division of the Energy Studies Institute, National University of Singapore. She also served as a Research Fellow at the Henley Business School, University of Reading (United Kingdom) and as chief specialist for the Tax Committee at the Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan. She earned her PhD in economics from the University of Essex (United Kingdom). She also holds an internationally recognized teaching qualification from the Fellow of Higher Education Academy and a qualification in research career management from the Staff Educational and Development Association.

Dina is a prolific researcher. In recent years, much of her research analyzes original firm-level data to understand decisions affecting carbon emissions. Just in the past several years, she has published articles in *World Development*, *Energy Economics*, *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, and *Climate Policy*.

**ANDRI YUDHI SUPRIADI**

Senior Statistician
Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia

Andri Yudhi Supriadi is the Head of Statistics Indonesia (BPS) for Denpasar City, Bali. He earned his Master's degree in Economic Planning and Public Policy (cum laude) and a Doctorate in Economics from the University of Indonesia, where his dissertation was awarded "Best Dissertation." With more than 25 years of experience in statistics and public policy, he has held various leadership positions at BPS, including roles in budget integration, change management, and ICT statistics.

Dr. Supriadi is actively engaged in teaching and capacity building, having lectured on applied econometrics and economic mathematics at the University of Indonesia and delivered training on socio-economic surveys, e-commerce, and data processing to national and international audiences. He has presented and published research on household welfare, electricity subsidies, and business-ICT integration at notable forums such as the Asia Pacific Statistics Week, UNESCAP, and international economics conferences.

His current focus is on strengthening evidence-based policymaking and promoting data integrity to support inclusive development at local and national levels.





RACHITA GULATI
Research Economist
Asian Development Bank Institute

Rachita Gulati joined Asian Development Bank Institute as a Research Economist in May 2024.

Rachita is also a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India. Prior to that she held the Subir Chowdhury Visiting Fellowship 2017–2018 from the India Observatory and London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). She also worked at the Indian Institute of Management Kashipur.

Her research work focuses on banking and financial institutions, financial stability, corporate governance, inclusive banking, bank digitalization, applied econometrics, and efficiency and productivity analysis.



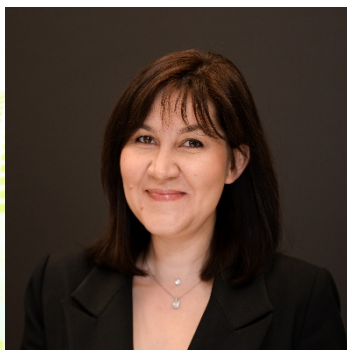


**Panel Session: Developments in Cross-Border E-Commerce:
Sub-regional and Sub-sectoral Cases**



KIYOSHI TANIGUCHI
Regional Lead Economist
Economic Research and
Development Impact Department
Asian Development Bank

Kiyoshi Taniguchi is currently a regional lead economist for the Central and West Asia Department. Prior to his current position, he was a country economist at the Pakistan Resident Mission, overseeing Afghanistan and Pakistan's economies. He led the team to process the Pakistan Country Partnership Strategy 2021-2025 and made noteworthy achievements in economic knowledge work. In his tenure at ADB, he carried out economic analysis for the Pacific Department as well as the Private Sector Operations Department and worked at the Uzbekistan Resident Mission, where he led a team of economists for Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Before ADB, he worked for the World Bank's Indonesia Country Office and began his career as an economist at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, Italy. He has also taught development economics at the International University of Japan, Westminster International University in Tashkent, and the University of the Philippines Diliman. He holds a Doctorate and a Master's degree in Economics from the Ohio State University, United States. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Economics with honors from the University of Oregon, United States, and from Chiba University, Japan.



ZALINA ENIKEEVA
Research Fellow
University of Central Asia

Zalina Enikeeva is Research Fellow at the Institute of Public Policy and Administration of University of Central Asia. She made a Visiting Research Fellowship at the CAREC Institute (Urumqi) in 2024 on cross-border trade between Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and People's Republic of China. Her expertise includes regional cooperation, digitalization, cross-border trade, e-commerce, and others.


RAMIL HUSEYN

Deputy Executive Director
 Centre for Analysis of Economic Reforms
 and Communication

Ramil Huseyn is a distinguished Azerbaijani economist, widely recognized for his expertise in economic reforms. He holds the academic degree of Doctor of Sciences in Economics, reflecting his solid educational and scholarly background.

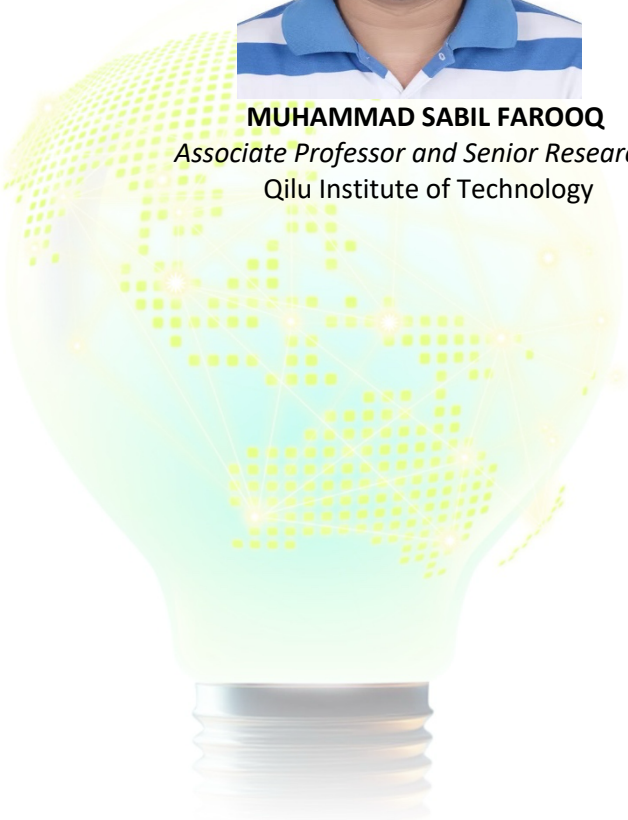
As the Deputy Executive Director of the Center for Analysis of Economic Reforms and Communication of Azerbaijan, Dr. Huseyn has played a pivotal role in shaping national reform strategies. He was a core member of the team responsible for developing Azerbaijan's Strategic Roadmaps and contributed to the formulation of various state programs. His professional portfolio also includes serving as a visiting professor at Newcastle University Business School and working as a national consultant in multiple international projects.

