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KEY POINTS

- The 2018 bilateral agreement between India and Bangladesh for transshipment through Chattogram and Mongla ports will reduce the transit time and cost of cargo movement between the rest of India and its North Eastern Region.

- Transit time for cargo movement from Kolkata to Agartala through Chattogram port is 5 days, vis-à-vis over 8 days through the Siliguri Corridor, which saves ₹500–₹1,300 per ton.

- Synchronized development of identified rail and road connectivity projects coupled with facility augmentation at key land ports and decongestion initiatives at Chattogram port are crucial to unhindered cargo movement.

- Aligned cargo handling procedures and risk management systems across ports, implementation of agreements such as the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement 2015, and integrated operations will enable a smooth logistical flow.

- Allowing third country cargo will help realize the full potential of Chattogram as a transshipment hub.

Using Chattogram Port as a Transshipment Hub for the North Eastern Region of India

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BACKGROUND

Prior to the partition of India in 1947, its North Eastern Region (NER) was connected to the rest of the country and the outside world largely through present-day Bangladesh. In fact, cargo originating from the NER transited through rail and river routes to Chittagong (now Chattogram) and Kolkata ports right till 1965. After that, the arrangement was suspended, turning the NER into a landlocked region with the Siliguri Corridor (merely 22 kilometers [km] wide) as the sole connecting link with the rest of India. Though Bangladesh and India signed several bilateral protocols and agreements starting with the Protocol on Inland Waterways 1972, infrastructure development to restore the traditional road, rail, and waterways routes lagged, and Chattogram port remained inaccessible from the NER until recently.

In 2018, India and Bangladesh entered into a bilateral Agreement for the use of the Chattogram and Mongla Ports (ACMP) to allow the movement of goods between the NER and the rest of India. Further, India and Bangladesh signed various other bilateral

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and multilateral agreements aiming to facilitate cross-border transport and logistics services.

- India–Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade 2009;
- India–Bangladesh Agreement on Coastal Shipping 2015 to facilitate the coastal movement of cargo through river–sea vessels directly from ports in India to ports in Bangladesh; and
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN–MVA) 2015 to facilitate unrestricted cross-border movement of cargo, passenger, and personal vehicles.

With reference to the ACMP, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was signed in 2019 by India and Bangladesh and some containers were moved from Kolkata to Agartala via Chattogram port (as transshipment point) starting July 2020. Both countries need to ensure that infrastructural, procedural, and regulatory issues are resolved to facilitate transshipment in a seamless and cost-efficient manner.

The current ACMP is limited to the movement of India's domestic cargo between the NER and the rest of India through Chattogram port. This can be expanded to facilitate movement of third-country export–import (EXIM) cargo of India, especially from and to the NER, to realize the full potential of Chattogram as a transshipment hub and make it a gateway port for South Asia.

Chattogram port has advantages as the gateway with demand centers in the NER located close to the Bangladesh border. The regular movement of the NER cargo through Bangladesh seems viable, specifically for essential bulk commodities such as food grain and fertilizers. During the monsoons when North Bengal and Assam are often flooded, Chattogram offers the most suitable route for the NER cargo. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the hard and soft infrastructure gaps and identify various potential interventions to streamline the NER cargo movement through Chattogram port.

EXISTING BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTING ROUTES BETWEEN THE NORTH EASTERN REGION AND CHATTOGRAM PORT

There are 38 functional land customs stations (LCSs) between India and Bangladesh, of which two are integrated check posts (ICPs) with 24 of these (LCSs or ICPs) notified in the NER.[1] There are multiple routes that can emerge as potential corridors to connect major economic clusters in the NER to Chattogram port through road, rail, and waterway routes. The governments

of India and Bangladesh have agreed on only four entry and exit points along the NER border for the use of Chattogram and Mongla ports.[2] Keeping in view the infrastructural development in the NER, new cross-border connectivity projects involving five road routes, two rail routes, and one inland waterway or multimodal route may be explored and developed for Chattogram connectivity (Box 1).

Although direct inland waterway connectivity exists between Kolkata and Haldia ports and Ashuganj, maintaining the navigable route of more than 750 km throughout the year is a challenging and costly proposition. Currently it takes about 7 days to reach Ashuganj from Kolkata by the river route. Chattogram port is a more viable option for the NER, especially Southern Assam, Tripura, Manipur, and Mizoram due to the shorter transit distance involved.

