

Engaging the private sector for inclusive cross border navigation and trade in the Meghna river basin

(MKF Side Event Room 4)



Session Moderator

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The Meghna Basin

: Opportunities :

- Livelihood Creation – Fishery, Improved Irrigation
- Enhanced Trade & Connectivity between India (Northeast) and Bangladesh:
 - Sonamura – Daudkandi
 - Ashuganj - Karimganj

Potential Tradeable Commodities:

Medicinal Plants, Spices, Fruits, Handicraft & Handloom Items, Limestone, Cement

: Key Challenges :

- Infrastructural:
 - Lack of Availability of LAD;
 - Inadequate Port Infrastructure at Karimganj,
 - Bridges along Sonamura-Daudkandi Route
- Other:
 - Lack of awareness and confidence among exporters/importers to trade in these routes;
 - Limited number of products traded through these routes.

NET EFFECT

- Low Degree of Private Sector Participation
- Low Degree of Investment
- Opportunities remains unrealised

What needs to be done?

- *Promoting Private Sector Participation* - Ensuring the following components
 - *Volume* – Identification of commodities that could be traded throughout the year.
 - *Cost* – Explore ways to ensure Economic Viability of carrying out Business.
 - *Predictability* – Ensure minimum navigability, ensuring scheduled services, and putting in place vessels that are suited for plying along Meghna.
 - *Convenience* – Simplification of procedures, availability of right kind of vessels, and making information available to businesses on vessel availability.
 - *Incentives* – Provide incentive to the private sector to encourage them to trade along the Meghna.

What needs to be done?

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- Exploring new river routes

- Karnaphuli / Khawthlang tuipui River connecting the turmeric growing zones of Mizoram with Bangladesh on one side and Tripura and other side.
- The Umngot /Piang rivers connecting Meghalaya and Bangladesh.

- Other

- Promoting smaller boats (300-400 tones) to ply – *Schemes like Jiban Dinga to be extended to boats in Meghalaya and other NE states.*
- Creating awareness among businesses and women entrepreneurs.
- Promote river tourism.

Stakeholder Suggestions