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**Multi-stakeholders and Traders' Meeting
On
Cross-Border Trade, Tourism and Navigation through Trans-boundary Inland
Waterways between India and Bangladesh**

Monday, March 21, 2022

Time: 11:00-13:00 (IST)

Hotel Swagat, Dhubri, Assam, India

Background Note

India and Bangladesh share 54 trans-boundary rivers. These rivers can generate opportunities for the local communities in the sub-region through economic, political and socio-cultural interactions between the two countries. Cross-border trade and connectivity between these two countries through these rivers and inland waterways hold immense socio-economic potential. However, these have not been utilised to their fullest potential owing to several political, navigational and regulatory challenges.

Although several efforts to engage the local communities in the production and trade of locally produced agricultural commodities, cultural artefacts, cuisine and historical artwork have been made in the past limited attention has been paid to the use of these trans-boundary waterways for the trade of these products. CUTS International's efforts have highlighted that the sub-regional connectivity and networking linkages between Bangladesh and India can be enhanced through the exchange of such products across borders on small stretches along the trans-boundary waterways.

In this context, CUTS International is organising this Multi-stakeholders and Traders' Meeting in Dhubri, Assam (India) with an aim "to build consensus among private sector, local communities and various government institutions at local, subnational and national levels for Cross-Border Trade, Tourism and Navigation through Trans-boundary Inland Waterways between India and Bangladesh".

This meeting is being organised under a regional project titled "Trans-boundary Rivers of South Asia" (TROSA), which is supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and managed by Oxfam. The project aims to reduce poverty of marginalized and vulnerable river basin communities through increased access to, and control over, water resources, over which their livelihoods depend. The details of the project can be accessed [here](#).

Objectives of the meeting:

- i. To build consensus among stakeholders to have an inclusive approach in cross-border trade via trans-boundary waterways;
- ii. To identify the scope for future interventions based on the stakeholders' feedback.

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Agenda

11:00 - 13:00	<p>Welcome Remarks</p> <p>Saurabh Kumar, Fellow, CUTS International</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atowar Rahman, President, Dhubri Waterways International Traders Association• Lalit Kumar Chopra, Chattered Accountant and Manager, Bhansali International• Surendar Kumar Choudhury, Trader• Surat Jamal, President, Dhubri Traders Associaton• Yunus Khan, Boat Operator, Panchu Ghat <p>Vote of Thanks and Wrap-up</p> <p>Saurabh Kumar, Fellow, CUTS International</p>
13:00- 14:00	<p>Lunch</p>