

Editor's Desk

The May 2023 issue of *Thinking Aloud* focuses on industrial transformation, growth and employment potential of the Matarbari Deep Sea Port, and Gender Responsive Budgeting. The first page article, "Strategies for Trade-oriented Industrial Transformation in South Asia" analyses premature industrialisation experienced in many developing countries and the takeaways for South Asian nations. The article points out that, despite that the need for industrialisation in South Asian countries for further economic and social development is well acknowledged, there are concerns that the policy regimes and associated factors are yet to be favourable for industrialisation in these countries. While trade and associated policies play a critical role in the industrialisation process, many South Asian countries are lagging in formulating and implementing such policies consistent with the need for the industrialisation process. The article suggests five strategies for the trade-oriented industrial transformation in South Asia: addressing policy-induced challenges, addressing supply-side challenges, human capital for rapid industrialization, attracting large-scale foreign direct investment (FDI), and making special economic zones (SEZ) effective. This issue features two more articles on the under-construction Matarbari Deep Sea Port (DSP) and Gender Responsive Budgeting in Bangladesh. The second page article titled "Growth and Employment Potential of the Matarbari Deep Sea Port" presents the findings from a study conducted by SANEM. The article outlines the economic and trade impact of Matarbari development project. Applying the SAM multiplier model with an integrated employment matrix, the study estimated the impact of investment on and export through the Matarbari DSP on growth and employment. The third page article, titled, "An Analysis of Gender Responsive Budgeting: Bangladesh Perspective" discusses the effectiveness of gender budgeting through a detailed inspection of the processes and allocation trend. Building on the historical background of gender responsive budgeting, the article examines the role of the Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh in the budget making process. The article contends that the methodology of the GRB exercise that is followed in Bangladesh is quite subjective and the gender sensitivity analysis of the projects has room for improvement. The fourth page showcases the events of April and May 2023.

Inside this issue

Strategies for Trade-oriented Industrial Transformation in South Asia

Growth and Employment Potential of the Matarbari Deep Sea Port

An Analysis of Gender Responsive Budgeting: Bangladesh Perspective

SANEM events

Editor:

Selim Raihan

Associate Editors:

Eshrat Sharmin
Omar Raad Chowdhury

Coordinator:

Sk. Ashibur Rahman

Strategies for Trade-oriented Industrial Transformation in South Asia

Selim Raihan

While industrialisation can be described as the process by which the structure of an economy is transformed from an agricultural base to a manufacturing base, on the contrary, deindustrialisation can be termed as a process leading to the fall in manufacturing activities, both in terms of output and employment, of an economy. In general, natural deindustrialisation occurred in most developed economies where after achieving a certain level of per capita GDP, there was a gradual decline in the share of manufacturing value-added in GDP. This deindustrialisation process coincided with the growing share of services value-added in GDP. However, in contrast to the natural process, several developing countries are experiencing premature deindustrialisation when the shares of manufacturing in GDP and employment, already much lower than those of the early industrializers, begin to fall corresponding to a level of per capita GDP much lower than those of early industrialized economies. Premature industrialisation in many developing countries is leading to a situation when these economies are becoming increasingly service-oriented economies without going through a proper process of industrialisation.

Despite that the need for industrialisation in South Asian countries for further economic and social development is well acknowledged, there are concerns that the policy regimes and associated factors are yet to be favourable for industrialisation in these countries. While trade and associated policies play a critical role in the industrialisation process, many South Asian countries are lagging in formulating and implementing such policies consistent with the need for the industrialisation process. Then what should be strategies for the trade-oriented industrial transformation in South Asia? We can suggest five strategies:

1. Addressing policy-induced challenges: There is a need for strategic and dynamic industrial policies in South Asian countries aiming at rapid expansion and diversification of manufacturing through large-scale domestic and foreign investments. Given the changes in the global and regional trade scenarios, the need for such strategic trade and industrial policies is more important now than ever.