Dr. Huseyn is the author of two books and more than 85 scholarly articles. He has lectured at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) and currently leads the Scientific Seminar on Field Economics at UNEC.


MUHAMMAD SABIL FAROOQ

Associate Professor and Senior Researcher
 Qilu Institute of Technology

Muhammad Sabil Farooq (沙兵) Pakistani national earned his Ph.D. in Sociology from Nankai University, People's Republic of China (PRC). He is proficient in Chinese, having studied the language at Nankai University and passed HSK 6, the highest level of language proficiency in China. He currently serves as an Associate Professor and Senior Researcher at, Qilu Institute of Technology, Jinan City, Shandong Province, PRC. He has extensive overseas teaching experience with different international Universities. His research interests include the Belt and Road Initiative, international trade, international relations, environmental issues, urbanization, quality education, gender equality, and women's empowerment. He has published several SSCI paper and monographs in well-known international journals and participated in many provincial, national and international research projects. He has supervised numerous national and international graduate and postgraduate students in their postgraduate thesis research, and publications.



**WAKANA ASANO**

Asia Pacific Initiative (API) Takano Fellow
International Institute of Strategic
Studies-Asia, Singapore

Wakana Asano is a Research Associate and inaugural API Takano Fellow at IISS–Asia in Singapore. With a background in business and geopolitics, her research focuses on science and technology policy, economic development and statecraft, and Global South–North cooperation.

Prior to joining the IISS, Wakana was a Senior Consultant at IBM, where she led cross-border digital transformation and strategy development projects for clients in manufacturing, healthcare and the public sector.

She has also conducted research on geo-economics and development economics at the Stimson Center and Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business, and with the Asian Development Bank Institute. Her work has appeared in publications such as the Japan Times, the Pacific Forum and the Institute of Geoeconomics.

Wakana holds an MS in Foreign Service from Georgetown University as a Fulbright Scholar and a BA in American Studies from the University of Tsukuba.





Day 2: 29 October 2025

**Special Session: Leveraging digital transformation
for inclusive and sustainable development**

JONG WOO KANG
Director
Regional Cooperation and
Integration Division
Asian Development Bank

Jong Woo Kang is Director of Regional Cooperation and Integration Division at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As director, he plays a role as an interface between ADB's internal and external stakeholders on regional cooperation and integration. He is a seasoned economist with extensive knowledge and experience on policy and strategic issues. He was Principal Economist at ERDI, Senior Advisor to the Managing Director General of ADB and Senior Economist at Strategy and Policy Department at ADB. He leads the annual publication of Asian Economic Integration Report. Areas of his research interest include regional integration, inclusive growth, macroeconomic policies, international trade and finance, and aid effectiveness. He published articles in economics journals such as Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Applied Economics, and World Economy. Before joining ADB, he was director at Ministry of Finance and Economy of Korea until 2006. He had got his BA in economics and MA in public administration from Seoul National University, and PhD in economics from University of Washington.





NAOYUKI YOSHINO
Professor Emeritus
Keio University; Fellow, ADBI

Naoyuki Yoshino is a Professor Emeritus at Keio University (Japan). He was Dean and CEO of the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI, 2014–2020). He obtained his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University, where his thesis supervisor was Sir Alan Walters, economic adviser to former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He has served as an assistant professor at the State University of New York and as a visiting scholar at MIT. He was awarded honorary doctorates from the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) and Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg (Germany). He received the Fukuzawa Award (2014) and the International Green Finance Lifetime Achievement Scientific Award at the Planet Budapest 2021 Sustainability EXPO Summit. He is a member of the Economic Advisory Group (EAG) of the Republic of Palau (2022-2026) and an Advisory Board (Chair) at Stockholm School of Economics, EUISS, Sweden (2024–2026).



TETSUSHI SONOBE
Professor
National Graduate Institute
for Policy Studies; Fellow, ADBI

Tetsushi Sonobe is a professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), where he has taught development economics and international cooperation for 22 years mostly to government officials from Asia and Africa. As a researcher, he has studied the process of industrial development and the management of businesses and government offices in developing countries. His interest in management led him to serve as GRIPS vice president from 2014 to 2020 and ADBI Dean and CEO from 2020 to 2025. Currently, he studies industrial policy for sustainable development and manages the Japanese Association for Development Economics (JADE) as its president.



**SAYURI SHIRAI***Fellow*

Asian Development Bank Institute

Sayuri Shirai has been the Asian Development Bank Institute's Fellow (formerly Advisor for Sustainable Policies) since October 2022 and is currently a professor of economics under Keio University's faculty of policy management. She is also an advisor to both the Nomura Research Center for Sustainability and the Nissin Oillio Group.

From 2020–2021, she was a senior advisor to London-based EOS at Federated Hermes, which provides environmental, social, and governance (ESG)-related stewardship services on firms and public policy. Prior to that, she was an ADBI visiting fellow from 2016–2020, a member of the Policy Board of the Bank of Japan from 2011–2016, taught at Sciences Po in Paris from 2007–2008, and served as an economist at the International Monetary Fund from 1993–1998.

She has published extensively on topics such as central bank digital currency, monetary policy, global finance, and ESG investment. She is also a contributing writer to the Japan Times and a frequent Japanese and international media commentator on Japan's economy and global monetary policies.

She holds a PhD in economics from Columbia University.





Session 2: Impact of Digital Trade and E-Commerce on Accessibility and Inclusion



AGNES SURRY

*Deputy Head and Senior Capacity
Building Specialist*
Asian Development Bank Institute

Agnes Surry joined the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) in September 2022 and is Deputy Head and Senior Capacity Building Specialist.