The routes connecting Agartala with Chattogram port are cost-efficient compared to the Siliguri Corridor. For instance, the distance by road from Kolkata port to Agartala, via the Siliguri Corridor, is approximately 1,570 km, requiring transportation time of 8–10 days and transportation cost of ₹6,300–₹7,000 per ton. The transshipment route via Chattogram port is shorter, with a sea distance of about 360 nautical miles (that is, 650 km) from Kolkata to Chattogram port and onwards inland distance of about 250 km from Chattogram port to Agartala via Akhaura. However, the transportation time and cost for this movement would depend upon the ease of movement facilitated by both the governments. As shared with the study team by various logistics service providers in the region, a composite transportation cost of ₹5,000–₹5,800 per ton may be incurred with transportation time of 5 days or more depending on pre-berthing delays at Chattogram port, or other significant delays due to customs clearance processes. Overall, Chattogram as a transshipment option could lead to 8%–20% savings (₹500–₹1,300 per ton).

The opening of the Sabroom–Ramgarh–Chattogram route will further trim the distance between the NER and Chattogram, reducing the cost of transportation. This presents an opportunity for the governments of India and Bangladesh to prioritize these routes by identifying and implementing various interventions related to transport connectivity and border infrastructure.

Apart from infrastructure and allied development, reducing administrative costs will be critical for operationalizing these route options. For instance, a notification related to additional documentation fees and other administrative charges was issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh in July 2020 (Table 1).

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1   High Commission of India, Dhaka. 2017. *Doing Business with Bangladesh: Frequently Asked Questions*. Economic Diplomacy Division. Ministry of External Affairs. Government of India. https://www.hcidhaka.gov.in/pdf/FAQ%20Book%202017.pdf.
2   Government of India. Ministry of Finance. Department of Revenue. Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs. 2020. Circular no. 14/2020; F. No. 484/50/2019-LC. 21 February 2020.

Using Chattogram Port as a Transshipment Hub for the North Eastern Region of India

Box 1: Connectivity Between the North Eastern Region and Chattogram Port via Road, Rail, and Inland Waterways

- **Road Route 1: Guwahati–Shillong–Dawki.** The shortest and most direct route from Guwahati to Chattogram is via Shillong (Meghalaya), passing through the Dawki LCS (proposed ICP) and onward to Chattogram via Tamabil (Bangladesh border crossing point) and Sylhet. The total length of this route is 588 km, with 21 km in Assam, 189 km in Meghalaya, and the remaining 378 km traversing through Bangladesh.
- **Road Route 2: Guwahati–Shillong–Kalain–Sutarkandi.** This is the second-shortest road route between Guwahati and Chattogram. This route passes through Shillong (Meghalaya), re-entering Assam through Kalain and passing through the Sutarkandi LCS (proposed ICP) to Sylhet and further to Chattogram port. The total distance of this route is 728 km, with 89 km in Assam, 241 km in Meghalaya, and 398 km in Bangladesh.
- **Road Route 3: Guwahati–Nagaon–Silchar–Sutarkandi.** On the Indian side, this route falls entirely in Assam and is considered the shortest road route to Chattogram for industries located in Nagaon (Assam). The total length is 861 km, with 464 km in India and 397 km in Bangladesh. This route also passes through Sutarkandi LCS in India.
- **Road Route 4: Guwahati–Silchar–Agartala.** This route connects Guwahati to Chattogram via Agartala (Tripura), which is an operational ICP. The total length is 915 km, with 526 km in Assam, 178 km in Tripura, and the remaining 211 km in Bangladesh.
- **Road Route 5: Guwahati–Silchar–Teliamura–Sabroom.** The approximate length of this route is 927 km, with 797 km falling in India and 130 km in Bangladesh. This route connects Guwahati to Chattogram via Silchar, Churaibari, Kumarghat, and Teliamura to the Sabroom ICP (yet to be operational) on the Indian side and then onward to Chattogram via the Ramgarh–Baraiyarhat highway. Expeditious development of the Ramgarh–Baraiyarhat road link to the Dhaka–Chattogram highway is critical for this link.
- **Rail Route 1: Guwahati–Karimganj–Kulaura–Akhaura–Chattogram.** This line was opened in British India to carry tea from Upper Assam to Chattogram port. In 2012, the Indian Railways approved the conversion of the meter-gauge Karimganj–Mahisasan section to broad gauge. Now this railway is a broad-gauge, single-track, nonelectrified line. In Bangladesh, Kulaura–Akhaura is either meter gauge or not used at present and needs development. The critical need on this route is the upgrading of the Mahisasan (India) and Sahbajpur (Bangladesh) meter-gauge link to a broad-gauge link.
- **Rail Route 2: Guwahati–Agartala–Akhaura–Chattogram.** This route connects Guwahati to Chattogram via Agartala (Tripura) and is double line from Guwahati to Digaru. After that, it is single line, broad gauge until Agartala. The connectivity between Agartala and Akhaura (Bangladesh) is at an advanced stage of completion. The Akhaura–Laksham dual-gauge link has been developed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Laksham–Chattogram link needs gauge upgrade.
- **Multimodal/Inland Waterways Route 1: Silchar (Karimganj steamer ghat)/Agartala–Ashuganj–Chattogram.** Silchar connects to Chattogram port via Ashuganj through the inland waterway route and then by road or rail. The Agartala–Akhaura section of broad-gauge rail connectivity is expected to be completed in 2021. The inland container river port of Ashuganj is also planned to be completed by 2021.

