



Event Summary

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

**Location:**

- Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

**Organizers:**

NITI Aayog, Invest UP, and the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)

**Participants:**

- Senior Government Officials from Uttar Pradesh and Central Ministries including NITI Aayog
- Representatives from border district administration
- Trade and business associations
- Civil society organisations
- Experts from CSEP

**Overview:**

On April 29, 2025, NITI Aayog and Invest UP, in collaboration with CSEP, convened a workshop to examine the role of India's border states in enhancing regional connectivity within the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) subregion. Hosted by InvestUP at Lucknow, this closed-door event focused on Uttar Pradesh (UP)-Nepal connectivity, gathering around 80 stakeholders from state and central governments, district administrations, trade associations, and civil society.

The workshop aimed to understand local perspectives on challenges and opportunities in infrastructure, trade, economy, society, and human development in context of interaction with neighbouring nation of Nepal. Following the special address and keynote address, three breakout sessions explored ways to strengthen cross-border

ties for mutual growth, emphasising cooperative federalism and subregional integration. It was followed by a focus interaction on Land Ports, and Integrated Check Posts in Uttar Pradesh was held with Chairman, Land Port Authority of India.

**Key Discussions:**

The workshop delved into various aspects of connectivity and infrastructure, beginning with an assessment of the current infrastructure and cross-border connectivity. Opportunities and challenges in key corridors connecting Uttar Pradesh and Nepal were identified, with an emphasis on the need for Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) and improved road and rail connectivity. The commercial relationship between Uttar Pradesh and Nepal was examined, highlighting procedural inefficiencies, policy gaps, and infrastructure deficits affecting trade. The discussions underscored the importance of better

institutional support and awareness of investment opportunities.

In the realm of society and human development, the workshop addressed structural and policy-level challenges in border districts. There was a strong emphasis on improving social infrastructure, including healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. The potential for cross-border collaboration in areas such as agriculture and technology was also explored.

A broad consensus emerged on the need for an integrated development approach that combines physical infrastructure with investments in human capital and social infrastructure. Participants agreed on the importance of accelerating the development of ICPs and enhancing road and rail connectivity. The need for closer integration in digital governance, healthcare, and education was emphasised.

### Summary of Key Outcomes:

The workshop identified severe infrastructure gaps and the need for improved coordination between government agencies. There was a recognition of the importance of central funding support for high-impact projects. The discussions emphasised the need for targeted investments in human capital and social infrastructure. Participants agreed on the strategic importance of Uttar Pradesh as a gateway for India's economic engagement with Nepal.

### Next Steps:

The findings and recommendations from the workshop, as detailed by CSEP, have been circulated by NITI Aayog to concerned ministries and state agencies for further action. As a follow-up, CSEP plans to conduct a survey with business associations in Uttar Pradesh to assess cross-border economic linkages. Similar workshops are planned for other key border states.



*All content reflects the individual views of the participants. The Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP) does not hold an institutional view on any subject.*

*This event summary has been prepared by **Abhishek Agarwal**, Visiting Fellow, CSEP and **Abhinand Siddharth**, Research Associate, CSEP.*

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