One of the worrying signs about the pattern of trade for South Asian countries is the falling trade-GDP ratio or trade orientation. Also, given the emerging challenges and complexities in the global trading regime, there is a need for re-orienting the trade policies in South Asian countries. Five major areas need to be focused on. First, continued efforts for trade liberalization should be there to effectively integrate with regional and global value chains. Second, the countries should avoid protectionist tendencies and new forms of import-substituting industrialisation, as are seen in some countries in the region in recent years and emphasise the importance of recognizing import-export linkages in manufacturing. Third, in most South Asian countries trade policies and industry promotion policies move in different tracks, and this needs to be corrected. Fourth, an action plan should be there to deal with the non-tariff barriers, trade facilitation and supply side issues both at home and in export destination countries. And fifth, trade policy needs to be proactive to effectively engage with multilateral, regional and bilateral trading arrangements.

2. Addressing supply-side challenges: It is also essential to keep in mind that comparative advantage does not necessarily translate into a competitive advantage. While many South Asian countries have comparative advantages in producing and exporting several labour-intensive manufacturing products,

given a domestic environment of the excessive cost of doing business, such comparative advantages are seized to be realised. The government should enhance legal and financial institutions for promoting private investments – both local and foreign. Infrastructure improvement and increased interconnectivity will cut business costs, while efforts to combat corruption may boost investor confidence. Government should engage closely with banks to find ways to offer financial services to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and informal businesses that cannot access financing as they are not registered.

3. Human capital for rapid industrialisation: Education is crucial for enhancing human capital in an economy, which in turn increases workers' productivity and thus contributes to economic growth. As the global market moves towards accelerated automation, increasing investment in human capital is now more important than ever. Even though most South Asian countries made considerable progress in gross enrolment in primary and secondary education, except Sri Lanka, all other South Asian countries are seriously lagging in ensuring quality education for all. Therefore, as most South Asian countries are lagging in educational infrastructure and outcomes, they must consider using public expenditure on education as a critical tool to achieve the targets which should coincide with improvements in the quality of institutional arrangements in the education systems. There are also challenges of skill mismatches and a lack of measures to facilitate skill adaptation. These challenges prevent the intersectoral movement of labour. Vocational training and skilling are the most critical in this regard.

4. Attracting large-scale foreign direct investment (FDI): To attract FDI, relevant trade policy reforms leading to a higher degree of openness are essential. Furthermore, infrastructural development is needed to attract larger FDI in an economy. FDI is positively associated with the magnitude of domestic investment. Low or stagnant domestic investment may show a lack of business confidence in domestic investors, which may convey negative messages to foreign investors. Therefore, the government needs to improve the business environment, reduce the cost of doing business and facilitate domestic investment by eliminating policy-induced and supply-side constraints.

5. Making special economic zones (SEZ) effective: While many South Asian countries are now emphasising the importance of SEZs for attracting FDI and domestic investment, SEZs in these countries must deliver what they promise. Delays in implementation and unsatisfactory delivery of services would make the SEZs unsuccessful. It is also important to understand that while SEZs are aimed at creating 'efficient' enclaves, improvements in the business environment and infrastructure of the overall economy cannot be overlooked. SEZs would need to be connected to 'efficient' sea and land ports. Otherwise, many of the benefits of the SEZs would be lost. Therefore, port infrastructure and its efficiency would need to be improved substantially. Furthermore, the quality of roads, connecting SEZs and ports, would need to be upgraded. SEZs should aim for facilitating economic and export diversification leading to the progressive structural transformation of the economy. Emphasis should be on the production of high-value-added and diversified products. Therefore, sectors with a high potential for economic and export diversification should get priority in the SEZs. The whole issue of the management of SEZs is particularly important. The gravity of institutional aspects for the well-functioning of SEZs cannot be underestimated. Therefore, it must be ensured that the institutions governing the operations of SEZs are competent enough.

