Sub-Regional Cooperation between India, Myanmar and Bangladesh
Trade, Investment and Connectivity

Editors: NISHA TANEJA, DEB KUSUM DAS AND SAMRIDHI BIMAL

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ABOUT THE BOOK:
The economic and political changes in Myanmar over the last two years, along with the
Act East policy initiated by the Indian government, have provided impetus to the need
for integrating one of the least developed regions of South Asia namely—India’s north-
eastern states, Bangladesh and Myanmar, which share borders with each other. The
book emphasises how greater trade in the sub-region can be a vehicle for economic
integration and raise living standards of the inhabitants. It also highlights the challenges
of cross-border connectivity, investments, infrastructure and logistics, and suggests
policy options for governments in the sub-region.

The book is the result of research collaboration between scholars from leading institu-
tions in India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, and brings together the various facets of
economic integration and cooperation from the perspective of each of these countries.
The initiative was funded by DFID and implemented by the Indian Council for Research
on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:
Bangladesh and Myanmar are two of the most important potential economic partners
for India, but there are non-trade issues such as connectivity, investments, infrastruc-
ture, deficiencies in logistics, lack of technical capacity, etc., which have not allowed
this potential to materialise. This volume is an excellent effort by people, who are fully
conversant with the realities of governance and sectoral complexities on all sides and
therefore, an excellent attempt at analysing problems and providing potential
solutions—Rajeev Kher, Former Commerce Secretary, Government of India.

In recent years, there has been considerable interest in Indian policy circles to further
regional cooperation with India’s immediate neighbours in the East. However, relative-
ly little is known about the constraints and challenges to India’s Act East policy. This
excellent book, edited by well-known academics in the field, brings together important
contributions by scholars working in this area. The book is essential reading for academ-
ics and policymakers alike—Kunal Sen, Professor, Global Development Institute, Universi-
ity of Manchester, UK.

The concept of greater integration among Bangladesh, Myanmar and the North-Eastern
states of India in areas of trade, investment and connectivity although politically chal-
lenging, is worth pursuing, especially in view of the fact that this region, one of the least
integrated in the world, is home to some of the poorest people on earth. The collection
of essays, each of which is a painstaking research work by renowned scholars in their re-
spective fields, is a commendable work. It rightly deserves a wide readership, especially
in the region the essays sought to cover—Ali Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh
Foreign Trade Institute (BFTI).

CONTENTS
List of Tables and Figures
List of Contributors
Acknowledgements
Foreword

1. Introduction
Nisha Taneja, Deb Kusum Das and Samridhi Bimal

2. India-Myanmar Political and Economic Relations
Nyunt Maung Shein

3. India-Myanmar Relations: Opportunities and Critical Gaps
Sonu Trivedi

4. Trade Patterns and Potential in the Sub-region: India, Myanmar and Bangladesh
Nisha Taneja, Sreerupa Sengupta and Shubhdeep Deb

5. Market Access Under Preferential Agreements in the Sub-region: India, Myanmar and Bangladesh
Nisha Taneja, Deepika Wadhwa and Shubhdeep Deb

6. Market Access and India
Zin Zin Naing and Khin Thida Nyein

7. Sub-regional Trade and Investment Cooperation between Bangladesh and India: The Case of the Readymade Garments Sector
Selim Raihan and Farazi Binti Ferdous

Farazi Binti Ferdous and Selim Raihan

9. India’s Outward Foreign Direct Investment: Prospects for Myanmar and Bangladesh
Samridhi Bimal and Deb Kusum Das

10. Indian Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar
Tin Htoo Naing and Myo Myo Myint

11. Connectivity and Transaction Costs between India and Myanmar
Tun Min Sandar

12. Transaction Costs Analysis of India’s Trade with Bangladesh and Myanmar
Nisha Taneja and Deepika Wadhwa
EDITORS:

Nisha Taneja, Professor Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi, has been engaged in policy-oriented research for more than 30 years at ICRIER. She has extensive research experience on regional trade in South Asia and East Asia on issues related to tariffs, sensitive lists, services, investment, non-tariff measures, and trade and transport facilitation. She has led numerous research teams comprising national and international consultants in South and South-East Asia. She has worked closely with governments in the South Asian region and was recently appointed advisor to the Government of Nepal on trans-shipment. She has also worked as an International Consultant with the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization and the Asian Development Bank.

Deb Kusum Das teaches at the Department of Economics, Ramjas College. He has a PhD from the Delhi School of Economics and received the EXIM Bank IEDRA Award 2004 for his doctoral dissertation, “Some Aspects of Productivity and Trade in Indian Industry”. He is also associated with ICRIER as an external researcher and researched on important issues related to Indian economy: jobs, labour intensive manufacturing, India’s global competitiveness. His research interests are empirical international trade, labour markets and productivity growth of the Indian economy. He is the co-founder of a network for South Asian undergraduate students of Economics (SAESM).

Samridhi Bimal is Consultant at ICRIER, New Delhi. She has over seven years of research expertise on international trade and trade policy issues related to the WTO, regional trading agreements and domestic trade policies. She has worked extensively on South Asia on a wide array of issues including trade, investment, transport facilitation, non-tariff barriers and informal trade. She has also been associated with the World Bank as a Short-term Consultant for their programme on Regional Integration in South Asia. Her research areas of interest include international trade, development policy and regional economics. She is currently a PhD scholar at the Centre for International Trade and Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.

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