



Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*Navigating India's
China Strategy on
Climate and Energy*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker:

Pooja Vijay Ramamurthi

24 December 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker: Dr. Pooja Vijay Ramamurthi, Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress, New Delhi.

Chair: Dr. Partha Mukhopadhyay, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; and, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar examined India's climate and energy engagement with China amid ambitious domestic transition goals, persistent supply-chain dependence and geopolitical realities. Dr. Pooja Ramamurthi assessed whether selective engagement with China can advance India's climate objectives without undermining strategic autonomy.
- The presentation highlighted that while India has set aggressive targets for renewable energy expansion, electric mobility and decarbonisation, these ambitions coexist with structural constraints. India remains reliant on China for critical minerals, power infrastructure and greentechnology inputs. Although diversification efforts are underway, absolute import volumes from China continue to rise and cost asymmetries across solar, wind and EV supply chains limit India's competitiveness in the short to medium term.
- The speaker traced India-China engagement on climate and energy through three phases: early multilateral alignment during the 1990s and early 2000s; intensified bilateral activity between 2008 and 2015, and a post-2015 phase marked by strategic divergence, geopolitical tensions and weakening institutional channels. She stated that this divergence reflects differences in industrial capacity and development trajectories rather than a simple mitigation-adaptation divide.
- Dr. Ramamurthi underscored that broad, symbolic cooperation frameworks are unlikely to yield results in the current context. Instead, any future engagement would need to focus on narrowly defined, low-risk areas that are less commercially competitive and politically sensitive.

- The speaker concluded by noting that India's challenge lies in managing unavoidable interdependence with China while hedging risks. A selective and realistic approach, anchored in India's long-term transition goals and informed by comparative international experiences, offers the most credible pathway for navigating India's climate and energy engagement with China.
- The Chair underscored the need for finer institutional detail, especially concerning implementing agencies and governance frameworks in both India and China, emphasising that sustained transformation depends on building institutional capacity, securing finance, and ensuring policy coordination over a decade-long time frame.

Disclaimer: This is a summary produced for purposes of dissemination and for generating wider discussion. All views expressed here should be understood to be those of the speakers and individual participants, and not necessarily of the Institute of Chinese Studies. Since this is a summary, it cannot be used for citation without confirming with the speaker(s).