Dr Selim Raihan, Professor of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM. Email: selim.raihan@gmail.com

Growth and Employment Potential of the Matarbari Deep Sea Port

Selim Raihan, Md. Abdul Aahad and Omar Raad Chowdhury

The construction of the Matarbari Deep Sea Port (DSP) was initiated in 2020, and upon completion, it will be the country's first deep sea port. The port will be able to facilitate berthing of mother ships with a draft greater than 16 meters. The project also includes construction of two 600 MW power plants and a 14.5 km long port channel. The Matarbari Deep Sea Port will play a crucial role in enhancing Bangladesh's trade as it will have the capacity to handle ships that are able to transport 8,000 to 10,000 containers. As simulations in a JICA study of 2018 show, in 2041, demand for container cargo at the Chittagong Port will increase to 6.9 million TEUs, while it will reach 550 thousand TEUs at Payra Port and 2.6 million TEUs at Matarbari Port.

The Matarbari DSP will increase the country's capacity to handle cargo and satisfy the rising demand for import and export activities. The ports of Bangladesh manage approximately USD 60 billion worth of imports and exports annually, with ship arrivals increasing by more than 11 percent annually. However, the shallow depth and the narrow width of the Karnaphuli channel restrict the size of ships that can anchor at the Chattogram port jetty. According to the Chittagong Port Authority, the construction of a deeper port capable of accommodating larger vessels could reduce transportation costs by 15 percent.

As part of a study on India-Bangladesh connectivity, we used the Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) multiplier model to estimate the impact of investment in and export through the Matarbari Deep Sea Port on output and employment. The study applied the Bangladesh Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) 2017. The SAM framework captures production linkages across sectors and the SAM data framework can be transitioned to the SAM Model. For injections in the exogenous accounts (policy instruments, such as government expenditure, investment, and exports), the interdependent SAM system sends a signal to the endogenous accounts (such as output, commodity demand, factor return, and household income or expenditure) and thereby demonstrates the impact of the injections. By modifying the exogenous injection vectors, the macroeconomic impacts of investing in the Matarbari Deep Sea Port (DSP) Project and the corresponding increase in exports have been examined. Additionally, to assess the employment impact of the Matarbari DSP Project, an employment matrix was incorporated into the SAM multiplier model.

The study conducted two separate simulations to demonstrate how investment in the Matarbari project and export increase through the port would impact output and employment. The first simulation was based on the investment in the Matarbari Development Project, while the other simulation assumed a 25 percent increase in the total export. The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) granted approval for the Matarbari Port Development project on March 2020, with a budget of approximately USD 1.68 billion. The study considered the approved amount as the investment shock and the amount was incorporated into the exogenous investment account, thereby allowing for the changes in output and employment. On the other hand, upon construction the Matarbari deep-sea port is assumed to account for 25 percent of the total export growth. Thus, the higher export quantity is regarded as the exogenous shock for the second simulation.

most of the employment created due to investment, will be generated in the low-skill category, followed respectively by medium and high skill categories. Most of the jobs created by investments in Matarbari will be in the rural areas—nearly three times the number of jobs as the urban region. Jobs in both urban and rural regions will be dominated by males.

With respect to employment creation, similar patterns emerged for the increased share of export through Matarbari. Most of the employment created due to increased exports will be in the low-skill category, followed respectively by medium and high skill categories. The export impact will result in more jobs in rural areas compared to the urban areas. Furthermore, males will dominate the jobs in both rural and urban areas.

The investment in Matarbari DSP and the exports to be materialized therein upon its completion will lead to higher GDP growth and employment creation, as our estimation shows. The Matarbari DSP can act as a

growth catalyst for Bangladesh and prove to be especially advantageous in the post-LDC scenario. With reduced cost in export and import, Bangladesh will no longer be solely dependent on other regional deep-sea ports. On the other hand, the port will act as a channel for regional integrity, with great significance for North-east India, Nepal and Bhutan.

However, there are some challenges as well. Primarily, there needs to be increased focus on the timely completion of the project, as in case of many mega projects there has not been sustained progress. Upon completion of the port, fully operationalizing it may prove to be equally challenging as need for increased manpower and management capacity

will emerge. There is also the question of maintenance—which would certainly entail significant costs and therefore needs to be considered in long-term planning regarding the project. Lastly, there needs to be a wider strategy for regional integration with the Matarbari DSP at its core—without which the full potential of the port may not be realized.