ICP = integrated check post, km = kilometer, LCS = land customs station.
Source: Study team analysis.

Table 1: Administrative Fees Charged by the Government of Bangladesh for the Movement of Cargo To and From the North Eastern Region of India via Chattogram Port

Type of Charge	Fees in Bangladesh Taka per ton (unless mentioned otherwise)	Fees in ₹ per ton (unless mentioned otherwise)
Document Processing Fee (per consignment)	30	26
Transshipment Fee	20	17
Security Charge	100	87
Escort Charge	50	43
Miscellaneous Administrative Charges	100	87
Container Scanning Fee (per container)	254	220

Source: Government of Bangladesh. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2020. Notification no – 19.00.0000.411.45.404.17-491, 5 July.

It is imperative to see how these charges impact the growth in transshipment traffic. Further, it needs to be ensured that the time and cost advantages are not diluted by thick borders, safety concerns, or connectivity infrastructure inefficiencies.
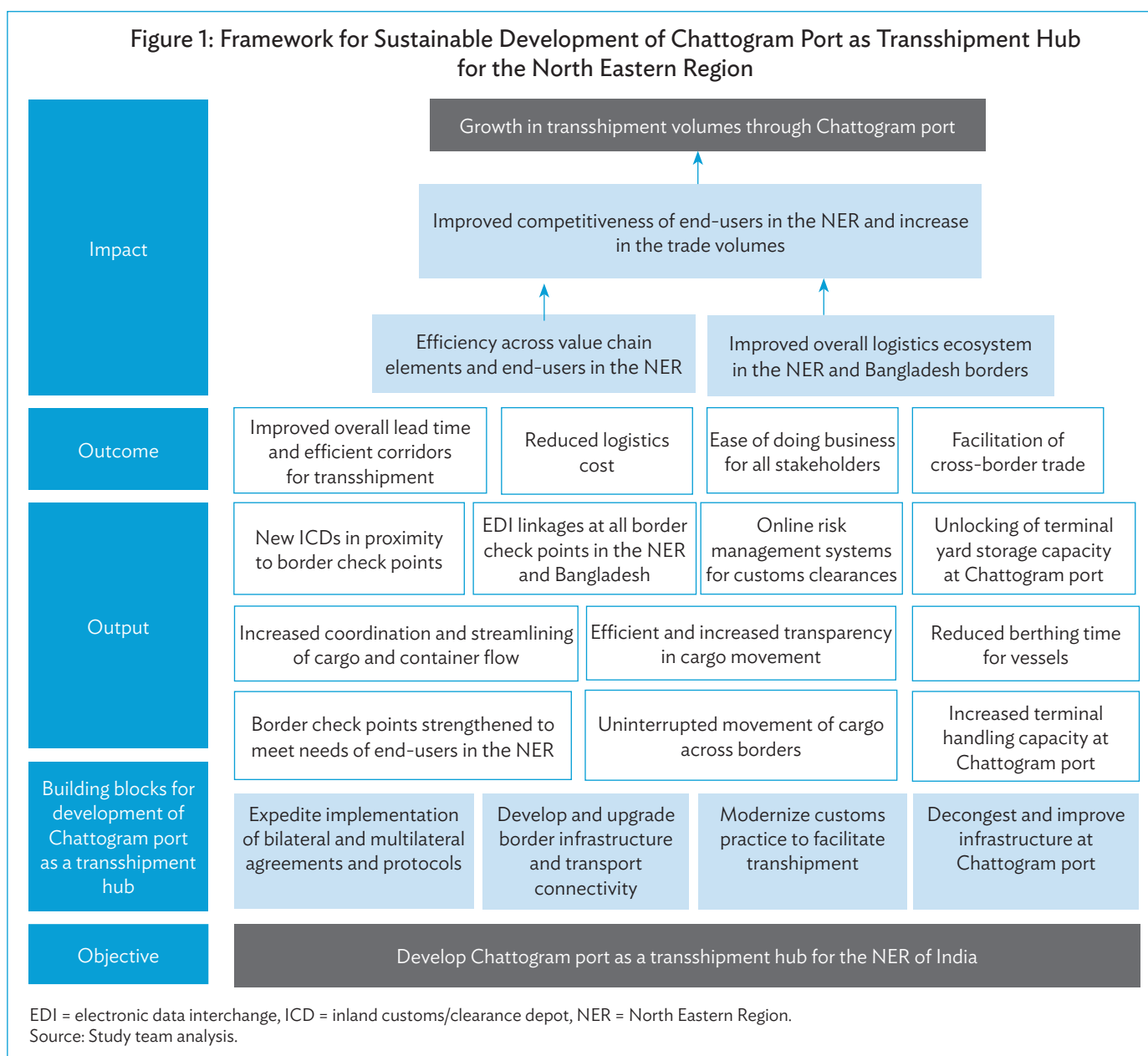
KEY INTERVENTIONS TO FACILITATE TRANSSHIPMENT THROUGH CHATTOGRAM PORT FOR THE NORTH EASTERN REGION OF INDIA

