



**SASEC EVENTS**  
**SW BANGLADESH**  
**ECONOMIC CORRIDOR**  
**JOINT ADB-KSP**  
**WORKSHOP**



**SASEC PROJECTS**  
**SASEC ROAD**  
**CONNECTIVITY TO OPEN**  
**OPPORTUNITIES FOR**  
**MSMEs**



**SASEC NEWS**  
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**IMPROVED GROWTH**  
**FOR SOUTH ASIA**



**PUBLICATIONS**  
**IMPROVING LIVES**  
**TOGETHER IN**  
**BANGLADESH: 50 YEARS**  
**OF THE ADB**



# SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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## ADB to Help Nepal Modernize Trade Facilitation, under the SASEC Program

10 July 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

ADB has approved a \$21 million loan to support the Government of Nepal's efforts to simplify, harmonize, and modernize the country's trade processes, under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation. The program will help Nepal promote and diversify exports, and help fulfill the country's commitments to the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.

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# SASEC EVENTS



## EVENT DHAKA

Southwest Bangladesh  
Economic Corridor Joint  
ADB-KSP Workshop



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Economic Corridor Joint  
ADB-KSP Workshop

## Southwest Bangladesh Economic Corridor Joint ADB-KSP Workshop: ADB Interim Reporting and KSP Final Dissemination Activity

30 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

This Workshop updated government agencies with on the ongoing economic corridor study, and discussed interim findings, offering recommendations on the main trunk of the corridor and location of industrial nodes. The Knowledge Sharing Program team highlighted implications of industrialization to Bangladesh's economy.

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# CALENDAR

## August

### Consultation Visit to Kolkata Port/Customs and Bilateral Discussion with CBEC India for CTD Automation

5-8 August 2017: Kolkata, India

### Dissemination Seminar for KSP Studies for the Colombo-Trincomalee Economic Corridor

3 August 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Top Tweets

July 2017



Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal's focus to bridge connectivity gaps crucial to reducing poverty in the region

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ADB Pres. Nakao: ADB ready to expand the economic corridor further south in Tamil Nadu

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ADB-funded SASEC Road Connectivity Investment Program to support expansion of Imphal to Myanmar highway

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Memorandum of Intent for Cooperation in Customs Capacity Building signed at the 6th SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting [Read](#)

Cabinet approves second tranche of northeastern SASEC road program [Read](#)



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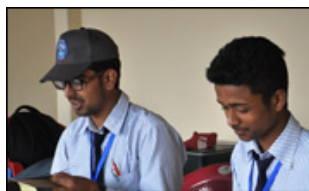
# SASEC PROJECTS



**PROJECT**  
**SASEC ROAD**  
**CONNECTIVITY TO OPEN**  
**OPPORTUNITIES FOR**  
**MSMEs**



**PROJECT**  
**SASEC PROJECT TO**  
**WIDEN IMPHAL-MOREH**  
**HIGHWAY IN**  
**NORTHEASTERN INDIA**



**PROJECT**  
**ADB TO HELP NEPAL**  
**MODERNIZE TRADE**  
**FACILITATION, UNDER**  
**THE SASEC PROGRAM**



**PROJECT**  
**ADB APPROVES \$21 M**  
**LOAN TO MODERNIZE**  
**NEPAL TRADE**  
**PROCESSES**

## SASEC Road Connectivity to Open Opportunities for MSMEs

**13 July 2017: New Delhi, India**

India's Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gave its approval for a \$253 million project to be implemented by the state-run National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation. The project, part of the SASEC Road Connectivity Investment Program, will upgrade and widen 65 kilometers of the Imphal-Moreh section of National Highway 39 in northeastern India.

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## Government of Odisha, ADB Discuss Economic Corridor CDP

**11 July 2017: Manila, Philippines**

The Asian Development Bank and the Government of Odisha discussed the status and progress of the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for the Odisha Economic Corridor. This is the third and final phase of the East Coast Economic Corridor studies, which will extend the corridor to the states of Odisha and West Bengal.

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## ADB Finalizes Chennai-Kanyakumari Corridor Report

**10 July 2017: Chennai, India**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) submitted the draft final report of the Comprehensive Development Plan for the Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor to the State Government of Tamil Nadu, India. The report highlighted the corridor's goals of increasing the state's manufacturing output to \$222 billion by 2035, and generating over 3 million jobs; and identified key locations for developing the industrial nodes.

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FOR SOUTH ASIA**



## NEWS

**BANGLADESH AND SRI  
LANKA INK 14 DEALS  
FOR COOPERATION**



## NEWS

**COMMENTARY:  
25 YEARS OF ASEAN-  
INDIAN INTEGRATION**



## NEWS

**INDIA ALLOWS EXPORT  
OF ESSENTIAL AGRICULTURAL  
GOODS TO MALDIVES**

## New Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit between India and Bhutan Comes into Force

**29 July 2017: New Delhi, India**

The new Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit between India and Bhutan has come into force. It provides for a free trade regime between the territories of India and Bhutan, and allows duty free transit of Bhutanese goods for trade with third countries.

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## US Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation to Invest in South Asian Energy Connectivity

**25 July 2017: New Delhi and Mumbai, India**

The Government of the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation is finalizing a \$500 million investment to help facilitate Nepal's electricity trade with India. The MCC grant, with additional \$130 million funding from the Government of Nepal, will finance construction of the second high-voltage cross-border transmission line on the Nepal side, 300 kilometers of high voltage power lines, and three large substations

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## Commentary: 25 years of ASEAN–India Integration

**23 July 2017: New Delhi, India**

This commentary by Mr. Prabir De, Professor at the Research and Information System, discusses how far the ASEAN–India partnership has come. As connectivity between India and ASEAN becomes a strategic focus to facilitate cross-regional production networks, India undertakes several initiatives to boost linkages, including the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway, supported by the India–Myanmar–Thailand Motor Vehicle Agreement.