Her areas of interest include development and public finance, aid effectiveness, climate change adaptation, gender equality, social policies, fiscal policies, public debt sustainability, resource mobilization, and country risk analysis. She is seconded from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where she worked in the Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department for more than 6 years. As senior planning and policy specialist, she supported policy work including country classification processes to determine access to concessional finance and reforms to provide better solutions to ADB developing member countries.

She led the replenishment of the Asian Development Fund 13 in 2020, which is the main ADB grant facility.

Prior to joining ADB, she worked at the African Development Bank as a resource mobilization expert and at the Treasury of France as a social economist and policy analyst.

She has a master's degree in international economics (development) and bachelor's degrees in econometrics and social sciences from Sciences Po Paris and École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, France.



RIFKI WENO

Executive Director
ASEAN Business Advisory Council
(ASEAN-BAC)

Rifki Weno has over a decade of proven track record in policy advocacy.

He has a rich and diverse experience set, from in-house government relations in tech company Tokopedia, public policy consultant, to global engagement facilitator within foreign embassies and the ASEAN Secretariat.

His issue expertise includes digital technology and sustainability.

**MENGYUAN CAI***PhD Candidate*

Nanyang Technological University

Mengyuan (Abby) Cai is a fifth-year PhD candidate in Economics at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, under the supervision of Professor Laura Guiying Wu. Her research focuses on the economics of digitization, with particular emphasis on the growth effects of digital infrastructure and the impacts of digital technology adoption on firms and individuals.

**MANISHA PRADHANANGA***Senior Economist*Economic Analysis and Operational
Support Division
Asian Development Bank

Manisha Pradhananga is a Senior Economist with the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). She conducts economic research and provides support for the analytical base for ADB's strategic policy and operational agenda. Her research interests are in energy and climate change related issues. Prior to joining ADB in 2018, Manisha was Assistant Professor of Economics at Knox College. Manisha received her bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke College, USA and her PhD in Economics at the University of Massachusetts, USA.

**DINA CHHORN***Centre Director*Centre for Development Economics
and Trade, Cambodia Development
Resource Institute

Dina Chhorn is the Centre Director of Development Economics and Trade at the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI). Prior to this role, he worked as an economic analyst at France Médias Monde in Paris, France. He was the Economist accredited by the European Commission as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the 7th Lindau Meeting for the Laureates of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel in Germany. He conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland and obtained his PhD in Economics from the University of Bordeaux in France, where he also taught courses in Econometrics and Statistics.

He has contributed to policy dialogues and research conferences. His research has been published in *The Journal of*



International Trade & Economic Development, Asian Development Review, Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy, Review of Development Economics, and Open Research Europe.

**SIVLY HOUY**

Research Assistant

Centre for Development Economics
and Trade, Cambodia Development
Resource Institute

Sivly Houy is a Research Assistant in the Centre for Development Economics and Trade at the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI). She holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations from Paragon International University in Cambodia. Her research interests include gender inequality, private sector development, and the digital economy.

**SANCHITA BASU-DAS**

Economist

Regional Cooperation and
Integration Division
Asian Development Bank

Sanchita Basu Das is an economist at the Regional Cooperation and Integration Division of the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). She contributes to the division's flagship publication, namely the Asian Economic Integration Report, and other knowledge products. She also supports the ASEAN regional forum. Her core research interests include regional cooperation and initiatives related to them, such as trade, logistics, industrial corridors, tourism, digital economy, institutions, and others. Sanchita joined ADB in November 2018 and served as an economist in the South Asia Department, processing loans/grants, implementing technical assistance projects, and leading operationally relevant analytical studies.

Prior to joining ADB, Sanchita was the lead researcher for economic affairs at the ASEAN Studies Centre of ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. She was concurrently a fellow of the Regional Economic Studies Program, coordinator of Singapore APEC Studies Centre and a co-editor of Journal of Southeast Asian Economies (JSEAE), all housed under the same institute. Sanchita has published in international journals including the Singapore Economic Review, Journal of World Trade and Asia Pacific Economic Literature, authored/edited books and book chapters, and wrote for media. Sanchita earned her PhD in international political economy from Nanyang Technology



University, Singapore, and her masters in economics and business management from the University of Delhi and the National University of Singapore, respectively.



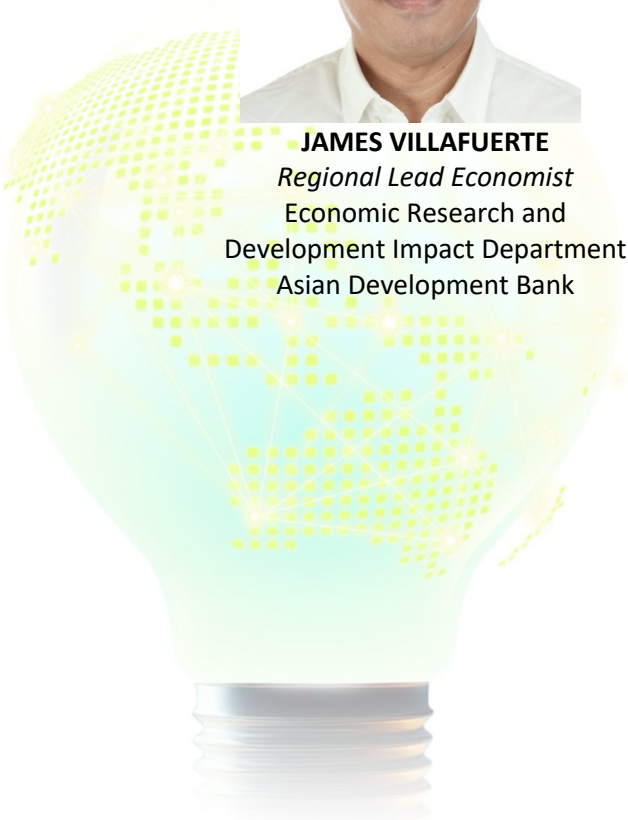
MA. KRISTINA ORTIZ
Policy Researcher
House of Representatives

Ma. Kristina P. Ortiz is a Filipino researcher with a background in economics, statistics, and public policy. She currently serves as a Supervising Legislative Staff Officer at the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) of the House of Representatives of the Philippines. Prior to her current role, she was a Supervising Research Specialist for a decade at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS). During her time at PIDS, her research focused on a range of topics, including regulatory reform, logistics and infrastructure, ASEAN integration, and education policy. She holds a bachelor's degree in Economics and a master's degree in Statistics, both from the University of the Philippines. She also earned a second master's degree in Public Policy from the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo, Japan. Her current research interests center on labor and employment policy.



