



# BANGLADESH-BHUTAN-INDIA-NEPAL MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY IN THE SUB-REGION (M-CONNECT)



Joining Dots • Connecting People • Shared Prosperity

## Project Advisory Committee Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2021



Knowledge Partner



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# BACKGROUND

- ❑ To facilitate multi-modal transport connectivity in the BBIN sub-region, enabling a political economy discourse is critical
- ❑ And this political economy discourse will require a clear understanding of ground level challenges at the national and sub-regional level
- ❑ In this line, the objectives of the M-connect project are as follows :
  - Addressing implementation challenges of the BBIN MVA in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.
  - Identification of gaps in infrastructure policy and regulations
  - Organising multi-level, multi-stakeholder advocacy and awareness generation to push for identified infrastructure development and policy, regulatory and procedural changes

# METHODOLOGY

- ❑ Four corridors were identified critical for the intra and sub-regional trade
- ❑ 55 plus locations had been covered throughout the BBIN sub-region
- ❑ Primary study was conducted through field visits, focus group discussions, and interviews of relevant stakeholders
- ❑ More than 450 stakeholders were interviewed which includes government officials, private sector, local communities, truck drivers, labours, non-government organisation officials, local academicians, and researchers among others.
- ❑ In addition, attempt to understand best practices from other regions was made

# RESEARCH OUTPUTS

E - Newsletters	6
Dossier Of Catalytic Multimodal Connectivity Initiatives	5
Briefing Papers	5
Working Notes	4
Discussion Papers	5
Field Diaries	25
Other Outputs	10+

# CATEGORIES OF LOCATIONS COVERED

	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Nepal
Land Ports/Rail	5	3	20	3
River Ports	4	0	8	0
Sea Ports	3	0	2	0
Inter-Modal hubs	1	1	3	1

