

## **Policy Dialogue on Economic and Transport Development in Border Areas in Eastern South Asia**

**Shillong (Meghalaya), India, 4-5 December 2013**

### **Concept Note**

#### *Background*

Remote border areas are junctions for connectivity between countries and very often also poorer places in most countries. In order to alleviate poverty and develop trade and transport connectivity in border areas, many countries opened borders for trade and transport, and granted special policies to them through border special economic zones. Numerous border special economic zones have been established in Northeast, Southeast and Central Asia. Many of them have become trade centres, transport hubs and cooperation centres, greatly promoted local economic development and poverty alleviation in border areas.

The countries in Eastern South Asia, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal, are the home of large number of poor people living under USD 2 per day and has performed poorly in terms of other key MDGs such as hunger and health. Despite being a geographically contiguous landmass, it has yet to harness potential benefits of closer regional integration and cooperation. South and Southwest Asia remains the least integrated subregion in the world as measured by proportion of intraregional trade, investment, transport connectivity and people-to-people contacts. The proportion of intra-regional trade in South Asia at below 6 per cent of the subregion's trade, is lowest among different subregions.

Development of border special economic zones in Eastern South Asia will greatly contribute to poverty alleviation, investment and trade promotion, cross-border and transit transport, and development of local economy. Border special economic zones will become bridges for cooperation between the countries. The four countries have strong demand for border trade and cross-border and transit transport but face numerous restrictions. Border special economic zones will provide practical solutions to most existing institutional barriers to trade and transport between the countries in Eastern South Asia.

#### *Objective of the Policy Dialogue*

The Policy Dialogue will provide an opportunity to share experience in development of economy and transport in border areas and discuss possible ways for the Eastern South Asian countries to develop the border areas as hubs for their cooperation.

#### *Activities*

The Policy Dialogue will include one-day presentations and discussions, and one-day field visit to a border crossing.

### *Participants*

Policy makers from ministries in charge of economic development, transport, trade and commerce, finance (Customs) and border control, and local governments in border areas from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal will participate. Business sector relating to cross-border and transit trade and transport will be also invited.

### *Dates and Venue*

The two-day seminar will take place on 4-5 December 2013, at Shillong (Meghalaya), India.

### *Languages*

The working language of the seminar is English.



Government of Meghalaya



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### **Tentative programme**

Wednesday, 4 December 2013

**09:30 – 10:30 Opening session**

Chair: **Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya**

Welcome address by host government

Opening remarks by Representative of UNESCAP

Opening remarks by Representative of ADB

Special Address by Member (MoS), North Eastern Council

Inaugural Address by Hon'ble Chief Minister

Vote of thanks

**10:30 – 10:45 Coffee break**

**11:00 – 12:30 Session 1: Key Issues in border area and crossing management and economic development**

Chair: Secretary, North Eastern Council

Presentations:

1. Presentation on poverty alleviation and the social aspects of border area development by SRO-SSWA, UNESCAP
2. Presentation on SASEC Transport and Trade Facilitation Sectors, by Ronald Antonio Q. Butiong, South Asia Department, Asian Development Bank

3. Presentation on border crossing management in India, by Government of India (tba)
4. Presentations on current status of economic and transport development in border areas in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal

Open discussion

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

**13:30 – 15:00 Session 2: Best practices and models in cross-border infrastructure and economic development**

**Chair:** tba

Presentations

1. Efficient Cross-Border Transport Models, by Heini Suominen, Transport Division, UNESCAP
2. Logistics and economic development at border crossings, Prof. Ji Shouwen, Beijing Jiaotong University
3. Experiences of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam in realizing cross-border opportunities, by Development Analysis Network

Open discussion including on the systematic assessment of non-physical barriers in cross-border transport in the subregion.

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break

**15:30 – 17:00 Session 3: Potential of transport facilitation and special economic zones for the development of the border areas of the subregion**

**Chair:** tba

Presentations:

1. Government of Meghalaya
2. Government representatives from Bangladesh/ Bhutan/ Nepal
3. Business sector perspectives (Bangladesh/ India/ Bhutan/ Nepal)

Open discussion

17:00 – 17:10 Wrap-up of Day 1

**预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：**

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_6006](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_6006)

