



Conference on Strengthening Cooperation among BBIN Countries: The Road Ahead

Venue: Hotel Annapurna, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu

Day 1: April 17, 2017

Inauguration

16:30 – 17:00	Registration /Tea Coffee
17:00 – 17:05	Call on to Dias
	Chair: Prof. Bishwambher Pyakuryal (Chairman, ISSR)
	Chief Guest: Hon. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Former Prime Minister and President of Nepali Congress, Nepal
	Special Guest: Hon. Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat, Foreign Minister, Nepal
	Ambassador of Bangladesh
	Ambassador of Bhutan
	Ambassador of India
	Keynote Speaker: Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Ph.D., Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi
	Representative The Asia Foundation
	Welcome Address: Prof. Govind Nepal, Board Director, ISSR
17:05 – 17:10	Inauguration by the Chief Guest
17:10 – 17:15	Brief Observations on "Strengthening Cooperation among BBIN Countries: The Road Ahead " –Prof. Madan K. Dahal
17:15 – 17:30	Remarks by :
17:30 – 17:35	H.E. Ambassador of Bangladesh
17:35 – 17:40	H.E. Ambassador of Bhutan
17:40 – 17:45	H.E. Ambassador of India
17:45 – 18:10	Keynote Speech by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Ph.D., Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi
18:10 – 18:35	Special Remarks by Hon' Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat, Foreign Minister, Nepal
18:35 – 18:50	Inaugural Speech by Hon. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Former Prime Minister and President of Nepali Congress, Nepal
18:50 – 19:15	
19:15 – 19:20	Vote of Thanks: Naresh Shrestha, Board Director, ISSR and Chairman, Pavilion Group
19:20 – 19:30	Chairman's closing remark
19:30 onwards	Refreshment and Dinner



Day 2: April 18, 2017

9:00 – 9:15

Tea /Coffee

9:15 – 10:30

Session 1: Emerging issues for enhancing cooperation among BBIN countries

Session Chair: Hon' Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, Former Finance Minister

Speaker: Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, BIGD, Brac University; and Director, Bangladesh Research Program, International Growth Centre, LSE-Oxford.

Observations:

- *Bangladesh*
- *Bhutan*
- *India*
- *Nepal*

Discussion:

10:30 – 11:45

Session 2: Trade Facilitation among BBIN Countries

intra-regional trade in South Asia is significantly low and unsatisfactory, which is often times affected by fragmented bilateral agreements. The review of existing trend and direction of sub-regional trade between BBIN countries is needed to facilitate trade in future.

The key issues in trade facilitation are: high tariff, inefficiencies in ports operation, customs and regulatory environment including land or cross-border procedures and regional and internal political conflicts. It necessitates in exploring major obstructions in tariff, Para tariff, and non-tariff barriers. Therefore, the discussions are warranted to make major policy recommendations by especially focusing on sub-regional issues. Last but not the least, the question is what role Think Tanks should play?

Chair: Dr. Posh Raj Pande, Chairman SAWTEE

Speaker: Prof. Selim Raihan,

Speaker: Joseph George, United Nations ESCAP

Observations:

- *Bangladesh*



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bhutan</i> • <i>India</i> • <i>Nepal</i> <p>Discussion:</p>
11:45 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 13:15	<p>Session 3: Connectivity for Enhancing Prosperity of BBIN countries</p> <p>Regional integration to a greater extent factor in enhanced connectivity which in turn depends on increased cooperation through consensus-based regional rules and institutions. Commercial interests linked to socio-political and security concerns should increase the probability of enhanced cooperation. This in turn, will increase connectivity through infrastructure development, integration and uninterrupted movement of goods and services in the region.</p> <p>It should be advisable to discuss the policies for creating need-based institutions responsible for enhancing the case for accelerating sub-regional connectivity and utilizing inherent complementarities? The deliberation should also focus on how regional Think Tanks could contribute to this objective?</p> <p>Chair: Ambassador Suhrab Hossain, Adviser, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, Bangladesh</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhury</p> <p>Speaker: Ms. Saroj Ayush, United Nations, ESCAP, SSWA</p> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bangladesh</i> • <i>Bhutan</i> • <i>India</i> • <i>Nepal</i> <p>Discussion:</p>
13:15 – 14:00	Lunch



14:00 – 15:15	<p>Session 4:</p> <p>Electricity Trade among BBIN countries</p> <p>The region suffers from extremely low intra-regional energy trade as against high potential and growing demand. The constraints include supply-side constraints, low private sector participation, poor cross-border infrastructure, underdeveloped and poor regulatory frameworks, difficulties in accessing finance, and inadequate information sharing in project development.</p> <p>The objective of such discourse is to seek answers on the impediments and possibilities of electricity trade among BBIN countries? What should be the mechanisms and best global practices to develop infrastructure especially for the hydropower? What are the best policy options on energy cooperation among BBIN? How regional Think Tanks could contribute to this objective.</p> <p>Chair: : Ambassador Lyonpo Dago Tshering, Bhutan</p> <p>Speaker: Arnab Ganguli</p> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Bangladesh</i>• <i>Bhutan</i>• <i>India</i>• <i>Nepal</i> <p>Discussion:</p>
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:20	<p>Session 5: Addressing Climate Change</p> <p>BBIN countries are extremely vulnerable to climate. They have already been experiencing climate change effects on average temperatures, precipitation, changes in pests and diseases, changes in sea level and changes in the nutritional quality of foods. The concern is also food insecurity for the vulnerable groups such as poor and marginal farmers.</p> <p>Some key questions for discussion include the identification of innovative practices and technologies, which can play a role in climate mitigation and adaptation? The question is also on how a range of available policies is executed that can reduce the risk of negative climate change impacts on key sectors and how to develop mechanisms to regularly share information at the sub-</p>



	<p>regional and regional level?</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Fahmida Khatun</p> <p>Speaker: Dr. Uttam Sinha</p> <p>Speaker: Lyonpo Dago Tshering</p> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Bangladesh</i>• <i>Bhutan</i>• <i>India</i>• <i>Nepal</i> <p>Discussion:</p>
<p>16:20 – 17:00</p>	<p>Closing Session</p> <p>Chair: Foreign Secretary: Shankar Das Bairagi</p> <p>Presentation of summary of outcomes: Prof. Govind Nepal</p> <p>Address by: Former Finance Minister: Hon Bishnu Prasad Poudel</p> <p>Observation by the Chairman of Organising Institution:</p> <p>Prof. Bishwambher Pyakuryal</p> <p>Vote of Thanks : Prof. Madan K. Dahal</p> <p>Closing remarks by session Chair</p>
