



SASEC EVENTS
**SIXTH MEETING OF THE
SASEC CUSTOMS
SUBGROUP**



SASEC PROJECTS
**ADB PRESIDENT
PROPOSES SUPPORT FOR
INDIA'S EAST COAST
ECONOMIC CORRIDOR**



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TO THE UNITED
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PUBLICATIONS
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SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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ADB Releases the First Tranche of the SASEC Chittagong-Cox's Bazaar Railway Project

21 June 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Bangladesh have signed a \$300 million loan agreement, the first tranche of the \$1.5 billion SASEC Chittagong-Cox's Bazaar Railway Project. Set for completion in 2022, it will be linked to the Trans-Asian Railway route, provide for future direct connectivity toward India, Bhutan, and Nepal through the Indian Railway network, and help boost Cox's Bazaar as a major tourist destination.

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EVENT BHUTAN

Sixth Meeting of the
SASEC Customs Subgroup



EVENT INDIA

India and Nepal Bilateral
Negotiation on the ECTS



EVENT NAGARKOT

ASYCUDA World
Implementation Workshop

Sixth Meeting of the SASEC Customs Subgroup

14-15 June 2017: Thimphu, Bhutan

The Sixth SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting reviewed national and subregional projects, shared progress in applying Electronic Cargo Tracking Systems, considered a new study on coordinated development of border infrastructure, and signed a Memorandum of Intent for Cooperation in Customs Capacity Building.

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Bilateral Negotiation Meeting on the Electronic Cargo Tracking System between India and Nepal

6 June 2017: Mumbai, India

The bilateral negotiation meeting between India and Nepal on the pilot use of the Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) for traffic-in-transit finalized and signed a Memorandum of Intent between the Government of India and the Government of Nepal to pilot the use of the ECTS for facilitating movement of traffic-in-transit of Nepal.

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ASYCUDA World Implementation Review Workshop

1-3 June 2017: Nagarkot, Nepal

The Nepal Department of Customs organized the ASYCUDA World Implementation Review Workshop to support implementation of the web-based ASYCUDA World system, and its roll-out in six Customs offices in Nepal. The Workshop discussed issues encountered during implementation and identified solutions.

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Top Tweets

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ADB expert explains 6 ways Asian economic cooperation is changing the region [Read](#)

ADB to support regional cooperation initiatives in Maldives to bolster Greater Male Region development [Read](#)

India-Bhutan Trade, Commerce, Transit Agreement allows duty free transit of Bhutanese goods for 3rd country trade [Read](#)

ITC Trade Map shows rise in intraregional trade in Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal subregion in 2016 [Read](#)

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CONSTRUCTION BEGINS



PROJECT
ECONOMIC CORRIDOR
TO ADVANCE
BANGLADESH'S
ECONOMY



PROJECT
SASEC ECONOMIC
CORRIDORS TO HELP
IMPROVE INDIA'S
CONNECTIVITY

ADB to Increase Support for India's East Coast Economic Corridor

29 June 2017: New Delhi, India

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Takehiko Nakao told India's leaders that ADB is increasing support for developing economic corridors under the Make-in-India initiative, following ADB's new country strategy for India for 2018-2022. ADB is prepared to invest up to \$5 billion during 2018-2022 to develop the East Coast Economic Corridor.

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Phuentsholing Mini Dry Port Construction Begins

23 June 2017: Phuentsholing, Bhutan

A groundbreaking ceremony initiated construction of the mini dry port in Phuentsholing, Bhutan. The project, costing around \$2 million, is funded by an Asian Development Bank grant, with additional funding from the Government of Bhutan. This dry port will improve Bhutan's logistics capability and augment its trade competitiveness.

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Economic Corridor to Propel Industrial Growth in Bangladesh's Southwest Region

13 June 2017: Manila, Philippines

The interim report for the Southwest Bangladesh Economic Corridor envisages huge economic gains for Bangladesh, including enhancement in Bangladesh's human capital, technological level, infrastructure, and backward linkages, and total output of the southwest region to \$148 billion by 2050 – more than 3 times higher under the business-as-usual scenario.