Note: The article is based on a study conducted by SANEM and published as a chapter titled "Economic and Trade Impact of the Matarbari DSP Project" in the report on "Assessing Connectivity Between North East India and Bangladesh: Towards a Prosperous Bay of Bengal Region", published by the Asian Confluence. The report was launched on 11 April 2023 at the Third India Japan Intellectual Conclave, held at Agartala, India.

Dr Selim Raihan, Professor of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM.
Email: selim.raihan@gmail.com
Md. Abdul Aahad, Research Associate, SANEM.
Email: aahad.work@gmail.com
Omar Raad Chowdhury, Research Associate, SANEM.
Email: omar.raad.chowdhury@gmail.com

Table 1: Summary of Simulation Results Using SAM Model

	Simulation 1: Investment Shock		Simulation 2: Export Shock	
	Annual average GDP growth (percentage point change)	Annual average employment generation (Million)	Annual average GDP growth (percentage point change)	Annual average employment generation (Million)
2020-2026	0.30	0.133	-	-
2026-2030	-	-	1.14	0.9218

Source: Authors' compilation based on SAM simulation results

Table 2: Employment Simulation Results

Simulation 1: Impact of Investment Shock on Employment							
Employment Creation	Rural (million)			Urban (million)			Total Employment (million)
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	
Low Skill	0.299	0.130	0.429	0.094	0.031	0.125	0.554
Medium Skill	0.157	0.070	0.227	0.084	0.021	0.105	0.332
High Skill	0.016	0.005	0.021	0.023	0.005	0.028	0.049
Total	0.472	0.205	0.677	0.201	0.057	0.258	0.935
Simulation 2: Impact of Export Shock on Employment							
Employment Creation	Rural (million)			Urban (million)			Total Employment (million)
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	
Low Skill	1.318	0.693	2.011	0.396	0.256	0.652	2.663
Medium Skill	0.746	0.387	1.133	0.414	0.174	0.588	1.721
High Skill	0.073	0.021	0.094	0.108	0.023	0.131	0.225
Total	2.137	1.101	3.238	0.918	0.453	1.371	4.609

Source: Authors' compilation based on SAM simulation results

Between 2020 and 2026, the investment in the Matarbari DSP is estimated to contribute to on average 0.30 percent in GDP growth annually and create 0.133 million jobs on average annually. Upon completion, between 2026 and 2030, export through the DSP is estimated to contribute to on average 1.14 percent in GDP growth annually and creation of 0.93 million jobs on average annually (Table 1).

For the investment simulation, the SAM result shows that more than half of the activity output will be generated in the industry sector (52.1 percent of the economy). The service and agriculture sectors will generate 32.9 percent and 15 percent of the activity output, respectively. Similarly, for the export simulation, industry sector (47.03 percent of the economy) will dominate activity output generation, followed respectively by the service sector (36.89 percent) and agriculture sector (16.08 percent).

The impact of investment and export on employment can be disaggregated across skill categories, gender and rural and urban regions (Table 2). We found that,

An Analysis of Gender Responsive Budgeting: Bangladesh Perspective

Sayema Haque Bidisha, Eshrat Sharmin

Gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming of the budgetary process. It is an important public policy tool that the governments can use to assess how budgetary allocation might affect gender equality. It entails analyzing government budgetary allocation through a gender lens, integrating gender perspective at different stages of the budgetary process, and to design revenues and expenditures for advancing gender equality. If implemented effectively, through gender budgeting, distribution of resources and relevant budgetary measures can play an effective role at closing gender gaps at different contexts. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), in this context is a broader term which serves as a fiscal instrument incorporated into the development processes of many of the developing countries. By linking policy prescriptions to budgetary allocations, GRB ensures that policies reduce gender inequality and results ineffective outcomes. GRB was originally introduced at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing, China.

