

SEVENTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MEETING

HOTEL MAHAWELI REACH,
KANDY, SRI LANKA
4TH MARCH, 2013



SOUTH ASIA FORUM FOR INFRASTRUCTURE REGULATION

C/O CENTRAL ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
3RD&4TH FLOOR, CHANDRALOK BUILDING, 36, JANPATH
NEW DELHI – 110001

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE SEVENTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF SOUTH ASIA FORUM FOR INFRASTRUCTURE REGULATION

DATE: 4TH MARCH, 2013

VENUE: HOTEL MAHAWELI REACH, KANDY, SRI LANKA

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Seventh Executive Committee Meeting of South Asia Forum For Infrastructure Regulation (SAFIR) was held on 4th March, 2013 at Hotel Mahaweli Reach, Kandy, Sri Lanka. The Executive Committee Meeting was chaired by Engr. Md. Emdadul Haque, Chairman, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC). The list of participants is attached as **Annexure – I**.
- 1.2 Dr. Jayatissa de Costa, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL) in his opening remarks stated that PUCSL is the country's electricity regulator and in near future would be regulating petroleum and water as well. He said that PUCSL is five member Commission and the members have 5 year tenure. The Commission consists of at least one member each from the profession of engineering, law and business management. He emphasized the need for regular meetings of the SAFIR for facilitating regulatory process and knowledge sharing on regulatory reforms and experiences among the members and capacity building in the field of infrastructure and regulation to serve regulatory agencies and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 Engr. Md. Emdadul Haque, Chairman, Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission and Chairman, SAFIR welcomed all the members of the Executive Committee and other officials present. He observed that in last two decades, countries in South Asian region have emerged as the fastest growing region in the world registering an average annual growth rate of 6% as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In spite of the impressive macro-economic growth, these countries have failed to harness their share of global export market primarily because of the inadequate and unpredictable supply of electricity and natural gas short supply. The Chairman added that economic progress and industrial development are dependent upon construction of infrastructure projects like gas transmission network, power transmission grid network, roads and highways, railway, waterway and irrigation. Every country needs large infrastructure projects for

industrialization, better transportation of raw and finished products to and from markets to ports and economic centres, irrigation for improved quality yield and increased production and poverty alleviation, up gradation of health and education system and enhanced quality of life of the common people. Therefore, the urgent call of the time is to improve the quality and enhance the capacity of all forms of infrastructure in the region so as to collectively tap the global opportunities. He stressed the need for putting together hands, hearts and brains in enhancing connectivity of all kinds of infrastructure and cooperate with each other to bring about real change in quality of life, create employment opportunities and alleviate poverty in the region. This will help to attain its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and be able to create sustainable growth for betterment of the region as a whole. Chairman, SAFIR informed the committee that BERC had already proposed to hold the 1st meeting of Energy Regulators/Bodies in SAARC in Dhaka sometime in May - June, 2013.

- 1.4 Dr. Pamod Deo, Chairperson, CERC emphasised the need for integrated development of the region. He said that South Asian countries are gradually integrating with a view to meet their electricity needs, but there are issues involved in connectivity. He stated that with the integration of the Southern Region with the rest of the country, India would become the largest grid in the world. He stated that already energy exchanges are taking place in India with Bhutan and Nepal and shortly it would commence with Bangladesh. Further, there is a proposed High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link with Sri Lanka. He emphasized that while technical level harmonisation has already taken place leading to seamless energy exchange but there is a need to firm up the regulatory framework to avoid any dispute in future. He informed that SAFIR should conduct a study and put up the draft study report before the members about the problems being faced and their plausible solutions. He also emphasised the need for harnessing electricity from the renewable sources of energy. He informed that the Central Transmission Utility, namely Powergrid Corporation of India has formulated a report for transmission requirement from renewable rich regions in India to the load centres. He offered that this report could be shared with the other members. He similarly offered other study reports already available with the CERC to be shared with the other members.

1.5 Mr Rajiv Bansal, Secretary, SAFIR/ CERC briefed that the 12th Core Course of SAFIR was originally planned in Bhutan but had to be shifted to Sri Lanka due to logistic reasons. He stated the same is now being organised under the aegis of LIRNEasia and there had been overwhelming response to the course. About 27 participants have confirmed their participation where as originally it was designed for 20 participants only.

2.0 Confirmation of the minutes of 6th Executive Committee Meeting and Action Taken Report

2.1 The minutes of 6th Executive Committee Meeting and Action Taken Report as circulated were confirmed.

2.2 Chairman, SAFIR as well as being Chairman, BERC proposed that the next Executive Committee meeting to be held in Dhaka. SAFIR Secretariat will find a convenient date for the meeting and inform BERC to take necessary actions for proper arrangement.

3.0 Next Core Course On Infrastructure Regulation and Reforms

3.1 It was decided that the possibility of holding the 13th Core Course of SAFIR would be explored in Bhutan. If the same does not materialize, then it would be conducted in Bangladesh.

4.0 Infrastructure Conference: Investment Opportunities, Policy and Regulation

4.1 It was decided to hold the same along with the Steering Committee meeting in Mumbai, as the same is the financial hub in India.

5.0 Extending Membership Base of SAFIR

5.1 It was decided that SAFIR would write to various Water and Transport Utilities for membership. The need for increasing representation from other South Asian Countries was reiterated.

6.0 Operationalisation of Virtual Working Groups

6.1 It was decided that the reports which could be of interest to other members would be shared immediately through e-mail. It was also decided that experts from the Commission would visit other Commissions for knowledge sharing.

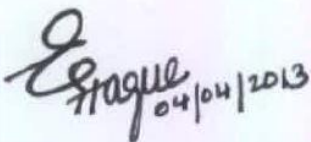
7.0 SAFIR Proposal to SAARC

7.1 The Chairman (SAFIR) said that the Executive Committee of the SAFIR may propose to the SAARC's Secretariat to include the following agenda for discussion in the first Meeting of Energy Regulators/Bodies in SAARC: (i) Information and data sharing on energy issues, option and challenges faced by the member states; (ii) Training of personnel in different fields of energy sector encouraging regulatory and harmonizational aspect; (iii) knowledge sharing on RE and its development; (iv) Exchange of experts to enhance the capacity of each regulators to world standard level and (v) visit to each other Commission to harmonize the regulators in tariff determination. So the committee decided to send a formal proposal to SAARC's Secretariat as mentioned above to upcoming meeting of SAARC Regulators.

8.0 Next Steering Committee Meeting of SAFIR

8.1 It was suggested that the next Steering Committee Meeting of SAFIR will be organised along with the Infrastructure Conference in Mumbai.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.



Engr. Md. Emdadul Haque
Chairman (Acting)
Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission
Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN 7TH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
AT MAHAWELI REACH HOTEL, KANDY, SRI LANKA**

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