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SASEC Economic Corridors to Improve Connectivity between India and Neighbors

5 June 2017: Kolkata, India

Two economic corridors being developed under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) are now in the pre-construction stage. The economic corridors would improve international trade and connectivity among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal.

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Visit the SASEC Trade Information Portal

28 June 2017: Manila, Philippines

The SASEC Trade Information Portal is your a gateway to e-information on trade procedures in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It gathers in one virtual space hyperlinks to the regulatory frameworks, import/export procedures, and other trade-related information for the seven SASEC countries.

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6th India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee Meeting Focuses on Building Multimodal Connectivity

27 June 2017: New Delhi, India

Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry (Independent Charge), India, sought active cooperation of India and Myanmar in improving multimodal connectivity to tap a huge bilateral trade potential. She noted the need to fast-track completion of the inland waterway linking Sittwe Port to the Myanmar hinterland, and move forward with the Motor Vehicle Agreement negotiation to facilitate seamless movement of cargo.

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Forum Emphasizes Importance of Cooperation in Regional Initiatives

27 June 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

A forum in Kathmandu, Nepal explored actions that will allow landlocked countries to take advantage of being "land-linked". Mr. Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director, CUTS International, underscored the importance of cooperation among the four countries to be able to move forward.

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Commentary: South Asian Countries Building Connections

24 June 2017: Canberra, Australia

Mr. Prabir De, Professor at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries, discusses how the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) subregional grouping's focus to bridge connectivity gaps is crucial to reducing poverty in the region. He highlights the pressing need to begin implementing comprehensive trade facilitation and connectivity measures in the BBIN subregion, and remarks how success of the BBIN initiative is important to move broader regional integration initiatives forward through SAARC and BIMSTEC.

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Bangladesh to Ease Transshipment of Goods with Road Widening Project

22 June 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Executive Committee of the National Economic Council approved a road widening project for the 51-kilometer road from Ashuganj River Port to Akhaura Land Port used by Bangladeshi exporters for transshipment of goods. The upgrade is a move to ease traffic and improve road safety.

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BBIN Intraregional Trade On the Rise

21 June 2017: Geneva, Switzerland

The International Trade Centre's Trade Map reports an increase in intraregional trade in the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) subregion in 2016, from \$21.65 billion in 2015 to \$23.52 billion. The ratio of BBIN intraregional trade to world trade went up from 2.98% in 2015 to 3.34% in 2016.

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India Becomes Party to the United Nations TIR Convention

19 June 2017: New Delhi, India

The Government of India ratified the United Nations Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention, becoming the 71st country to accede to this worldwide Customs transit system, which has the widest geographical coverage. Accession promises to be a boon to India's trade, and contribute to an integrated economy with global and regional production networks.

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Bangladesh, Sri Lanka to Hold Trade Talks in July

15 June 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will hold high level talks in July 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to deepen trade and expand investment. Mr. Rishad Bathiudeen, Sri Lanka Minister of Industries and Commerce, noted that while Sri Lankan exports to Bangladesh have tripled since 2010, Sri Lanka wants to explore many untapped bilateral opportunities to further boost trade growth.

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Commentary: Promise and Flux in South Asian Electricity Trade

14 June 2017: Singapore, Singapore

The Asia Foundation, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry, is preparing a study on energy trade in the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal subregion, examining how market forces, networks, and stakeholders interact. In this commentary, Mr. Aditya Valiathan Pillai, program officer of the Asia Foundation in India, discusses the creation of an energy market in South Asia and the growing importance of regional electricity trade in helping mitigate carbon emissions and providing a more economical means of managing electricity surpluses and deficits.

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Nepal-Bangladesh Youth Meet on Promoting Bilateral Trade

11 June 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Nepal-Bangladesh Youth Conference 2017, held in Kathmandu, Nepal, discussed possible ways to increase bilateral trade between Nepal and Bangladesh. The environment and the economic and business sectors were among the topics tackled at the conference.