JAMES VILLAFUERTE
Regional Lead Economist
Economic Research and
Development Impact Department
Asian Development Bank

James Villafuerte is the Regional Lead Economist in the Southeast Asia Department of the ADB. He heads the ASEAN Policy Network and conducts research on a wide range of economic and policy issues, including: i) regional economic surveillance; ii) economic impact assessment of COVID-19; and iii) thematic research on trade and supply chain, technology and digitalization, infrastructure financing, and climate change, among others. Prior to joining ADB, he was the Team Leader of the Asia Regional Integration Center of the ADB, a Senior Economist at the Department of Treasury and Finance in Victoria, and an Economist of the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Team of World Bank Office in Manila. He holds a Masteral Degree in Economics from the University of the Philippines, completed research internship at the East-West Center in Hawaii, and attended several CGE modelling courses in Monash and Purdue University.



**Session 3: Policy and Regulatory Enablers for Enhanced Digital Trade and E-Commerce**

RACHITA GULATI
Research Economist
Asian Development Bank Institute

Rachita Gulati joined Asian Development Bank Institute as a Research Economist in May 2024.

Rachita is also a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India. Prior to that she held the Subir Chowdhury Visiting Fellowship 2017-2018 from the India Observatory and London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). She also worked at the Indian Institute of Management Kashipur.

Her research work focuses on banking and financial institutions, financial stability, corporate governance, inclusive banking, bank digitalization, applied econometrics, and efficiency and productivity analysis.



ALADDIN D. RILLO
Managing Director
for Policy Design and Operation
Economic Research Institute
for ASEAN and East Asia

Aladdin D. Rillo is currently serving as Managing Director for Policy Design and Operations for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). Prior to that he served as the Senior Economic Advisor for ERIA from 2021-2024, after he has worked in various positions at the ASEAN Secretariat for many years. His last position in ASEAN Secretariat was as the Deputy Secretary-General for the ASEAN Economic Community (2018-2021). During this period, he provided the overall leadership in the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025 and ASEAN's economic integration agenda. He also held positions at the Asian Development Bank Institute in Tokyo as Senior Economist (2013-2018) and PricewaterhouseCoopers in Toronto as Senior Manager Transfer Pricing (2006-2007).

Dr. Rillo has written and published extensively on the ASEAN economy and on the broader economic and trade and financial integration issues. He holds PhD and MA degrees in economics from the University of Hawaii, and a BA in economics from the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines.





PAUL BAKER
Chief Executive Officer
International Economics Consulting

Paul Baker is the founder and chairman of International Economics Consulting Group (IEC) and chairman of the Africa Trade Foundation. Paul has worked for over thirty years as a lead economist advising several G7, G20, and G90 governments on trade policies and negotiations. He has also worked for the WTO, UNCTAD, ESCAP, ITC, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and others delivering economic analysis and modelling projections of trade policies. He has been recognized for the last ten consecutive years in Who's Who Leading Trade Economists and Global Thought Leader. Since 2005, he has regularly advised and trained trade negotiators in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, and carried out several sustainable impact assessments of FTAs. He is currently advising the ASEAN Secretariat and European Commission on digital trade provisions in Digital Trade Agreements. Since 2019, he is a Visiting Professor at the College of Europe where he teaches a master's course on the Political Economy of Trade. Paul is an expert in the Working Group of the World Economic Forum's Trade Tech Working Group and is sits on the Board of ESCAP's Trade Intelligence tools and is a Research Advisor to the ESCAP's Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade.



LOAN THI HONG LE
Director
International Economics Consulting

Loan Le as Director at International Economics Consulting (Viet Nam), is responsible for trade strategy and advice in East Asia. Her work covers trade and market analysis, multilateral and bilateral trade agreements, trade preferences, trade negotiations, business facilitation, and value chain analysis. Loan has been working on various cross-border trade advisory projects, including digital trade and digital economy initiatives, trade negotiation training, and economic integration strategies across Africa and the Asia-Pacific countries. Since 2019, Loan has been intensively engaged in designing and delivering capacity-building programmes on trade negotiations for Indonesia (trade in services and NTMs), Cambodia (Preferential tariffs and Rules of Origin), Angola (trade impact assessments), Uzbekistan (WTO accession, TRIPS and TRIMS), the Philippines (emerging trade issues), and ASEAN (environment and climate change), Ecuador (services trade), etc.




SANCHITA BASU-DAS
Economist

 Regional Cooperation and
 Integration Division
 Asian Development Bank

Sanchita Basu Das is an economist at the Regional Cooperation and Integration Division of the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). She contributes to the division's flagship publication, namely the Asian Economic Integration Report, and other knowledge products. She also supports the ASEAN regional forum. Her core research interests include regional cooperation and initiatives related to them, such as trade, logistics, industrial corridors, tourism, digital economy, institutions, and others. Sanchita joined ADB in November 2018 and served as an economist in the South Asia Department, processing loans/grants, implementing technical assistance projects, and leading operationally relevant analytical studies.

Prior to joining ADB, Sanchita was the lead researcher for economic affairs at the ASEAN Studies Centre of ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. She was concurrently a fellow of the Regional Economic Studies Program, coordinator of Singapore APEC Studies Centre and a co-editor of Journal of Southeast Asian Economies (JSEAE), all housed under the same institute. Sanchita has published in international journals including the Singapore Economic Review, Journal of World Trade and Asia Pacific Economic Literature, authored/edited books and book chapters, and wrote for media. Sanchita earned her PhD in international political economy from Nanyang Technology University, Singapore, and her masters in economics and business management from the University of Delhi and the National University of Singapore, respectively.