Gender-sensitive budgeting is a strategic approach that involves working in a comprehensive way to integrate gender perspectives at different stages of the budget plan. There are three specific components to GRB: gender budget analysis, modification in budgets and policies to achieve gender equality outcomes, and systematic integration of gender budget analysis in planning and budget process. Globally, Australia was the first country to introduce and adopt GRB in 1984, which was even before the Fourth

World Conference on Women. Under this exercise, each participating government ministry was asked to analyse the effect of the annual budget on women. Gradually more countries adopted GRB like Canada in 1993 and South Africa in 1995.

Bangladesh incorporates gender responsive budget (GRB) at the time of the announcement and publication of the National Budget and by publishing it as a stand-alone report. From a methodological point of view, the gender budget exercise is conducted primarily by the Ministry of Finance (MoF) while utilizing information from different ministries. Under this exercise, the MoF provides the ministries with a list containing fourteen criteria of gender sensitivity (e.g. access to health services, access to education and training, participation in different forums, access to law and order) for evaluating their projects under the development budget. The relevant ministries evaluate the projects and attach a score within the band of 0 to 100 based on the gender sensitivity of each of the projects. As for the operating budget of the ministries, the proportion of female employees is

served as a criterion of gender sensitivity. Based on such information provided by the ministries, the MoF utilizes a standard modeling exercise (RCGP model) to summarize the information and formulate gender budget, which is then published for all 44 ministries along with the national budget documents.

In FY 10, for the first time in Bangladesh, the Finance Minister announced gender budget in the national parliament with the total allocation for women's development being 27,248 crore taka (Table 1). At the initial years, gender budget was prepared for four ministries and divisions and according to the report, it constituted 3.95% of GDP. Over the years, the gender budget program of the GoB has expanded significantly and at the moment the gender budget exercise is conducted for as many as 44 ministries and divisions. In FY 23, the total allocation for women development was reported as high as 2,29,484 crore taka, which was 33.84% of the National budget and 5.16% of GDP of that year.

A closer analysis at the ministry-wise allocation of gender budget reveals that, in 2022-23, 69.71% of the total budget of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) can be considered to be allocated for women. The MOWCA being the central ministry responsible for the welfare of women, such a gender centric budgetary allocation is consistent

relating to child marriage, violence against women, labour market participation of women etc. Thirdly, a detailed exercise on GRB indicates that, despite a substantial allocation as reported, there are relatively smaller number of projects specifically targeted for women. As a result, women are not significantly benefited by the overall development programs of each of the ministries. Fourthly, the ministries' whose budget are closely linked to the overall welfare of women in particular (e.g. MOWCA) typically get smaller share of the overall national budget and as a result, the share of the 'pie' is relatively small for women's development. Finally, given that 'gender' is a cross-cutting issue, encompassing various ministries and divisions, the GRB exercise is argued not to carry out a comprehensive and integrated budgetary allocation.

In order to effectively utilize the limited budgetary resources for women's development and to modify the GRB exercise as a tool, it is important to take several necessary steps. The most crucial step in this regard would be to effectively incorporate a regular monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the project, so that greater transparency is ensured for the development projects. In this context, the M&E exercise should not only evaluate the projects in terms of quantitative targets but also in the light of broad qualitative target of women empowerment.

Table 1: Gender Budgeting Trend in Bangladesh

Fiscal year	Total Budget (crore taka)	Allocation for women dev. (crore taka)	Allocation for women in the budget (%)	Allocation for women in GDP (%)	No. of ministries & divisions
2009-10	110523	27248	24.65	3.95	4
2010-11	130011	34221	26.32	4.36	10
2011-12	161213	42154	26.15	4.61	20
2012-13	189231	54302	28.68	5.23	25
2013-14	216222	59756	27.64	5.06	40
2014-15	239668	64087	27.74	4.23	40
2015-16	264565	71872	27.17	4.16	40
2016-17	340604	92765	27.25	4.73	40
2017-18	400266	112019	27.99	5.04	43
2018-19	464580	137742	29.65	5.43	43
2019-20	523191	161247	30.82	5.56	43
2020-21	568000	169083	30.98	6.0	43
2021-22	603681	197524	32.72	5.71	43
2022-23	678064	229484	33.84	5.16	44

Source: Finance Division, Ministry of Finance

with the goals and objectives of the ministry. For 2022-23, other notable ministries with gender-centric allocation was found for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education- gender budget was 60.21% for this ministry, the Ministry of Social Welfare (50.0% allocation for gender budget) and the Secondary and Higher Education Division (44.73% of the total budget).