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India Proposes Regional Air Connectivity Scheme among BIMSTEC Countries

7 June 2017: New Delhi, India

The Government of India has proposed application of its "Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik" or "Common People of the Country can Fly" policy among member countries of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). An enabling regional connectivity policy could help attract high value economic agents, business travelers, and tourists.

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New Border Haat to be Built in Tripura

6 June 2017: Agartala, India

The India-Bangladesh Border Haat Management Committee met to finalize the lineup of vendors for a border haat set to rise in Tripura, India. The committee has selected Kamalpur, Dhalai, as the site for the new border haat.

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State Counselor Suu Kyi Pledges Myanmar Participation in BIMSTEC Integration

8 June 2017: Yangon, Myanmar

Myanmar State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi has pledged to support the integration of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) region to help accelerate economic growth and social progress among BIMSTEC member countries. The message was issued to mark BIMSTEC's 20th anniversary.

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Tokyo Conference: South Asia Needs to Accelerate Connectivity to Boost Growth

6 June 2017: Tokyo, Japan

Mr. Shahriar Alam, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh, emphasized the importance of regional connectivity for South Asia to reap the benefits of being the world's fastest growing region. He called for stronger cooperation among member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to connect the region's markets, and take advantage of a young demographic dividend.

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Building Stronger Cooperation with BIMSTEC

29 May 2017: Bangkok, Thailand

The Secretary General of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) advised member countries to look at regional cooperation in a pragmatic way, with efforts to build regional cooperation focusing on achieving practical results, at the conference marking BIMSTEC's 20th anniversary.

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India to Link Meghalaya-Myanmar, Boost Waterway Transit

30 May 2017: Mumbai, India

The Government of India plans to begin construction of the highway connecting Meghalaya to Myanmar in June 2017, according to the Ministry of Road Transport, Highways, and Shipping, India. India also plans to boost waterway transit for more cost-effective transport of goods, and is considering waterway connectivity between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

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Sri Lanka Makes Big Push for Renewable Energy

21 May 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Of Sri Lanka's 4,000 megawatts (MW) installed electrical capacity, the country generates 550 MW from wind and solar energy sources. By pushing to increase its renewable energy capacity and exploring the possibility of building undersea power cables, Sri Lanka could open the doors to mutually beneficial energy trade with India.

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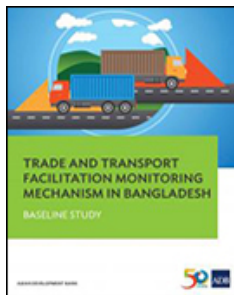
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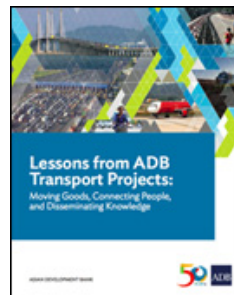
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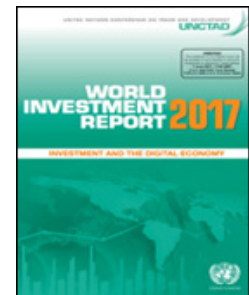
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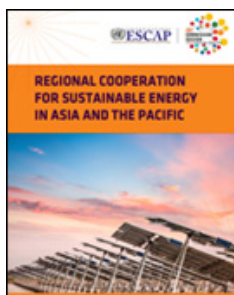
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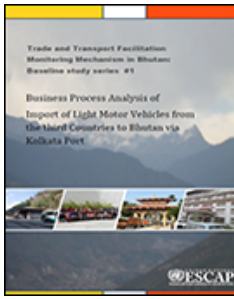
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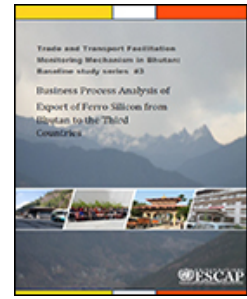
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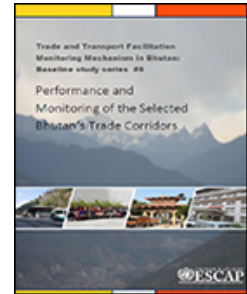
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