The sustainable development of Chattogram port as a transshipment hub for the NER of India can be achieved through a structured framework focusing on unlocking the efficiencies across the logistics ecosystem in the NER and Bangladesh. Emphasis on the following building blocks and systematically addressing infrastructure and regulatory gaps can facilitate seamless transshipment movement through Chattogram port (Figure 1).

- Expedite the implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements and protocols.
- Develop and upgrade border infrastructure and transport connectivity.
- Modernize customs practice to facilitate transshipment.
- Decongest and improve infrastructure at Chattogram port.

Figure 1: Framework for Sustainable Development of Chattogram Port as Transshipment Hub for the North Eastern Region

Impact

Growth in transshipment volumes through Chattogram port

Improved competitiveness of end-users in the NER and increase in the trade volumes

Efficiency across value chain elements and end-users in the NER

Improved overall logistics ecosystem in the NER and Bangladesh borders

Outcome

| Improved overall lead time and efficient corridors for transshipment | Reduced logistics cost | Ease of doing business for all stakeholders | Facilitation of cross-border trade |

Output

| New ICDs in proximity to border check points | EDI linkages at all border check points in the NER and Bangladesh | Online risk management systems for customs clearances | Unlocking of terminal yard storage capacity at Chattogram port |

| Increased coordination and streamlining of cargo and container flow | Efficient and increased transparency in cargo movement | | Reduced berthing time for vessels |

| Border check points strengthened to meet needs of end-users in the NER | Uninterrupted movement of cargo across borders | | Increased terminal handling capacity at Chattogram port |

Building blocks for development of Chattogram port as a transshipment hub

| Expedite implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements and protocols | Develop and upgrade border infrastructure and transport connectivity | Modernize customs practice to facilitate transhipment | Decongest and improve infrastructure at Chattogram port |

Objective

Develop Chattogram port as a transshipment hub for the NER of India

EDI = electronic data interchange, ICD = inland customs/clearance depot, NER = North Eastern Region.
Source: Study team analysis.

Expedite Implementation of Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements

Extending the ACMP to third-country EXIM cargo. Bangladesh and India can explore extending the ACMP to movement of third-country EXIM cargo through Chattogram port in the next phase. This could further assist in increasing traffic through the port and reduce logistics costs for traders in India.