Despite such a significant allocation of budget for females, there are several challenges in case of gender responsive budgeting in Bangladesh. First of all, and most importantly, there is growing concern that the methodology of the GRB exercise is quite subjective and the gender sensitivity analysis of the projects are not conducted in a detailed manner as outlined before. If the gender sensitivity analysis is not done in a scientific manner, it is highly likely that the results will not be able to capture the real scenario of gender based budgetary allocation. Secondly, despite a consistent increase in the allocation of gender budget, there are still challenges in different aspects of women empowerment,

For conducting GRB exercise in an efficient manner, it is important to have gender-segregated data of key indicators. Thus, proper initiative must be taken to gather gender-centric information and to ensure the availability of regular flow of gender-segregated data- not only for males and females but also for those of trans-gender. For better and efficient implementation of

budgetary allocation on women, it is crucial to strengthen coordination across ministries and divisions especially relevant for women's wellbeing. Given that the MOWCA is the lead ministry in implementing projects closely linked to women's socio-economic wellbeing and empowerment, it is extremely crucial to allocate greater share of the budget to this ministry and to strengthen its institutional capacity. As the budgeting exercise is based on the framework of the three-year Medium Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF), preparation and planning of the MTBF must be done in a gender sensitive manner, while analyzing the projects through a gender-lens. Finally, for the exercise of the GRB, the MoF should have a separate cell comprising of gender experts, practitioners, academicians for a careful review of the analysis of gender sensitivity of the development programs.

Dr Sayema Haque Bidisha, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Research Director, SANEM, Email: sayemabidisha@gmail.com
Eshrat Sharmin, Senior Research Associate, SANEM, Email: sharminshrat4@gmail.com

Dr Selim Raihan spoke at the Pre-budget Discussion of DCCI



Dr Selim Raihan, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM, was a discussant at the Pre-budget Discussion organized by the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), in association with Daily Samakal and Channel 24 at the BICC on 22 March 2023. Salman F. Rahman, MP, and Adviser to the Prime Minister was present as chief guest. State Minister for Planning Dr. Shamsul Alam and Md. Shafiqul Islam (Mohiuddin), MP were present as special guests. Md. Jashim Uddin, President, FBCCI and A K Azad, Former President, FBCCI were also present as guests of honour. The discussion was moderated by Barrister Sameer Sattar, President, DCCI. Among other discussants were present Md. Nojibur Rahman, former NBR Chairman; Md. Alamgir Hossain, former NBR Member; Zaved Akter, MD, Unilever Bangladesh; Masrur Arefeen, MD, The City Bank.; Arif Khan, Chairman, Shanta Asset Management.; Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, Chairman, Pran RFL; Mohammad Ali Khokon, President, BTMA; Imran Karim, Vice Chairman, Confidence group; Mainuddin Monem, MD, Abdul Monem Ltd; and Mozammel Hossain, Editor, Daily Samakal.

Dr Bazlul Haque Khondker spoke at Dialogue on Social Safety Net

Dr Bazlul Haque Khondker, Former Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, and Chairman, SANEM was a discussant at a dialogue on "How to Improve Coverage and Effectiveness of the Social Safety Net Programmes?", organized by the Centre for Policy Dialogue, on 30 April 2023. The dialogue was chaired by Dr Fahmida Khatun, Executive Director, CPD. As the Chief Guest was present Mr Rashed Khan Menon, MP. As the Special Guests were present Ms Aroma Dutta, MP, and Ms Rasheda K Chowdhury, Former Adviser to the Caretaker Government and Executive Director, CAMPE. The keynote presentation was delivered by Dr Khondker Golam Moazzem, Research Director, CPD. The welcome remarks were delivered by Ms Nuzhat Jabin, Programme Manager, Christian Aid Bangladesh. Also present as discussants were: Dr Md Mokter Hossain, Director, Department of Social Services and Dr Mohammad Abu Eusuf, Professor, Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, RAPID.