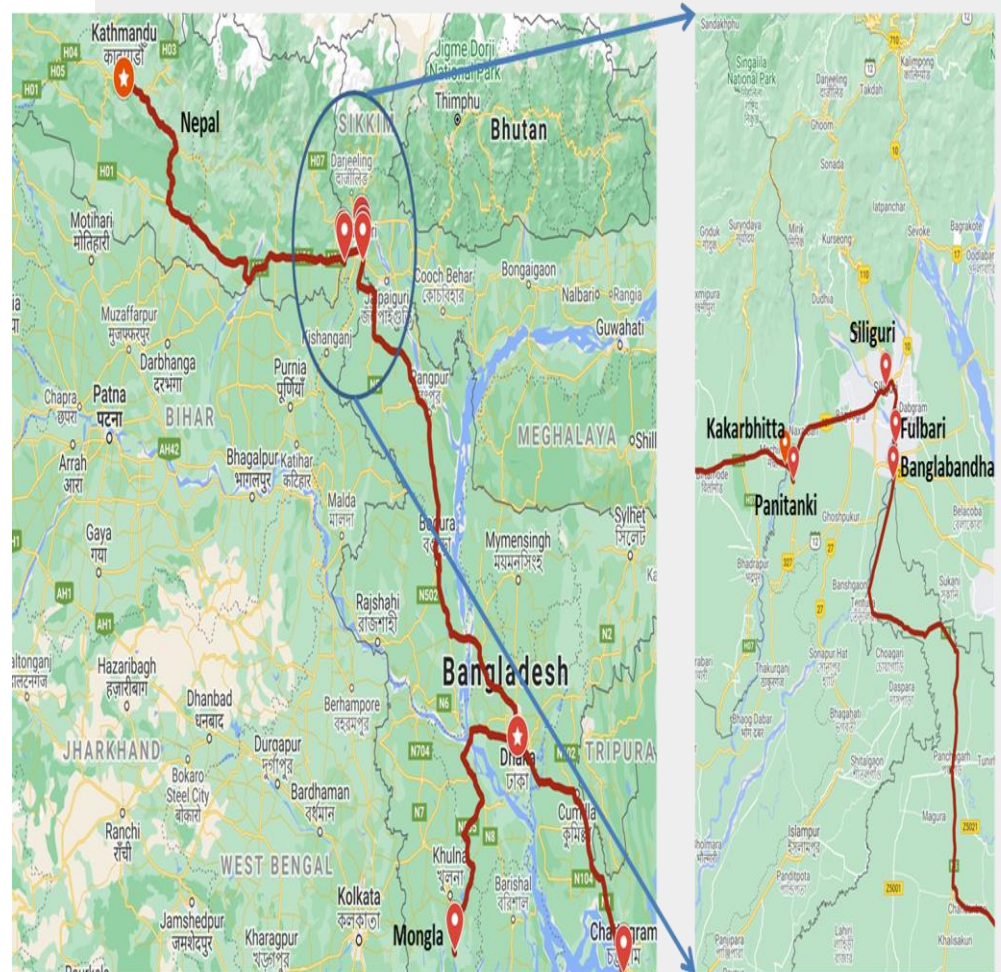
# MATRIX OF CORRIDORS

	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Nepal
Corridor 1	●		●	●
Corridor 2			●	●
Corridor 3	●	●	●	
Corridor 4	●		●	

# CORRIDOR 1

Connecting Nepal to Bangladesh through India

[Kathmandu- Kakarbhitta/ Panitanki- Siliguri-  
Fulbari/ Banglabandha- Dhaka-  
Mongla/Chattogram]





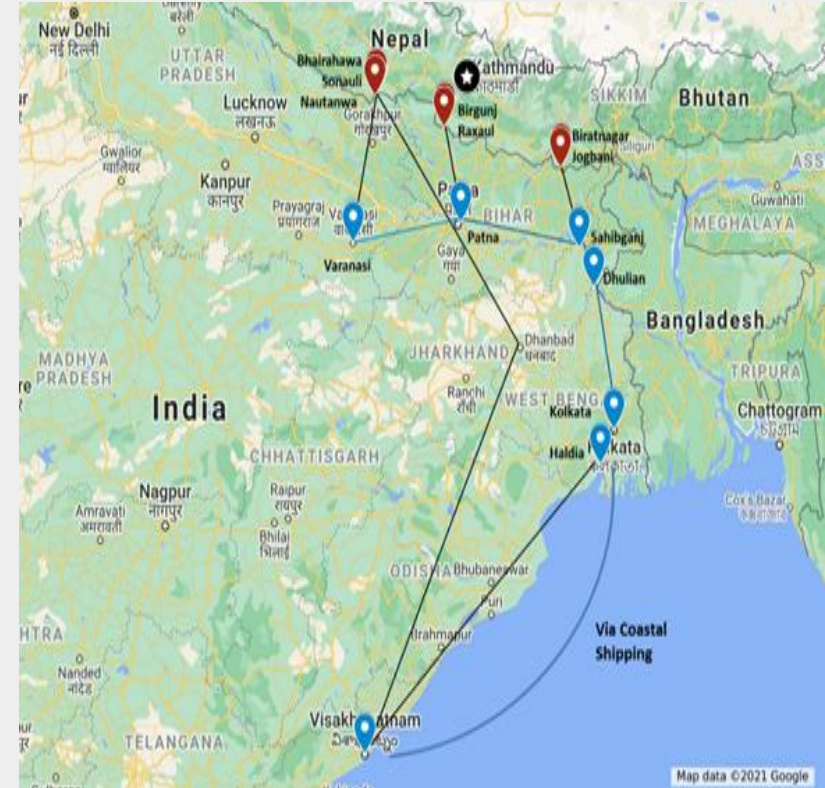
# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Refrigerated Container handling Facility at Kakarbhitta.
- ❑ Relax traffic congestion in and around Kathmandu.
- ❑ Inter-modal trans-shipment facilities and a Fully operational SEZ in Bhairahawa.
- ❑ Expediting Railway connecting Kakarbhitta to Kanchanpur (in progress).
- ❑ Panitanki ICP
- ❑ Road traffic management in Siliguri- developing alternatives to Siliguri corridor with cooperation from Bangladesh.
- ❑ Construction of express highways and bypass roads around periphery of Dhaka city- ease congestion
- ❑ Speeding up Mongla to Khulna Railway link.