SUBORNA BARUA
*Professor and Chairman Department of
 International Business
 University of Dhaka*

Suborna Barua is a full Professor of Finance at the Department of International Business, University of Dhaka. He obtained a PhD from Federation University Australia, as well as a BBA and an MBA degree in finance from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Before joining the Department, Prof. Barua taught full-time at Jagannath University and United International University, served as a Sessional Lecturer at Federation University Australia, and worked as a Research Associate at the Institute of Inclusive Finance and Development (InM), a UK FCDO-funded institution. Before that, he served as a Research Fellow (parttime) at the Bangladesh Institute of Capital Market, Ministry of Finance (MoF), Government of Bangladesh (GoB). He is a former Chairman of the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, the country's largest state-owned capital market intermediary and market maker. Dr. Barua currently serves as



the Director of Fin2Tech Solutions Limited, a FinTech company, Chairman of Republic Insurance PLC, and an Independent Director of Janata Capital and Investment Limited, a state-owned investment bank. He is also a professional trainer specializing in topics related to financial technology (Fintech), digital financial crimes, financial analysis and planning, financial and investment management, advanced financial modelling, financial data analytics, and financial markets.

Dr. Barua has led and worked as a member in over twenty cross-border and local research projects, funded by the World Bank, the UNDP, DFID-UK, GIZ, and the University of Oxford. He has also served as a research and finance team leader in several government projects, including those with the Bangladesh Bank (the central bank of Bangladesh), the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority. In addition to teaching and research, he has held financial and management advisory roles at over ten local and multinational financial institutions, including banks, asset management companies, securities brokers and dealers, and merchant banks. He has served in advisory roles for several Digital Financial Services providers, including Information Technology Company Limited (the owner of Q-Cash, the country's largest payment switch) and Progoti Systems Limited, the parent of Bangladesh's largest B2B mobile financial services platform, TallyKhata, and TallyPay.

Dr. Barua's research portfolio encompasses two broad areas: fintech and sustainable finance. He has served as a technical expert in different industry-level and government-level committees related to ecommerce in Bangladesh. He has made significant contributions to the drafting of the Digital Commerce Authority Act and the Digital Cross-border E-commerce Act, which were formulated by the Ministry of Commerce of Bangladesh. He regularly writes expert opinion pieces in national media on contemporary ecommerce issues. He has recently completed several research projects covering topics in CBDC, cashless economy, digital lending, technology adoption and practices, and payment systems. Furthermore, Dr. Barua has introduced the country's first-ever certificate and university-level course in Financial Technology, offered by the Bangladesh Institute of Capital Market and United International University, respectively. He is a member of the Bangladesh Fintech Society.

His current research areas include financial technology and data analytics, the interface between finance and the





environment, and sustainable development, as well as machine learning and artificial intelligence applications in finance and economics. He is the author of the book *“Principles of Green Banking: Managing Environmental Risk and Sustainability,”* published by De Gruyter (2020), a leading resource on sustainable banking globally. His second book, titled *Financial Technology: Concepts, Principles, and Applications*, is scheduled for publication in mid-2026. He has also authored several book chapters and over thirty-five articles in highly-ranked and high-impact factor journals, including *IJFE*, *FIN*, and *BSE*. Dr. Barua currently serves as an Associate Editor for *SN Business & Economics* and *Humanities and Social Sciences Communication*, an Academic Editor for *PLOS Climate*, and a former Managing Editor for the *Journal of Financial Markets and Governance*. A comprehensive list of Dr. Barua's publications is available on [Google Scholar](#).

**JAMES CORREIA**

Capacity Building Associate
Asian Development Bank Institute

James Correia joined the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) in March 2024 and is a Capacity Building Associate.

Prior to joining ADBI, James held various posts with the New Zealand Government in Wellington and Brussels. He previously worked for the OECD in Paris, the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) in London, and the EU in Brussels.

James holds a master's degree in public policy (MPP) from Maastricht University and the United Nations University (UNU), and a bachelor's degree in politics and international studies from the University of Melbourne. He is currently pursuing his PhD in international climate policy and global environmental governance at the University of Tokyo.



**Special Talk: Regional Integration and Cooperation for Digital Transformation in Asia****MASAHIRO KAWAI**

*Professor Emeritus
University of Tokyo;*

Senior Fellow

*Policy Research Institute
Japan Ministry of Finance;*

Distinguished Research Fellow

*Japan Forum on International Relations;
Fellow, ADBI*

Masahiro Kawai is Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo. He is also a Senior Fellow of the Policy Research Institute of Japan's Finance Ministry and a Distinguished Research Fellow of the Japan Forum on International Relations. He taught economics at The Johns Hopkins University and the University of Tokyo and served for the World Bank, Japan's Finance Ministry, the Asian Development Bank, and its Institute (ADBI). He has published extensively on international finance and open macroeconomics, Asian economic integration and cooperation, and global economic governance. His recent works include: *Redefining Strategic Routes to Financial Resilience in ASEAN+3* (ADB, 2021); and *Trauma to Triumph: Rising from the Ashes of the Asian Financial Crisis* (World Scientific, 2022). He earned a PhD in economics from Stanford University.





Session 3: Policy and Regulatory Enablers for Enhanced Digital Trade and E-Commerce (continued)



JONG WOO KANG
Director
Regional Cooperation and
Integration Division
Asian Development Bank

Jong Woo Kang is Director of Regional Cooperation and Integration Division at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As director, he plays a role as an interface between ADB's internal and external stakeholders on regional cooperation and integration. He is a seasoned economist with extensive knowledge and experience on policy and strategic issues. He was Principal Economist at ERDI, Senior Advisor to the Managing Director General of ADB and Senior Economist at Strategy and Policy Department at ADB. He leads the annual publication of Asian Economic Integration Report. Areas of his research interest include regional integration, inclusive growth, macroeconomic policies, international trade and finance, and aid effectiveness. He published articles in economics journals such as Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Applied Economics, and World Economy. Before joining ADB, he was director at Ministry of Finance and Economy of Korea until 2006. He had got his BA in economics and MA in public administration from Seoul National University, and PhD in economics from University of Washington.



