Agenda of 13th SAFIR Core Course, Tulhiriya, Sri Lanka, 5-8 March 2013

Organized by LIRNEasia for the Secretariat of the South Asian Forum on Infrastructure Regulation.

Course directors: DrParthaMukhopadhyay (Center for Policy Research, India & Member Scientific Advisory Council, LIRNEasia) and Dr Rohan Samarajiva (Chair, LIRNEasia & Former Director General of Telecommunication, Sri Lanka)

The course is designed to address the challenges facing member agencies of SAFIR, drawing from the economic principles that underlie the practice of principle as well as the specificities of South Asian politico-economic context. The focus is on actions that may be taken by the regulator, rather than an abstract discussion of regulation. Content is organized on two parallel, intertwining tracks -- one focusing on the rationales for regulation and the various factors that affect regulation as currently practiced in the region and the other on strategies for securing the legitimacy of the regulator through customer engagement.The design of the compressed course is based oncounterposingconcepts and their application and the contrasting of country experience to yield insight.

5th March		Members of the SAFIR Executive Committee& Chair PUCSL
0830-0930	Inaugural session	
0930-1000	Break	
1000-1100	Electricity sector in Sri Lanka 1 *Other than Bhutan, Sri Lanka is the only electricity surplus country in the SAARC region. It has low T&D losses and some of the highest prices in the region. The last load-shedding episode was in mid-2012; this was after a decade of stable supply. This overview session will introduce participants to the factors that have led to these unusual outcomes.*	DamithaKumarasinghe, DG Public Utilities Commission,Speaker from Ceylon Electricity Board, moderated by Dr Rohan Samarajiva, LIRNEasia
1100-1130	Break	DrParthaMukhopadhyay (CPR); Shanthanu Dixit (Prayas)
1130-1300	2 Why regulate? Weaning or protecting consumers? *There are two polar narratives that are applied to utility regulation: one is the conventional narrative that comes from developed economies about protecting consumers from the bad outcomes of monopoly; the other is about regulation carving out space from the dysfunctional political context for much needed private investment and*	

1

	professional management. This session will begin a series of discussions on related themes of the purpose of regulation.	
1300-1400	Lunch	
1400-1500	3 Regulatory legitimacy *Regulatory agencies exist in a precarious space; having to manage relations with government, regulated utilities and consumers. The tradition of independent regulation has yet to put down deep roots in South Asia. A former regulator will discuss strategies for managing these problematic relations. This session will pay the foundation for subsequent discussions on consumer touch and public hearings.*	Dr Rohan Samarajiva
1500-1530	Break	
1530-1630	9 Consultation and transparency *Acts setting up regulatory agencies were among the first to mandate transparency and consultation in our region. This session will build on the previous session, laying out the theoretical and comparative perspectives related to procedural legitimacy.*	Dr Rohan Samarajiva
1630-1730	5 Relations between IPPs, "single buyer" and regulator *How the regulator referees the relationships between single buyer distribution/transmission entities and private power producers will be discussed with Sri Lanka representatives. The moderator will draw out the generalizable lessons.*	DamithaKumarasinghe,Speaker from Ceylon Electricity Board, Speaker from Hayleys/AES, moderated by DrParthaMukhopadhyay
1730-1800	Break	
1800-1900	Public hearings, consultations and websites: Practice in India and Sri Lanka *Here, the actual practice of conducting public hearings, consultations and using the website in the different countries will be discussed. If representatives from other S Asian countries are present they will be invited to join the panel.*	DamithaKumarasinghe and Shanthanu Dixit, moderated by Dr Rohan Samarajiva
6th March		
0900-1000	7 Why regulate? How does it change with different ownership structures? *In Sri Lanka, all distributors are government owned. In India both private and public entities exist, with the latter predominating. This session will explore the different dynamics that come into play based on different ownership structures.*	DrParthaMukhopadhyay; Shanthanu Dixit
1000-1030	Break	

1030-1230 8	Staying in touch with the consumer I *Life will be that much easier for regulatory agencies if they have the support of the public, or at least if they can avoid the public's hostility. The first of two interconnected presentations, this session presents new research on how regulatory agencies can contribute to improving the customer experience, gaining valuable support for its balancing act with the government and the utilities.*	HelaniGalpaya (LIRNEasia) & Raj KiranBilolikar (Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad)
1230-	Lunch & depart for tour of Kandy	
	Return by 2100 hrs	
7th March		
0900-1000 9	Why regulate? Market signals v planning models? *One of the most critical elements of efficient energy supply management is timely action based on accurate prediction of demand. Big power plants take time to come on stream. If demand is under-predicted, shortages will occur and expensive emergency power and/or load shedding become the only options. If demand is over-predicted, the cost of power may be excessive. Planning models have problems as do market signals. This session will explore how regulators can deal with this fundamental problem.*	DrParthaMukhopadhyay; Shanthanu Dixit
1000-1030	Break	
1030-1200 10	Challenges of cost-reflective tariffs: Sri Lanka and India experience *Pretty much everyone agrees that cost-reflective or at least cost-oriented tariffs are the optimal solution, but despite many public commitments in their support, their achievement has been a problem in South Asia. This panel will seek to draw out the commonalties and the differences in how policy makers and regulators have approached the problem in the two countries.*	Panel:DrTilakSiyambalapitiya (RMA Energy Consultants) & Raj KiranBilolikar, moderated by DrParthaMukhopadhyay
1200-1300 11	Regulatory predictability *How can investors invest in the volatile S Asian environment? Can regulators give them the necessary predictability? Can regulators and policy makers protect investors from their own bad judgment, perhaps caused by the fact that they are "too big to fail"? This provocative session will explore the options that regulators have with reference to real-world examples.*	DrParthaMukhopadhyay
1300-1400	Lunch	
1400-1500 12	Staying in touch with the consumer II *The second in a series of sessions will discuss new findings on how regulators can help improve the customer experience in telecom and electricity.*	HelaniGalpaya& Raj KiranBilolikar
1500-	Break	

1530		
1630-1730 13	Public hearings and consultations: how can they be done better? *Across South Asia, regulators are mandated by law to conduct hearings and consultation and to act transparently. By this time, we know what the theory says and what we actually do. The objective of this session is to collectively explore how we can do better: practical recommendations on how we can make public hearings and consultations serve the overall objectives of regulation better.*	DamithaKumarasinghe; xxx moderated by Dr Rohan Samarajiva
1730-1800	Valedictory session	
		DrJayatissa Costa, Chair PUCSL
8th March		
0930-	Departures commence	