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# India Releases National Trade Facilitation Action Plan

**21 July 2017: New Delhi, India**

The Government of India launched the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan to align India's border procedures with international best practices and improve the country's ease of doing business. The plan includes a time-bound roadmap containing 76 action plans reflecting the Government's commitment to implement the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.

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# Impact of GST on Bhutan and Nepal's Third Country Trade

**20 July 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal**

At an awareness-raising meeting on Goods and Services Tax (GST), India's Ministry of Commerce and Customs and the Central Board of Excise and Customs confirmed to officials of the Nepal Department of Customs that charges for different port and Customs services for Bhutan and Nepal's third country trade through India will not be affected by GST.

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# Bangladesh, Sri Lanka Businesses Look to Expand Trade

**15 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Business leaders from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka welcomed the move by their respective governments to expand bilateral trade and investment in a business-to-business dialogue held on the occasion of Sri Lanka President Maithripala Sirisena's visit to Bangladesh. The President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry noted the potential for business volume between the two nations to grow, with the Free Trade Agreement providing an avenue for more businesses and investments.

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# Bangladesh and Sri Lanka Ink 14 Deals for Cooperation

**14 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka signed 14 instruments of cooperation following the bilateral meeting between Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lanka President Maithripala Sirisena in Dhaka, Bangladesh. These include an MoU on economic cooperation, and an MoU on Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution and Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

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# Bangladesh, India to Pilot Cargo Railway Service

**13 July 2017: Kolkata, India**

Bangladesh and India will pilot a freight train service in August, using the broad gauge railway connection from Gede, India, to Darshana, Bangladesh, to assess the feasibility of rail cargo services between the two countries. The trial run will also establish the safety of a loaded container train on the 5-km long Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge.

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## **SAARC Countries Urged to Focus on Removing Non-tariff Barriers**

**13 July 2017: Islamabad, Pakistan**

Mr. Younus Dagha, Federal Secretary of Commerce, Pakistan, has urged the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation member countries to focus on removing non-tariff barriers to strengthen trade in the region. The region holds immense trade and investment potential, being home to 21% of the world's population.

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## **ADB Forecasts Improved Growth for South Asia**

**13 July 2017: Manila, Philippines**

Economic growth prospects in developing Asia for 2017 have improved on the back of stronger-than-expected export demand in the first quarter of this year, according to the Asian Development Bank's Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2017 Supplement. South Asia will remain the fastest growing of all subregions in Asia and the Pacific, with growth on track to meet projections of 7.0% in 2017.

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## **Bangladesh, Sri Lanka Shipping Companies Mull Container Feeder Service Joint Venture**

**12 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Bangladesh Shipping Corporation and Sri Lanka's Ceylon Shipping Corporation plan to launch a container feeder service joint venture to provide exporters, importers, and local coastal traders with a dependable and effective container feeder service option. The two companies are also exploring potential supply chain collaboration.

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## **India Calls for Raising Cross-border Trade with Bangladesh**

**9 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Mr. Harsh Vardan Shringla, India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, urged the business community to increase the volume of India-Bangladesh cross-border trade, noting how standards certification will boost trade for Bangladesh products.

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## **Bangladesh to Purchase Hydropower from Nepal Company**

**6 July 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Government of Bangladesh and Nepal's GMR Upper Karnali Hydropower Ltd. are preparing to sign a power purchase agreement. GMR will be exporting 300-500 megawatts of energy generated by the Upper Karnali Hydroelectric Project in Nepal via India.

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## **Digitization of the ATA Carnet System Moves Forward**

**5 July 2017: Brussels, Belgium**

Digitization of the ATA Carnet system was emphasized at a meeting between the International Chamber of Commerce World Chambers Federation's eATA Steering Committee and the World Customs Organization eATA Working Group. Benefits include convenience in transaction facilitation, increased data security, claims prevention, and reduction in administration.

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## **Commentary: Standards Need Continuous Updating**

**1 July 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

This commentary by Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, Chief Executive Officer, Business Initiative Leading Development, highlights the need to improve standards regulation to increase Bangladesh's competitiveness in the export-based manufacturing industry. Recommendations include raising capacity of the Bangladesh Standard Institute to meet global standards in food safety, and involving the private sector in standard setting consultations.

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## **Commentary: Improving Regulatory Standards for Export Diversification**

**30 June 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Products for export need to conform to given standards and undergo certain procedures before they are allowed entry into the importing country. In this commentary, Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, Chief Executive Officer, Business Initiative Leading Development, explains what exporters from Bangladesh need to do to understand these standards so they can expand their reach in India and other markets.

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## **India Allows Export of Essential Agri Commodities to Maldives**

**28 June 2017: New Delhi, India**

The Government of India has allowed the export of select commodities to Maldives for 2017-2018 without any policy restrictions and prohibitions. India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade announced the decision to allow 19,466 tonnes of onions, 67,640 tonnes of rice, and other essential agricultural products under a bilateral trade agreement between India and Maldives.

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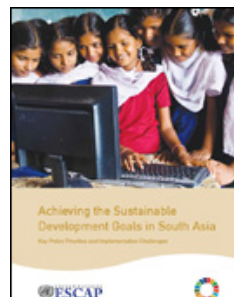
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