AVIK GHOSH
Assistant General Manager
Reserve Bank of India

Avik Ghosh is a Central Banker and is currently working as Assistant General Manager at the Reserve Bank of India, Kanpur, India. He brings over 16 years of industry experience across corporate finance, financial inclusion, currency management, HR, auditing, and budgeting. An Electrical Engineering graduate and Cost and Management Accountant, Mr. Ghosh holds global certifications including FRM (GARP, USA), FMVA, and CBCA (CFI). He is a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers. He has completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Machine Learning and Deep Learning and is presently pursuing doctoral research at the Indian Institute of Technology. His research interests span development economics, energy and climate economics, public finance, and applied policy analysis. Mr. Ghosh's work has been published in leading academic journals and featured at prominent international conferences. He is committed to bridging empirical research with practical policy design to advance inclusive and sustainable economic development in emerging economies.



THIAM HEE NG
Regional Head
Regional Cooperation and
Integration Unit
Asian Development Bank

Thiam Hee Ng is an economist who has done extensive research on regional cooperation, economic development, and finance. He currently leads the regional cooperation and integration program in South Asia at ADB.

He received his PhD and MSc in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his BA (hons) in economics from the University of Cambridge.



IVAN CENON BERNARDO
Research Associate II
BSP Research Academy
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Ivan Bernardo is a Research Associate of the BSP Research Academy. Within the Academy, he is part of the team that investigates issues focusing on International Economics and Sectoral Studies, particularly trade and industrial performance and its national and international implications. His research covers service sector development, servicification, firm and pricing dynamics in times of crisis, and exchange rate forecasting.

Before joining the bank, he was an innovation and policy advisor in the development sector, including the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Mr. Bernardo has a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of the Philippines, Diliman, and a Master of Economics in Applied Economics from the National University of Singapore.





ARIEF RAMAYANDI
Senior Research Economist
Asian Development Bank Institute

Arief Ramayandi joined the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) in June 2024 and is a Senior Research Economist.

Prior to joining ADBI appointment, Arief was a Principal Economist at the Economic Research and Development Impact Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He was mostly responsible for providing inputs for the macroeconomic surveillance and analysis of the Asian Development Outlook (the ADB's main flagship publication) and macroeconomic modeling activities within the bank.

Before joining ADB, Arief was the director of the Center of Economics and Development Studies at Padjadjaran University in Indonesia. He holds a PhD in economics from the Australian National University and has published in the field of macroeconomics and development.

His field of interest includes macroeconomics and monetary economics, economic modeling, policy economics, development economics, public policy and governance, and economic integration and policy coordination. His recent works include the macroeconomic impact of COVID-19 and issues related to business cycle and exchange rate fluctuations and debt build-ups.



RUPA CHANDA
*Director of Trade,
Investment and Innovation*
Economic and Social Commission for Asia
and the Pacific

Rupa Chanda is the Director of Trade, Investment, and Innovation at UN ESCAP. Earlier, she worked as a Professor of Economics at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore and was an Economist at the IMF in Washington, DC. She holds a PhD from Columbia University and BA from Harvard University. Her research interests include the WTO, international trade in services, regional integration, health services, and migration. She has served on national and international committees and advisory boards in these areas and has undertaken research for several international organizations and think tanks, including the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), OECD, European Commission, World Bank and ICRIER. She has published extensively in the form of authored and edited books, journal articles, book chapters, reports, and popular media articles. She frequently presents in national and international forums.

**Day 3: 30 October 2025****Session 1: Digital infrastructure, Platforms, and Payment Systems:
Expanding Access Across Borders****RIFKI WENO**

Executive Director
ASEAN Business Advisory Council
(ASEAN-BAC)

Rifki Weno has over a decade of proven track record in policy advocacy.

He has a rich and diverse experience set, from in-house government relations in tech company Tokopedia, public policy consultant, to global engagement facilitator within foreign embassies and the ASEAN Secretariat.

His issue expertise includes digital technology and sustainability.

**IMADUDDIN SAHABAT**
Head Representative
Representative Office
Bank Indonesia Tokyo

Imaduddin Sahabat is the Head Representative of Bank Indonesia in Tokyo, a position he has held since early 2024. In this role, he plays a pivotal part in strengthening international collaboration and advancing Indonesia's economic engagement with Japan. He began his career at Bank Indonesia in 1997 and has since held several strategic positions, including Head of the Money Management Department Group and Head of the Bank Indonesia Representative Office for Banten Province in 2022.

He completed his Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Socioeconomics from Bogor Agricultural University in 1993, followed by a Master's in Management in 1996 and a Master's in Economic Science in 2010, and later earned his Doctorate in Economics from the University of Indonesia in 2016.





KATI SUOMINEN
Founder and CEO
Nextrade Group

Kati Suominen is the Founder and CEO of Nextrade Group that helps governments, leading technology companies, and multilateral development banks enable trade and private sector development through technology. Author of 140 articles and 10 peer-reviewed books, Dr. Suominen works on trade in goods and services, digital trade, digital payments, digital competition, and AI policy, and DPIs. She also serves as Adjunct Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and Adjunct Professor at UCLA Anderson School of Management and Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Visa Economic Empowerment Institute.



SUBHASIS BERA
Associate Professor
International School of Business
and Media

Subhasis Bera is an Associate Professor in Economics and Quantitative Techniques at the International School of Business and Media, Kolkata and an external consultant for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He has more than eighteen years of experience in research and teaching.

He has worked at the World Bank as a consultant and as a Fellow in a policy think tank, the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi. He has worked as an Associate Professor at the FORE School of Management, New Delhi, and taught undergraduate and graduate students at universities and colleges.

