

# CUTS CITEE in Action

January-March 2018



## Events

### Unleashing Connectivity for Inclusive Growth

CUTS International, Himalayan Consensus Institute (HCI), Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), and The Asia Foundation (TAF) organised a panel discussion entitled ‘Unleashing Connectivity for Inclusive Growth – Leveraging Himalayan Consensus’ in New Delhi on January 23, 2018.



The discussion introduced the idea behind Himalayan Consensus process to the larger audience in Delhi and developed an initial framework on how this platform can be used to usher connectivity and people-to-people contact. In a moderated session, speakers reflected on the work of their institutions and shaped up the discourse especially in context of how this can shape the larger Act East discourse for India, together with China’s Belt and Road Initiative, in the interests of furthering connectivity.

[www.cuts-citee.org/events.htm](http://www.cuts-citee.org/events.htm)



## Events

# Creating an Enabling and Inclusive Policy and Political Economy Discourse for Trade, Transport and Transit Facilitation

CUTS International organised a National Policy Dialogue on ‘Creating an Enabling and Inclusive Policy and Political Economy Discourse for Trade, Transport and Transit Facilitation in and among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Myanmar’ in New Delhi on February 27, 2018.

This dialogue aimed to facilitate trade and transit among the five countries (BBIN+M) by enabling the implementation of the BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) and such other enabling connectivity initiatives through evidence-based advocacy, facilitative dialogues, and capacity building.

It was a platform to share and discuss research findings and recommendations at the national level with policymakers, subject experts, academicians, private sector players, think tanks and media so as to validate and fine tune them.

[www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/Event.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/Event.htm)



## Publication

# Reviving Trade through Waterways

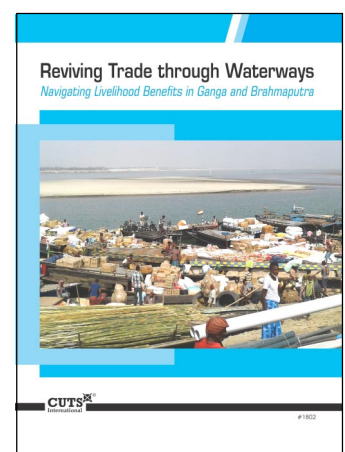
## *Navigating Livelihood Benefits in Ganga and Brahmaputra*

The findings presented in this report have been compiled from country-specific diagnostic studies. It provides an overview of the institutional framework governing waterways, opportunities and challenges with respect to inland navigation in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) countries as well as the stakeholder perceptions regarding environmental, livelihood and gender implications of developmental initiatives being undertaken in inland water transport sector.

It has come up with recommendations like developing an integrated strategy for closer cooperation within BBIN countries on cross-border navigational use of Inland Waterways (IWs), engaging local river dependent communities in river training, disaster management, freight handling and other services to supplement their livelihoods and developing ports with multimodal connectivity for seamless transportation.

[www.cuts-citee.org/IW/pdf/](http://www.cuts-citee.org/IW/pdf/)

[Reviving\\_Trade\\_through\\_Waterways\\_Navigating\\_Livelihood\\_Benefits\\_in\\_Ganga\\_and\\_Brahmaputra.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/IW/pdf/Reviving_Trade_through_Waterways_Navigating_Livelihood_Benefits_in_Ganga_and_Brahmaputra.pdf)





## Participation

- Sanjay Kumar Mangla participated in the First Workshop of ERIA's Project 'Improving e-commerce enabling/supporting connectivity in Asia' organised by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, Jakarta at Bangkok, during January 21-22, 2018. He presented first draft of CUTS paper for ERIA's project.
- Veena Vidyadharan participated in the GBM (Ganga Meghna Brahmaputra) CSOs Network Meeting organised by e International Union for Conservation of Nature at IIT Guwahati during February 06-08, 2018.
- Susan Mathew participated in the 'Trilateral Winter Law School on National Security and Defence Laws and Practices: France, Germany and India' organised by Gujarat National Law University in collaboration with University Paris Nanterre, Paris and University of Potsdam, Germany at Gandhinagar, Gujarat on February 13-16, 2018.
- Susan Mathew attended the '6<sup>th</sup> SAARC Business Leaders Conclave' at Kathmandu, Nepal on March 16-19, 2018. The Conclave is a biennial event of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry and organised in collaboration with Government of Nepal, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with all national chambers/Federations of South Asian countries and Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom. The theme of this year's conference was 'Unleashing Shared Prosperity through Economic Integration'. As part of this conclave, Susan was a panellist in a session entitled 'Agribusiness: Target - Doubling agribusiness by 2020'.
- Bipul Chatterjee participated in Himalayan Consensus Summit 2018 at Kathmandu, Nepal on March 23-24, 2018. He was a panellist in a session, which discussed steps toward establishing a consortium of think tanks working on the preservation of environment and culture, and promotion of sustainable development in the Himalayan region.



## In Media

### What Would a India-US Free Trade Agreement Look Like?

*The Wire, January 25, 2018, By Pradeep S Mehta and Bipul Chatterjee*

If India has to realise the imperative of creating new jobs, the country's manufacturing base needs to be expanded with a clear trade strategy in mind. The world economy is on the upswing, offering better potential for India's exports. Faced with a World Trade Organisation (WTO) losing its animal spirits, India needs bilateral trade deals with countries with big markets such as the US. <https://thewire.in/217445/india-us-free-trade-agreement-look-like/>

### Saving Majuli, is it possible?

*The Third Pole, February 02, 2018, By Akshat Mishra*

Majuli is a picturesque island within the mighty Brahmaputra river, in the Indian state of Assam. It is the largest riverine island in the world, but as it is slowly eaten away, it may soon disappear.

Given its size and location, the island is a biodiversity hotspot and an offbeat tourist destination. It specifically attracts birding aficionados as its fertile floodplains and highly productive wetlands provide an ideal habitat for a plethora of resident and migratory birds, up to 260 species.

[www.thethirdpole.net/en/2018/02/02/saving-majauli-is-it-possible/](http://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2018/02/02/saving-majauli-is-it-possible/)

### Trade in an increasingly protectionist world

*Live Mint, March 07, 2018, By Pradeep S Mehta*

The prioritisation of a tariff hike above difficult domestic reforms points to the urgency for convergence between trade and industrial policy. The rhetoric against globalisation is disturbingly shifting away from strengthening domestic industry through necessary economic reforms to shielding it from global competition. This is not a good sign. [www.livemint.com/Opinion/X85hbGZDg28XPaEudP8SLJ/Trade-in-an-increasingly-protectionist-world.html](http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/X85hbGZDg28XPaEudP8SLJ/Trade-in-an-increasingly-protectionist-world.html)