

# TRADE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT MONITOR

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## Opinion in Lead

### [Shifting landscape of unilateral trade and tariff preferences](#)

As the US announced sweeping tariffs targeting nearly all countries on 2 April 2025, with the US President Donald Trump making good on what he promised when he took office in January, it appears like the era of providing

trade preferences to countries deemed economically weaker is nearing its demise. The US, which was the flagbearer of the rules-based multilateral trading system, is now wrecking the system that ensured least developed countries (LDCs) were provided relatively easier trading terms to level the uneven playing field of international trade.

Through the Enabling Clause adopted in 1979 by the contracting parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), non-reciprocal trade preference schemes gained significance, aiming to integrate least developed countries (LDCs) into the global trading system. This led to various initiatives offering duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) market access to LDCs as well as providing a host of other forms of special and differential treatment. The tariff benefits were awarded based on the country's level of development—more importantly, differentiating between LDCs and non-LDC developing countries. For instance, the European Union's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) has three tiers for granting tariff preferences—Everything but Arms (EBA) for LDCs, GSP+ for vulnerable developing nations, and the standard GSP for lower- middle-income countries. [Read more...](#)

## Commentary

### [Pathway to better governance: Bangladesh White Paper](#)

My aim, in this article, is not to repeat the multidimensional problems of Bangladesh enumerated in the white paper or recount solutions, reforms, and policies which are already mentioned in it. In fact, I have drawn my theme from certain recurring words from the paper: corruption, government, and bureaucrats/bureaucracy. First of all, the

white paper frequently finds faults with the latter two entities – now considered enemies of Bangladesh. Their collusion is blamed for misleading the people regarding Bangladesh's growth and progress. Second, a solution proposed in Section E of the paper that corresponds to Reforms and Policies, for instance, mentions good governance as a solution that addresses various political and economic factors of post-conquest Bangladesh. Since elected politicians and non-elected bureaucrats are two important factors that help practice good governance, it is clear, thus, that the writers implicitly believe that either their collusion or a respectful distance between them is indispensable for a reformed Bangladesh. I will, therefore, lay out the nature of the tension belonging to this paradoxical relationship through the help of multiple studies and enumerate the problems mentioned in the white paper that need maintenance where this relationship, or a lack thereof can be made useful. The rest of the stakeholders for good governance will be left out for the sake of this distinct point of view. [Read more...](#)

## In the News

### [India, Pakistan trade now will come to complete halt](#)

With Pakistan suspending all trade ties with India, including that routes through third countries, the two-way commerce will now come to a complete halt, apex exporters' body FIEO said. Following the terror attack in Pahalgam on 22 April, which killed 26 people, mostly tourists, India took a series of measures including immediate shutting down of the Attari land-transit post, used for movement of certain kinds of goods. [Read more...](#)

### [China imposes 84% tariff on US goods as Trump trade war escalates](#)

Beijing will raise tariffs on US goods from 34 percent to 84 percent starting on 10 April, an action that follows the US increasing tariffs on Chinese goods and tensions over trade policies. [Read more...](#)

### [\*\*Donald Trump authorizes 90-day pause in tariffs on most countries except China\*\*](#)

US President Donald Trump has said he has authorised a 90-day pause in trade tariffs for most countries but has left China out of the new arrangement. In a post on Truth Social, Trump said he was imposing revised tariffs of 125 percent on imports from China "effective immediately" because of "the lack of respect China has shown the World's Markets." [Read more...](#)

### [\*\*Pakistan, Turkiye agree on joint oil, gas bids\*\*](#)

In a significant development, Pakistan and Turkiye have agreed on forging cooperation in oil and gas exploration, which came on the sidelines of Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025. [Read more..](#)

### [\*\*Pakistan, Bangladesh revive high-level talks after 15 years\*\*](#)

After a hiatus of 15 years, 17 April finally saw high-level diplomatic engagement between Pakistan and Bangladesh when the 6th round of Foreign Secretary Level Consultations (FSLC) took place in Dhaka. The 7th round of the FSLC would take place in Islamabad in 2026. [Read more...](#)

### [\*\*Bangladesh halts yarn import through land ports\*\*](#)

Bangladesh's National Board of Revenue has issued a gazette notification regarding the ban on the import of yarn and some other products through the country's land ports from India, Nepal and Bhutan, following repeated demands from local textile millers. [Read more...](#)

### **[India revokes transshipment for Bangladesh](#)**

India has revoked the transshipment facility for Bangladesh's export cargo to third countries transiting through its land borders to Indian airports and ports, but clarified that the measure would not affect Dhaka's trade with Nepal and Bhutan through Indian territory. [Read more...](#)

### **[India recognizes Nepal's food laboratory for the first time](#)**

For the first time, India has officially recognized Nepal's National Food and Feed Reference Laboratory (NFFRL), clearing the way for the export of select Nepali food products tested within Nepal itself. [Read more...](#)

### **[Nepali cement, plywood makers secure BIS](#)**

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the national standard body of India, has begun issuing certificates to cement and plywood manufacturers, a year after they applied for quality certification. [Read more...](#)

### **[Trump's tariffs on China, EU and rest of the world](#)**

On 2 April US President Donald Trump announced a sweeping set of tariffs, arguing that they would allow the United States to economically flourish. These new import taxes, which Trump imposed via executive order, have sent shockwaves through global markets as they kicked in this week. [Read more...](#)

## **Events**

### **[Roundtable Discussion: Navigating Nepal-US trade in uncertain times](#)**

SAWTEE, in partnership with WTO Chairs Programme - Nepal, Kathmandu University School of Management (KUSOM), organized a roundtable discussion titled "Navigating Nepal-US Trade in Uncertain Times" on 21 April 2025 at KUSOM, in conjunction with the release of an issue note, Decoding US' Reciprocal Tariffs: A Nepali Perspective. The discussion fostered dialogue on potential policy responses and collaborative strategies to manage emerging trade dynamics.

## Publications

### [Decoding US' Reciprocal Tariffs: A Nepali Perspective](#)

The US Administration's reciprocal tariffs announced on 2 April affect virtually all countries. The universal 10 percent tariff hike has already come into effect and the additional hike for countries other than China has been put on a 90-day pause. The road ahead is full of uncertainties—there are doubts about how, or whether, the reciprocal tariff scheme will continue. However, one thing seems certain: the international trade landscape is undergoing a profound change. Against this background, SAWTEE's issue note, authored by Dr. Paras Kharel and Mr. Kshitiz Dahal, examines the US's reciprocal tariffs from Nepal's perspective.