His areas of expertise are Economics of Technology, Econometrics, Development Economics and International Trade. In particular, he has worked on various aspects of Digitalisation, Open Source Software Development, Energy Efficiency, FDI and Applied Econometrics.

He has served as a member of the country risk expert panel at Euromoney and at the Centre for Education Growth and Research (CEGR).

He has published 3 edited books, book chapters, policy papers, and more than 30 research papers in peer-reviewed, reputed international journals and presented papers at international conferences abroad and in India.





Session 2: Building Skills and Harnessing AI for Inclusive Digital Trade



PHONGPOB BEN METHAKULLAWAT

Capacity Building Specialist
Asian Development Bank Institute

Phongpob (Ben) Methakullawat is an economist with a diplomatic background and extensive experience in regional integration, trade, investment, and development cooperation. He began his career as a diplomat with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

He served as an economist at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, where he worked on key economic integration initiatives, and as National Project Coordinator for the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Bangkok, managing an EU-funded on competition policy, public procurement and organic agriculture, supporting greater connectivity and economic integration between Thailand and ASEAN.

His diplomatic assignments include a posting in Jakarta where he worked on development cooperation between Thailand and Indonesia, and a leadership role at the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) as Head of TICA-UN Coordination, where he oversaw partnerships with UN agencies in Thailand, and spearheaded South-South cooperation projects with countries in Latin America and South Asia.

Ben holds a PhD and master's degrees in economics from the Australian National University (ANU) and an honours degree from the University of Melbourne.



BRENDAN CHIA

Head, Regional Public Affairs (Policy)
Grab

Brendan Chia is Head, Regional Public Affairs and Policy at Grab. He focuses on emerging policy topics at the intersection of technology and public policy - including AI governance, digital platforms, and the gig economy - to advance Grab's economic and social impact. With a career spanning the private, public, and multilateral sectors, he brings diverse experience and perspectives from roles at the Boston Consulting Group, World Bank, and Singapore Economic Development Board.

**PITI SRISANGNAM**

*Executive Director of the ASEAN
Foundation*

*Associate Professor of Economics,
Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn
University*

Piti Srisangnam holds a Ph.D. degree in Economics and Commerce from the University of Melbourne (Australia), and an M.A. degree in International Economics and Finance from Chulalongkorn University (Thailand). He has been teaching International Economics and ASEAN Studies for bachelor and master degree students at Chulalongkorn University since 2002.

Dr. Piti Srisangnam holds a Ph.D. degree in Economics and Commerce from the University of Melbourne (Australia), and an M.A. degree in International Economics and Finance from Chulalongkorn University (Thailand). He has been teaching International Economics and ASEAN Studies for bachelor and master degree students at Chulalongkorn University since 2002.

He has been Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the Centre for European Studies from 2010 to 2012 and Deputy Director for Academic Affairs of the ASEAN Studies Center in 2012, both at Chulalongkorn University, before he became Director of the Center in 2013.

He has been selected for the 2019 Rising Star Royal Thai Government Scholarships Association Award: Rising Star. In 2021, he was granted the Dongfang Scholarships to become a visiting scholar at Peking University. In 2023, He received the Australian Alumni of the Year award from the Australian Alumni Association of Thailand and Australian Embassy, Thailand.

He has published several papers in journals and books e.g. on the socioeconomic development in Southeast Asia, on trade in services among ASEAN member states, on regional economic integration of ASEAN, on the economic reform and SME development in Thailand, on ASEAN-India, ASEAN-China, ASEAN-Japan, and ASEAN-ROK relations. Apart from academic works, he also hosts 4 radio programs related to current issues in ASEAN.

At present, Piti Srisangnam holds the position of the Executive Director of the ASEAN Foundation, a regional inter-governmental body established by the ASEAN leaders in December 1997 to promote greater awareness, deeper understanding, and closer engagement among the peoples of ASEAN as well as to contribute to the region's development. He is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.





SARUJ THIPSENA
*Executive Director and
Chief Technology Officer*
STelligence

Saruj Thipsena, a Thai national, is the Executive Director and Chief Technology Officer of STelligence, an AI powerhouse based in Thailand, specializing in LegalTech, RegTech, and Compliance Automation. He leads efforts to advance responsible AI adoption through practical, high-impact applications in governance and industry.

In 2024, Mr. Thipsena was appointed Advisor to the House of Representatives Commission on the Study and Development of Artificial Intelligence Control and Promotion Strategies, contributing to Thailand's national AI policy and governance framework. Previously, he served as Deputy Managing Director of Microsoft Thailand, where he led the company's Cloud and AI strategy, driving the regional adoption of Generative AI and advancing enterprise readiness in AI governance. He also held the role of Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), where he introduced and championed the Zero Trust security framework to strengthen cybersecurity resilience across sectors.

Before Microsoft, he held senior roles across the telecommunications industry in APAC, driving market growth and regulatory collaboration in Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, India, and Japan.