# CORRIDOR 2

**Connecting Kathmandu to Kolkata/Haldia and  
Visakhapatnam in India**

[Kathmandu- Birgunj/Raxaul- Biratnagar/Jogbani-  
Bhairahawa/Sonauli- Kolkata/Haldia and  
Vishakapatnam (alternative intermodal accessibility  
for Nepal to India's NW-1 i.e., from Kalughat to  
Raxaul, and Sahibganj to Biratnagar; Visakhapatnam  
to Nautanwa)]



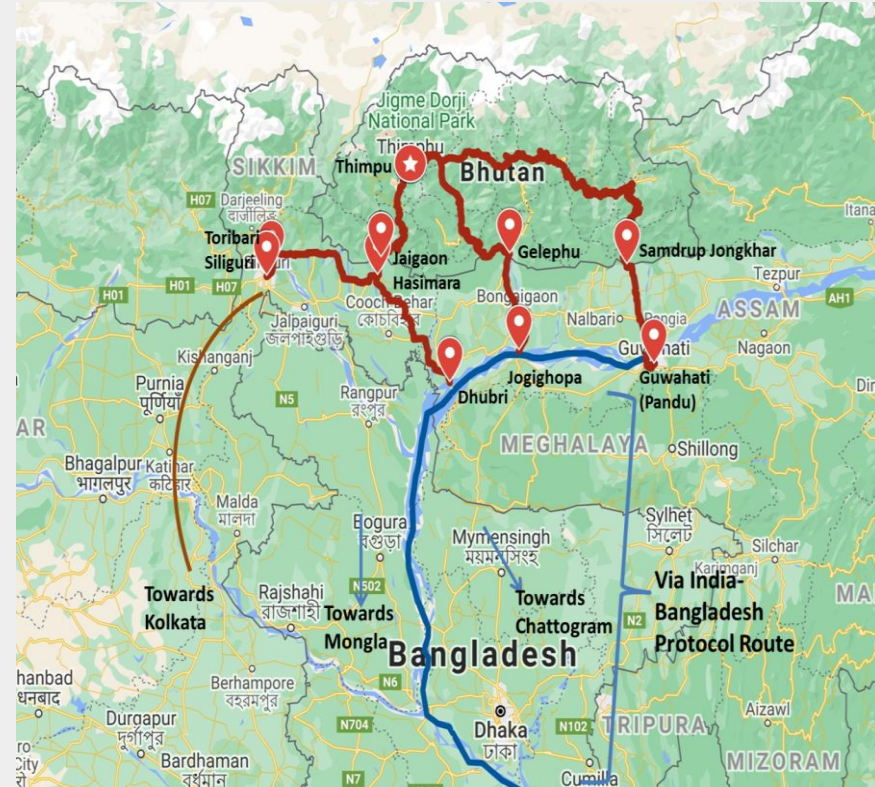
# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Speedy Completion of Motihari-Raxaul Highway Construction- Started in 2014.
- ❑ Cold storage and rail facility inside Raxaul ICP.
- ❑ Expediting Jogbani- Biratnagar rail link construction.
- ❑ Speed and efficient cargo handling in Kolkata port; improvement of approach road to the port.
- ❑ Upgradation of lock gates in NSD and Kidderpore Dock (KPD).
- ❑ Dedicated rail corridor inside the Visakhapatnam port.
- ❑ Using Sahibganj for Nepal based cargo; Speed-up construction of bridge between Sahibganj and Manihari (foundation laid in 2017).
- ❑ Dredging and maintenance of navigability in National Waterway 1.

# CORRIDOR 3

## Connecting Bhutan to Bangladesh through Northeast India

[Thimphu/Phuentsholing (Bhutan) to Dhubri and  
Jogighopa (Northeast India) to Chattogram and  
Mongla Ports (Bangladesh) - (multi-modal transport  
and transit access by road, inland waterways and  
railways)]



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Proper storage facilities for perishable goods at Phuentsholing
- ❑ Establishment of railway connectivity from Hasimara to Pasakha
- ❑ Common customs transit/liaison office at Gelephu
- ❑ Jetty connection between Pandu port to other side of Brahmaputra river in Guwahati.
- ❑ River signalling and night navigation for barges plying on National Waterways 2 and the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT).
- ❑ Connecting Gelephu with Jogighopa via railway.
- ❑ Expedite India-Bhutan railway connectivity and explore use of ropeway.

