

# SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ISA REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION

15 – 17 JULY 2025 | COLOMBO, SRI LANKA



## Links without Limits: Regional Interconnections for Cross-Border Renewable Energy Trade and Energy Security

**16 July 2025, Time (14:30-16.00 hours)**

**Colombo, Sri Lanka**

**Registration link:** [https://isa.int/rcm\\_apac](https://isa.int/rcm_apac)

### BACKGROUND

Presently, South Asia stands at a defining moment in its energy transition journey. Rapidly increasing electricity demand, rising climate commitments, and the need for energy diversification are pushing the region toward a more integrated and sustainable energy future. Against this backdrop, the advancement of regional interconnection and the promotion of Cross-Border Renewable Energy Trade (CBRT) have emerged as vital strategies for enhancing energy security, economic efficiency, and environmental sustainability across the region.

India, with its strategic geographical location and robust transmission infrastructure, is well-positioned to anchor the development of a regional power network. The country is already facilitating over 4,000 MW of cross-border electricity trade through established interconnections with Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. Discussions are underway to expand these linkages to include Sri Lanka and the Maldives. These growing interconnections highlight the region's readiness to move toward a more integrated electricity market, particularly focused on harnessing renewable energy potential.

Cross-Border Renewable Energy Trade (CBRT) presents a valuable opportunity to harness the region's diverse renewable resources—such as Nepal and Bhutan hydropower, India's solar and wind, and Bangladesh's growing demand—for mutually beneficial energy exchange. The seasonal and demand diversity across countries enhances grid reliability, reduces fossil fuel dependence, and supports cost-effective integration of renewables. Regional interconnection through CBRT can drive economic and environmental gains by lowering generation costs, improving access, creating green jobs, and advancing climate goals. A well-integrated power market also boosts investor confidence by offering scale, stability, and consistent demand for clean energy.

However, realizing this vision requires overcoming a set of complex challenges. Technical issues such as grid code harmonization and system integration need coordinated planning and shared operational standards. Politically, it demands sustained commitment from participating countries to align regulatory frameworks, build trust, and foster cross-border cooperation. Financially, the scale of investment required for cross-border infrastructure and system upgrades calls for innovative financing solutions and a clear cost-benefit framework for all stakeholders. Additionally, cybersecurity and grid security concerns must be proactively addressed.

### Session Objective/ Potential Outcome

This session will focus on advancing the vision of regional energy integration through Cross-Border Renewable Energy Trade (CBRT) and expanded regional interconnections. It aims to explore key policy, regulatory, and infrastructure priorities needed to enable seamless and sustainable electricity exchange across South Asia. Discussions will address opportunities for leveraging renewable energy advantages, harmonizing technical standards, mobilizing investments, and enhancing regional and international cooperation. Expected outcomes include a shared commitment to regional collaboration, strategic recommendations for enabling CBRT, identification of priority transmission projects, and potential next steps for pilot initiatives. The session will contribute to building a resilient, integrated, and low-carbon power future for the region.

### AGENDA

Agenda Item	Speakers
<b>Welcome Address &amp; context setting (5 minutes)</b>	<b>DG ISA</b>
<b>Keynote Address (5 minutes each)</b>	<b>H.E. Kumara Jayakody, Minister of Energy, Sri Lanka.</b>  <b>H.E. Mr. M Fouzul Kabir Khan , Advisor (Minister), Ministry of Power,Energy &amp; Mineral Resources, Bangladesh</b>
<b>Presentation on Regional Interconnections – Need, Benefits &amp; Challenges – ( 10 minutes)</b>	<b>Pankaj Khurana, Programme Specialist, ISA</b>
<b>Regional Energy Cooperation &amp; Cross Border Electricity Trade - Opportunities and Challenges (45 minutes)</b>	<b>Moderator: Mr. Ashish Khanna, DG- ISA</b>  <b>Panelists:</b>  <b>1. Professor K.T.M. Udayanga Hemapala, Secretary Ministry of Energy, Sri Lanka, NFP-ISA</b>  <b>2. Mr. Sagar Raj Goutam, Joint Secretary (Ministry of Energy,Wtaer resources &amp; irrigation) &amp; NFP-ISA , Nepal</b>

	<p><b>3. Mr. Karma Penjore Dorji, Director General , Ministry of Energy &amp; Natural Resources, Bhutan</b></p> <p><b>4. Sh. Ghanshayam Prasad, Chaiperson(CEA), India</b></p> <p><b>5. Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India</b></p> <p><b>6. Mrs. Manju Gupta, Dy. COO (CTU), India</b></p> <p><b>7. Mr. Abdullah Alshehri , General Director of Business Development , Ministry of Energy, Saudi Arabia</b></p>
<b>QA Session (15 minutes)</b>	<b>Audience</b>
<b>Closing remarks &amp; Vote of Thanks ( 5 minutes)</b>	<b>Pankaj Khurana, Programme Specialist, ISA</b>

\*\*\*\*\*