Dr Selim Raihan attended the Third India-Japan Intellectual Conclave



Dr Selim Raihan, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM, attended the Third India-Japan Intellectual Conclave on "North East India, Bangladesh and the Bay of Bengal in the Indo-Pacific Building on Partnerships: The Way Forward", organized by the Asian Confluence, India, in collaboration with the Embassy of Japan, New Delhi and the Ministry of External Affairs, India, on 11-12 April 2023. Dr Raihan was a panelist at the "Discussion on the Report: Northeast India and Bangladesh: Seizing the Opportunity". The panel was chaired by Ambassador Riva Ganguly Das, Hon. Member Governing Council, Asian Confluence. As the other panelists were present: Dr Prabir De, Professor, RIS, New Delhi, Dr Kazutoshi Tamari, Associate Professor, Chukyo University, and Mr Kentaro Orita, Counselor, Embassy of Japan, New Delhi.

SANEM-ERD Inception Workshop



Dr Selim Raihan, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM presented the inception report of the "Study on Expanding Private Investment in the Context of LDC Graduation" at a workshop of the Economic Relations Division - ERD, Ministry of Finance on 23 March 2023. The workshop was chaired and moderated by Mr Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary and Project Director, SSGP, ERD. The workshop was attended by Ms Priti Chakraborty, Director, BWCCI; Mr Mohammad Lutfullah, Senior Private Sector Specialist, IFC; Mr Md. Ariful Hoque, Director, BIDA; Mr Md. Sameer Sattar, President, DCCI; Ms Shahida Sultana, Director General, Prime Minister's Office; Mr. Anwar Hossain, Joint Secretary, SSGP, ERD and Mr Mamun Askari, (BTTC).

e-version: <http://sanemnet.org/thinking-aloud/>

Dr Selim Raihan spoke at the Pre-budget Meeting of BMP



Dr Selim Raihan, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, SANEM, was a discussant at the Pre-budget Meeting, titled "Accessibility of women in ICT and preparations for the 4th Industrial Revolution", organized by the Bangladesh Mohila Parishad on 28 March 2023. The meeting was presided by Dr Fouzia Moslem, President, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad. The chief guest of the meeting was State Minister for Planning Dr Shamsul Alam. The meeting was moderated by Rabeya Khatun, Secretary, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad. The welcome address was delivered by Maleka Banu, General Secretary, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad. Professor Shormin-do Nilormi, Department of Economics, Jahangirnagar University, made the keynote presentation. In his discussion, Dr Raihan stressed on ensuring equal access for women to digital technologies.

SANEM-World Bank
Fourth North America Discussion Forum 2023

CALL FOR ONLINE PARTICIPATION

Shocks and Development Strategies:
Toward a Resilient South Asia

May 5, 2023 | 8:30 AM - 7:30 PM (Eastern Time Zone, GMT-4)

The World Bank, Washington, D.C., USA



South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), the World Bank and the South Asia Economic Policy Network will organize the Fourth North America Discussion Forum 2023 on "Shocks and Development Strategies: Towards a Resilient South Asia" on 5 May 2023, at the World Bank premises in Washington, D.C., USA. The Forum will be streamed live through the web conferencing app Webex. The one-day conference will hold sessions on macroeconomics, health, education, inequality, gender, environment, energy, trade and labor market where scholars and economists from South Asia, Europe and North America will present their research works. The detailed agenda is available on SANEM's website. SANEM invites interested participants to join the Forum online. The google form for registration is available on SANEM's website and Facebook page.