**Session 3: Regional Integration and International Cooperation for Inclusive Digital Trade****WITADA ANUKOONWATTAKA**

Economic Affairs Officer
United Nations ESCAP

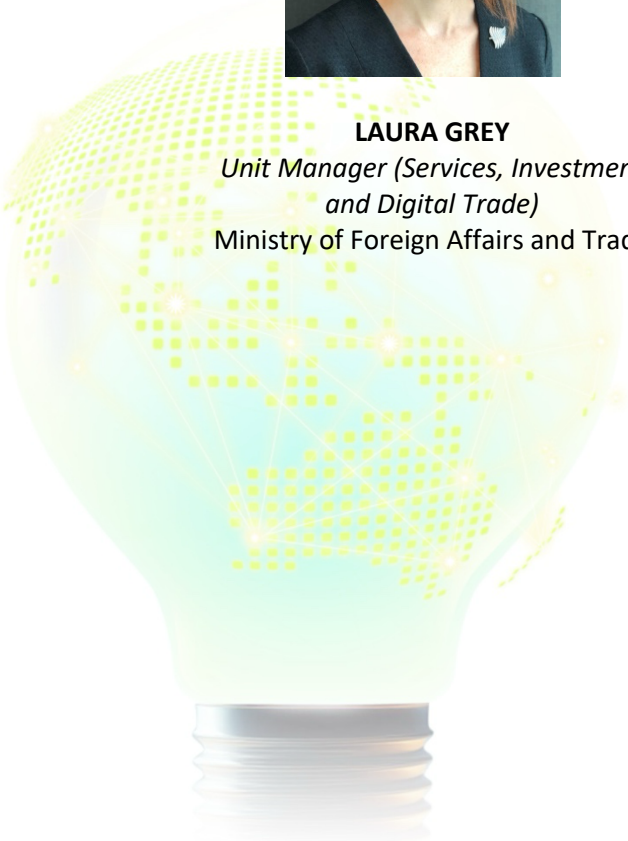
Witada Anukoonwattaka serves as Economic Affairs Officer (Senior Economist) in the Trade Policy and Facilitation Section of the Trade and Investment Division at the United Nations ESCAP. With extensive experience in trade, investment, and digital policies, she leads research and capacity-building initiatives on digital trade, global value chains, and their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She directs UN-ESCAP's programmes on Digital Trade Policy and Regulations, which involves collaborative research with international organizations including UN-ECA, UN-ECLAC, UNCTAD, UNIDO, OECD, and the ASEAN Secretariat. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

**LAURA GREY**

*Unit Manager (Services, Investment
and Digital Trade)*
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Laura Grey has been Unit Manager (Services, Investment and Digital Trade) at the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) since April 2024.

Laura joined MFAT in 2012, and in Wellington has primarily worked on New Zealand's relationships in the Middle East, South East Asia and North Asia. Before taking up her current role, she was Lead Adviser (China Trade and Economic) from 2020-24 and New Zealand's Deputy High Commissioner to Singapore between 2017–2020. Prior to joining MFAT, Laura worked in New Zealand's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.



**PREWPRAE CHUMRUM***Executive Director*

Department of Trade Negotiations,
Ministry of Commerce, Thailand

Prewprae Chumrum has been appointed as Executive Director, Bureau of Trade in Goods, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce of Thailand in September 2025. Before joining trade in goods team, she was Executive Director for Bureau of Trade in Services and Investment Negotiations (2018-2025) and Bureau of Asia (bilateral affairs on Asia, Middle East and African regions). Prewprae has had various working background and experience on international economics, international relations including international negotiations on goods, services, investment environment, climate change, digital trade, etc. at bilateral, regional and multilateral level for more than 23 years. She has been a lead negotiator for Thailand in various bilateral and ASEAN- dialogue FTAs and also ASEAN Co-Chair for Working Group on Trade in Services under AANZFTA, AJCEP and ACAFTA. In addition, Prewprae has taken up a Chair for ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) negotiations.

**RIFKI WENO***Executive Director*

ASEAN Business Advisory Council
(ASEAN-BAC)

Rifki Weno has over a decade of proven track record in policy advocacy.

He has a rich and diverse experience set, from in-house government relations in tech company Tokopedia, public policy consultant, to global engagement facilitator within foreign embassies and the ASEAN Secretariat.

His issue expertise includes digital technology and sustainability.





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BYUNSIK JUNG

Deputy Dean

Asian Development Bank Institute

Byungsik Jung is Deputy Dean of the Asian Development Bank Institute, specializing in international finance, trade agreements and international tax. He was previously Director General for International Tax in the Republic of Korea Ministry of Economy and Finance, and Bureau Member in negotiating the Terms of Reference for the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation. He also was a Deputy Director General for the international finance bureau, and co-chair for the G20 International Financial Architecture Working Group. Mr. Jung was responsible for the negotiations for various tax treaties and numerous free trade agreements between the Republic of Korea and other countries.

Mr. Jung earned his Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) in international trade laws from American University Washington College of Law in 2008, his LL.M. in financial law from Georgetown Law Center in 2007, and his LL.B. from Korea University in 1994. He was admitted to the New York Bar in 2008.



KYOHEI YAMAMOTO

Chief Investigator

Digital Investigations Division, Digital and
International Affairs Policy Group
Japan Fair Trade Commission

Kyohei Yamamoto is Chief Investigator in the Digital Investigations Division, Digital and International Affairs Policy Group at the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC). He has been involved in shaping the Commission's competition policy in the digital sector, including legislative initiatives to address emerging competition issues. Since his appointment to the current position, he has contributed to preparing for the full enforcement of the Mobile Software Competition Act (MSCA). Prior to joining the JFTC, he practiced law at one of Japan's leading law firms, where he was involved in M&A and antitrust matters.

**QUAN ZHAO**

*Senior Programme Manager
International Trade Centre*

Quan Zhao is a Senior Programme Manager (Trade Policy) in the Division of Market Development, International Trade Centre (ITC). He covers research, policy advisory and project management in the areas of trade in services, e-commerce, digital economy and cross-border investment. He also advises the senior management on trade and investment issues in the context of the G20 and BRICS. Prior to joining the ITC, Mr. Zhao served as a trade negotiator and diplomat at the Permanent Mission of China to the World Trade Organization and the Ministry of Commerce of China. He served as the Chair of the WTO Committee on Trade in Financial Services and was the lead services negotiator in a number of China's FTA negotiations.

Quan Zhao holds a master's degree in international law and economics from the World Trade Institute, University of Bern in Switzerland.

**WITADA ANUKOONWATTAKA**

*Economic Affairs Officer
United Nations ESCAP*

Witada Anukoonwattaka serves as Economic Affairs Officer (Senior Economist) in the Trade Policy and Facilitation Section of the Trade and Investment Division at the United Nations ESCAP. With extensive experience in trade, investment, and digital policies, she leads research and capacity-building initiatives on digital trade, global value chains, and their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She directs UN-ESCAP's programmes on Digital Trade Policy and Regulations, which involves collaborative research with international organizations including UN-ECA, UN-ECLAC, UNCTAD, UNIDO, OECD, and the ASEAN Secretariat. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