Cross-border implementation of the BBIN–MVA 2015. Bangladesh and India have already ratified the BBIN–MVA. While the BBIN–MVA offers scope for transit through Bangladesh between the NER and the rest of India, the protocols and implementation arrangements are not in place. In the interim, customs of both countries have introduced some measures to facilitate border trade, for instance, by allowing each other's vehicles and drivers up to specific LCSs or ICPs without visas to offload cargo and take the empty trucks back.[3] This arrangement can be extended to key border posts in the NER. Authorities also need to expedite and finalize the protocol of operating procedures for movement of passenger and cargo vehicles under the agreement.

Develop and Upgrade Border Infrastructure and Transport Connectivity

Coordinated development of LCSs and ICPs with bordering locations. The infrastructural augmentation at LCSs and ICPs in India needs to be complemented with similar efficient facilities at the Bangladesh land ports. There can be improved risk management, enhanced resource efficiency, and increased overall accountability and transparency. The required infrastructural interventions include developing truck parking yards, warehouses, and quarantine facilities (according to cargo profile) at the border check points. The critical border points to be considered for development are Dawki–Tamabil, Agartala–Akhaura, Sutarkandi–Sheola (Sylhet), Sabroom–Ramgarh, and Srimantapur–Bibir Bazar.

Synchronized development of transport connectivity infrastructure. There are multiple land port connectivity projects being undertaken both in the NER and Bangladesh to connect the hinterland with the key gateways (Table 2). These projects need to be expedited for financial closure and completion. Connectivity gaps that emerge once the transshipment starts will need to be addressed along the way.

Table 2: Identified Connectivity Infrastructure Projects

No.	Project
Last-mile connectivity	Development of last-mile road connectivity in • Dawki (cross-border bridge), • Sheola (Bangladesh)–Sutarkandi–Karimganj road, • Srimantapur–Cumilla (10 km) road link to connect to Dhaka-Chattogram highway
Road connectivity in Bangladesh	Development of road connectivity and construction of bridges between Ramgarh at Bangladesh–India border and Baraiyarhat on the Dhaka–Chattogram highway in Bangladesh
Critical rail links	• Development of Mahisasan–Shabajpur–Kulaura–Akhaura and Agartala–Akhaura rail links • Gauge compatibility projects for Laksham–Chattogram rail link and double-tracking of Silchar–Agartala–Sabroom rail link in anticipation of future trade growth

Source: Asian Development Bank. 2018. ADB TA 8435: Trade Facilitation in South Asia (Facilities Development Plan for Selected Border Check Point Pairs at Bangladesh- India Border). August.

Modernize Customs Practice to Facilitate Transshipment

Upgrading of Customs Infrastructure at LCSs and ICPs. Many LCSs in the NER lack basic infrastructure like power availability, computers, and internet connectivity, leading to nonavailability of the Customs Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system. Both countries should ensure 24x7 power supply and information and communication infrastructure to make the automation operational and make data exchange easy. Subsequently, other technology-enabled solutions can also be made functional for better trade facilitation (e.g., Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications, eSanchit, and Risk Management Systems).

Integrating Customs Operations. The movement of EXIM cargo of the NER through Bangladesh needs an efficient customs operation at the border points. India and Bangladesh can explore the possibility of integrating their customs operations and work out of a single facility at major border points (similar to Scandinavian or East African countries). Customs authorities of both countries can also establish a standard protocol for a single integrated process of clearance to avoid duplication. Opportunities may even be explored to develop a single EDI interface that can be linked to the Indian Customs Electronic

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[3] Government of India. Ministry of Finance. Department of Revenue. Central Board of Indirect Tax and Customs 2017. Circular No. 52/ 2017 - F. No.550/05/2011 -LC. 22 December.

Gateway and Bangladesh National Single Window for streamlined custom clearance.

Expediting Online Risk Management Systems for Bangladesh Customs. The existing system of EXIM movement in Bangladesh involves multiple physical touch points and paper documentation by customs and other border agencies. A robust risk management system is yet to be developed; this leads to delay in customs clearance processes. ADB supported the modernization of Bangladesh customs through the introduction of an authorized economic operator program and post-clearance audit procedures. The greater use of such tools and instruments can boost the efficiency of cargo evacuation in Chattogram port, especially for EXIM cargo movement from the NER, if allowed under ACMP. In addition, the possibility of entering into a Mutual Recognition Agreement for Authorized Economic Operators between India and Bangladesh will further increase efficiencies as entities of one country would be able to avail facilitation from customs and other agencies in the other country.