# CORRIDOR 4

## Mainland India to Northeast India via Bangladesh

[Kolkata/Haldia – Chattogram/Matarbari - Akhaura - Sabroom/Agartala via mix of modes], [Kolkata-Petrapole – Benapole – Dhaka – Agartala via road], [Sahibganj – Dhulian – Rajshai – Joghghopa via IWT], [Kolkata – Ranaghat – Gede – Darsana – Khulna – Dhaka -Akhaura – Agartala via Rail], [Dawki– Tamabil- Sylhet– Dhaka- Mongla/Chattogram– Kolkata/Haldia via mix of modes], [Kolkata- Haldia- Mongla- Pangaong- Narayanganj- Dhaka - Ashuganj- Akhaura- Agartala via IWT and IBP routes with alternatives of Sonamura- Daudkandi (IWT) and; Srimantapur- Bibir Bazar via road]



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Decongestion of Petrapole-Benapole route; expedition of Padma river multi-purpose bridge
- ❑ Shillong-Dawki road widening & wider bridge at Dawki; foreign exchange facility at Dawki
- ❑ Revival of Mahisasan railway route.
- ❑ Hili (West Bengal) – Mahendraganj (Meghalaya) Corridor through Bangladesh
- ❑ Rail link to the Integrated Check Post (ICP) in Agartala.
- ❑ Dedicated RO-RO service at Mongla port
- ❑ Inter-modal gateway at Karimganj- connecting road, rail and river route
- ❑ A multi-modal terminal in Ashuganj



## GENERAL TO ALL CORRIDORS\*

- ❑ Container handling equipment such as forklifts, conveyor belts, cranes, sufficient parking space, commodity wise warehousing facility, quarantine facility, scanners and security enhancement infrastructure, etc. at relevant locations.
- ❑ Basic facilities such as restrooms, washrooms and drinking water facility for drivers.
- ❑ Gender- friendly infrastructure at trade and transport related offices.
- ❑ 24\*7 internet & electricity availability.
- ❑ Foreign exchange office and banking facility in border points.

*\*Location specific requirement details in report*



# STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

- ❑ Livelihood Opportunities
- ❑ Skill Development and Capacity Building
- ❑ Communication and Access to information
- ❑ Stakeholder Participation in policy dialogues
- ❑ Need for more Public Private Partnerships
- ❑ Role of Women in Cross-Border Trade

# CHALLENGES

- ❑ Vested Interests of various stakeholders
- ❑ Poor internet connectivity & mobile network at border locations
- ❑ Asymmetries in rules & regulations
- ❑ Compensating the loss of land and livelihood
- ❑ Corruption & local extortions
- ❑ Building the technical knowhow among relevant stakeholders
- ❑ Limited existing value chains

# SOLUTIONS & WAY FORWARD

- ❑ Creating greater buy-in among stakeholders for regional initiatives
  - Organise public-private consultations meetings
  - Mechanism to increase participation of local people
  - Ensuring losers are compensated
  - Awareness generation
- ❑ Strengthening Regional Cooperation
  - Establishment of BBIN research institute
  - BBIN dispute settlement mechanism
  - Separate division for coordination of multimodal transport in respective governments- break the silos

# SOLUTIONS & WAY FORWARD

- Interventions in policy and physical infrastructure to make trade through multiple modes seamless and cost efficient
  - Improvement in coordination among inter-country and intra-country stakeholders;
  - Harmonisation of Rules and Regulations among BBIN countries
  - Reliance on Technology
  - Basic facilities such as banking facility, sufficient warehouses, container handling facilities, parking facilities and gender friendly infrastructure
  - Explore potential of new modes such as ropeways and drone corridors

THANK YOU