

**Address delivered by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Piyush Singh during the  
inaugural session of Webinar 'India and MERCOSUR: Towards a  
deepening of Trade and Investment Relations' co-organized by  
RIS (India) and CADEP (Paraguay)  
[28 May 2026]**

Dear all,

Good morning from Asuncion. Let me begin by thanking RIS and CADEP for organizing this Webinar on the relevant subject of India and MERCOSUR trade and investment relations.

During the State Visit of His Excellency President Santiago Pena Palacios to India in June 2025, both sides had noted their interest in strengthening and expanding existing trade links under the India-MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). Further, the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of India-Paraguay Joint Commission Mechanism held in November 2025 emphasized the importance of strengthening ties between India and MERCOSUR as a means to expand trade and investment opportunities. This semester Paraguay holds the Pro Tempore Presidency of MERCOSUR.

Friends, in my opinion, the value of this Webinar which is being held today lies in bringing together the views and assessments of Track II experts on this pertinent subject. The consolidation of these views in form of specific recommendations that would emerge from today's Webinar could help further inform the various relevant stakeholders who continue to work on expanding the India-MERCOSUR agenda.

Further, as the Ambassador of India to Paraguay, I am glad that this Webinar also represents the strengthening of ties between Track II institutions of India and Paraguay. I congratulate RIS and CADEP for this partnership. I should also mention that 2026 is a special year in which we are celebrating the 65th anniversary of India-Paraguay diplomatic relations. This Webinar is a welcome addition to these celebrations.

On my behalf, I welcome the moderators and speakers for this Webinar: Prof. Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General RIS; Prof. Fernando Masi, Director, CADEP; Prof. Manuel Gonzalo (Argentina); Dr. Renato Baumann (Brasil); Dr. Ignacio Bartesaghi (Uruguay); Prof. Belén Servin (Paraguay); Prof. Fernando Ribeiro, IPEA (Brasil); and Dr. Pankaj Vashisht, RIS (India).

With those words, I look forward to fruitful discussions during the Webinar as well as specific recommendations emerging from it towards deepening of trade and investment relations between India and MERCOSUR.

Thank You.

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