Setting up inland customs and clearance depots in the NER and implementing off-border clearance. The countries should strive to move towards off-border clearance and reduce dependence and congestion on land border infrastructure. Creating an effective ecosystem for off-border clearance requires the development of inland customs clearance facilities at major logistical nodes. Governments and logistics operators are already tapping into such opportunities, like developing an ICD at Siliguri to serve multiple-country cargo (Box 2). In this context, development of an inland clearing/customs depot in Silchar that serves as a logistics solution for the larger region (including South Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland), could be a critical intervention. This ICD can be a relatively modest facility providing the same ecosystem of services as a large, well-designed dry port. A demand-driven approach should be used for the development of ICDs. In some cases, development of bonded warehouses adjoining the LCSs can also be explored as an alternate measure.

Enabling uninterrupted flow of cargo/containers to support off-border customs clearance. Custom authorities from both countries can engage and agree on developing an SOP to facilitate the uninterrupted flow of trucks across the borders. Further, the BBIN–MVA needs to be taken into consideration while developing an SOP for cross-border movement of cargo and containers. An SOP may include potential solutions such as Bangladeshi trucks that can directly come to the ICD or the bonded warehouse location in India to drop and pick up cargo, thereby eliminating the need for transshipment between Indian and Bangladeshi trucks. Historically, there have been instances of Bangladeshi trucks being

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Box 2: Setting up an Inland Customs and Clearance Depot to Cater to Domestic Catchment and Border Trade

Siliguri, the gateway of North Eastern Region of India and the trade hub of North Bengal, is connected by national highways to four border points—Panitanki (Nepal), Jaigaon (Bhutan), and Fulbari and Changrabandha (Bangladesh). Given its proximity to multiple countries, the location was identified as a key aggregation point by Indian customs. Recently, a new privately owned multimodal (road- and rail-based) inland customs/clearance depot (ICD) has been developed at Siliguri, which caters to Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. The terminal is located next to the New Jalpaiguri railway station near National Highway 31D. The Asian Highway 2 connecting Bangladesh, India, and Nepal is adjacent to the site and the Asian Highway 48 connecting Bhutan, India, and Bangladesh is about 45 km from the site.

The ICD is operated through a special purpose vehicle called Pristine Hindustan Infraprojects Private Limited and is spread over 120,000 square meters (m^2). It has a rail-handling area of 35,000 m^2, with two handling railway lines. The terminal has a bonded area for handling EXIM containers, including a warehouse and a domestic warehouse (dry) of nearly 930 m^2 each, 64 plug-in points for reefer containers, and cold storage of almost 465 m^2 along with a nonbonded open storage yard of 40,469 m^2. The terminal also has an empty container park and maintenance and repair infrastructure. The ICD is equipped with two reach stackers, one empty container stacker, and over 50 trailers for first- and last-mile connectivity. Other ancillary infrastructure at the ICD includes an office building, parking area, canteen, and a drivers' rest area.

Source: Study team analysis.

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escorted by local authorities till the border check points. However, such practices are unviable in the long term as the transshipment volumes increase. The SOP agreed on between India and Bangladesh on the use of Chattogram port also considers affixing of electronic seals and locks on all the trucks from Chattogram port. The Indian customs authority has already extended the usage of electronic cargo tracking system (ECTS) to Petrapole, Gede, Ghojadanga, and Mahadipur (all located in West Bengal) border check posts with Bangladesh.[4] ADB also supported similar initiatives including pilot testing of ECTS on the India–Nepal border (Box 3). Further, additional aggregation and distribution points in the NER can be evaluated by Indian customs for trucks coming in from Bangladesh.

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4   Government of India. Ministry of Finance. Department of Revenue. Central Board of Indirect Tax and Customs. 2017. Circular No. 52/ 2017- F. No.550/05/2011 -LC. 22 December.

Box 3: Use of Electronic Cargo Tracking System for Transit Cargo of Nepal via India

ADB supported a pilot on the application of an electronic cargo tracking system (ECTS) between India and Nepal in August 2018 for transit cargo from Visakhapatnam port in India. This arrangement is already providing greater convenience and visibility in the trade, minimizing the role of intermediaries, and improving ease of monitoring by the authorities. Leveraging this, procedural and documentation needs have been simplified and business processes re-engineered and automated. A completely transparent system was designed with no role for intermediaries or hidden charges.

The initial results have indicated the following savings:

- Overall transit time has been cut by about half.
- The number of documents has reduced from 8 to zero.
- The number of procedures has reduced from 30 procedures and 22 signatures to zero.

Further improvement that ECTS can support includes off-border clearances which could be specially useful in managing numerous border crossing points, often with inadequate infrastructure. The regulatory processes involved are conducted at inland facilities (such as dry ports) and the border points would act as soft gateways, thus reducing congestion and staffing cost at these check points.

Source: Study team analysis.

Avoiding prohibitive tariffs for transshipment of cargo. The transshipment of the NER cargo through Chattogram port could result in a definitive time and cost advantage for end-users as long as the authorities in both countries ensure that charges levied during transit (including at the border points) are not high enough to dilute the benefits and discourage the end-users.

Removal of commodity restrictions. The Government of Bangladesh may consider easing existing restrictions on export movement of cargo through the NER LCSs. For example, only 23 goods are currently allowed through Sutarkandi LCS and 31 through Agartala.[5] Besides, improvement of cross-border connectivity and infrastructure and the removal of such restrictions is key to improving transshipment of cargo volume from the NER.

Facilitating advanced filing of Bill of Entry at Chattogram port. In the existing scenario, the filing of the Bill of Entry (BOE) in advance is not permitted at Chattogram port. This leads to delays and hassles at each step of release and clearance. Bangladesh Customs can explore allowing advance filing of BOE at Chattogram port for Indian cargo and containers, which will reduce delays and improve overall trade facilitation.

Decongest and Improve Infrastructure at Chattogram Port

Expediting development of new berths and terminals at Chattogram port. The average vessel berth time at Chattogram port is high (around 4 days). Also, challenges related to yard storage capacity increase the average dwell time of containers inside the port to nearly 10 days.[6] In order to reduce congestion while berthing and improve overall productivity, Chattogram Port Authority has planned various greenfield and brownfield terminal expansions such as Bay Container Terminal, Mirsarai Terminal, Matarbari Terminal, and Karnaphuli Container Terminal, which will increase the container-handling capacity. The implementation of the capacity expansion plans needs to be expedited to improve the overall productivity of the port, which will also assist in increasing transshipment to the NER in the long term.

Ensuring green channel access for Indian transshipped cargo. Green channel access, wherein cargo and containers are not subjected to detailed examination and assessment of all documents, may be explored for Indian transshipped cargo and containers at Chattogram port. One of the potential solutions may include earmarking a yard inside or outside Chattogram port as a dedicated facility for all customs-related procedures for Indian transshipment cargo. Further, there can be a provision for containers to be electronically sealed and trailers equipped with ECTS to travel to and from this yard, without having to undergo further processing by Bangladesh Customs at the international border.

WAY FORWARD

The governments of India and Bangladesh need to address various gaps to facilitate the transshipment of the NER cargo through Chattogram port.

- The ACMP may be expanded to include EXIM cargo movement of the NER from other countries to explore the full potential of transshipment of Chattogram port.
- Implementation of the BBIN–MVA needs to be expedited along with finalization of operating protocols to enable seamless transit of vehicles across the land ports without an additional truck-to-truck transshipment.
- Issues on key routes such as last-mile connectivity at Dawki, Sutarkandi, Srimantapur–Cumilla road link, Agartala–

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[5]   Government of Bangladesh. National Board of Revenue (Customs). 2018. Notification. S.R.O. NO: 237-Law/2018/39/Customs. 17 July.
[6]   Interactions with Chattogram Port Authority.

Akhaura rail links, and others need to be addressed to enable unhindered movement of cargo.
- Coordinated development and infrastructure augmentation at critical border points such as Dawki–Tamabil, Agartala–Akhaura, Sutarkandi–Sheola, Srimantapur–Bibir Bazar, and Sabroom–Ramgarh need to be prioritized to improve risk management, efficiency, and transparency.
- The development of an ICD at Silchar can be explored to facilitate off-border clearance and optimize the transshipment movements.

- The governments of India and Bangladesh should focus on upgrading digital infrastructure at border points.
- The Government of Bangladesh also needs to expedite the development of new berths and backup infrastructure at Chattogram port to ease out the existing port congestion.
- Green channel access at the Chattogram port for transshipment cargo along with a dedicated yard facility for customs procedures for the NER cargo could also be explored.