



SASEC Events



Training on Customs Valuation and Risk Management 2-6 February 2015: Mumbai, India

The Central Board of Excise and Customs of India, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank held a training course for 22 SASEC government officials on practical aspects of developing and using Customs valuation databases and risk management systems, together with other tools for enhancing the efficiency of Customs controls.

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Meeting of BBIN Transport Secretaries on Regional Road Transport Connectivity 2-3 February 2015: Kolkata, India

The Meeting of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN) Transport Secretaries on Regional Road Transport Connectivity facilitated discussions among senior officials of the four SASEC member countries to finalize the draft BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement, a transport facilitation framework that aims to enhance road connectivity in the subregion by allowing passenger, personal, and cargo vehicles to cross international borders and travel along designated key trade routes.

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SASEC Projects



Railway Sector Investment Program Approaching Completion 24 February 2015: Manila, Philippines

The Asian Development Bank approved the Railway Sector Investment Program on 10 October 2006 as a multitranche financing facility amounting to \$430 million, with counterpart financing of \$107.5 million from the Government of Bangladesh. It is expected to improve transport by enhancing efficiency and capacity of Bangladesh's railway sector to contribute to sustainable economic growth and promote further poverty reduction. One of the main components of the investment project—the construction of the 64 km Tongi-Bhairab Bazar Double Track on Bangladesh Railway's Dhaka-Chittagong railway corridor—is approaching completion within 2015.

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- [PDS Subproject 1](#)
- [RSIP Subproject 1](#)

SASEC Calendar

March 2015						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Upcoming SASEC Events

[Third Meeting of the SASEC Customs Subgroup](#)
11-12 March 2015
Goa, India

[National Workshop on Time Release Study](#)
17-19 March 2015
Kathmandu, Nepal

[National Workshop on Revised Kyoto Convention and Draft Customs Act](#)
16-20 March 2015
Phuentsholing, Bhutan

[National Workshop on Draft Customs Act for the Government and Autonomous Agencies](#)
26-27 March 2015
Thimphu, Bhutan

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- [BBS](#)
- [SASEC News](#)

SASEC Transport Project Improving Bhutan-India Connectivity Receives Go Signal

24 February 2015: Manila, Philippines

Works to improve road connectivity and facilitate trade between Bhutan and India are set to begin soon along the Phuentsholing-Jaigaon border. An Asian Development Bank-financed project under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program will construct a bypass road from Jaigaon, India to Pasakha, Bhutan and include a mini-dry port in Phuentsholing to enable faster Customs clearance of cargo. A land customs station will also be constructed in Pasakha to monitor the bypass road.

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- [BBS](#)
- [Druk Green](#)

Dagachhu Hydroelectric Project Commissioned

21 February 2015: Thimphu, Bhutan

Commissioning of the first unit of the 126 Megawatt (MW) Dagachhu Hydroelectric Project officially began at 15:25 on 21 February 2015 with commercial generation of energy from Bhutan to India, coinciding with the 35th birthday of the King of Bhutan. Generating capacity during peak season can reach a maximum of 63 MW. The Green Power Development Project under the SASEC program funded its construction.

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SASEC News



- [BSS](#)
- [Dhaka Tribune](#)

Bangladesh Nominated as LDC Coordinator for WTO in 2015

22 February 2015: Geneva, Switzerland

Bangladesh has once again been nominated as least developed countries' (LDC) coordinator for 2015—its first time was in 1996 when former Industries and Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed attended the WTO Ministerial Conference in Singapore. Bangladesh was nominated due to its vital role and experience in bargaining with the developed world on behalf of the LDCs.

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- [The Financial Express](#)
- [The News Today](#)

Bangladesh-India Business Council by April 2015

22 February 2015: Dhaka, Bangladesh

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has proposed a joint business council for Bangladesh and India to meet by April 2015 to address existing disputes in bilateral trade and business. The proposal followed discussions with business leaders during a 3-day visit to Bangladesh. The India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Indian Chamber of Commerce signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the presence of Chief Minister Mamata, to conduct a joint study on the bottlenecks that hinder the growth of bilateral trade and business between India and Bangladesh.

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- [My República](#)
- [ADB Project](#)

Nepal Electricity Authority to Cut System Loss to 10%

21 February 2015: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Nepal Electricity Authority plans to reduce current system loss to 10% by 2020 through several technical and non-technical measures, including unbundling of development and operation of electricity transmission lines. NEA's total energy generation loss in 2013-2014 stood at 25%. It is currently implementing the Energy Access and Efficiency Improvement Project under the SASEC program.

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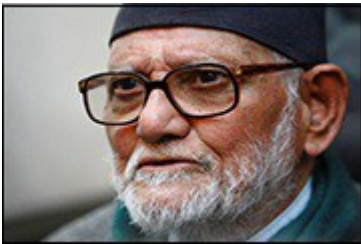


- [The Financial Express](#)

Bangladesh Identifies Nine Sectors for Development Cooperation with India **20 February 2015: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Bangladesh Prime Minister's Office has identified nine priority sectors for development cooperation with India under an umbrella agreement: power and hydropower, energy, commerce, connectivity (rail, road, water and motor vehicle), customs and immigration regulations, water management, and capacity building and capital dredging of Mongla Port. The countries signed the framework agreement to promote trade, investment and economic cooperation.

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- [MoFA Speech](#)

Nepal Prime Minister Koirala Emphasizes Importance of Regional Cooperation to Nepal's Foreign Policy **18 February 2015: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Nepal Prime Minister Sushil Koirala emphasized Nepal's strong engagement in the process of regional cooperation—through membership in SAARC and BIMSTEC—as “a major defining feature” of Nepal's foreign policy in a speech delivered at the 67th anniversary of Nepal Council of World Affairs.

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- [The Times of India](#)
- [Daily Mirror](#)

India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Talks to Deepen Economic Ties **16 February 2015: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena's recent visit to India after assuming office last month allows both countries to adopt a fresh approach to bilateral ties. New leadership in both New Delhi and Colombo has the potential for economic cooperation in development, commerce, and trade. According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is proud to be a trade partner of Sri Lanka and plans to take bilateral relations to a new level. Meanwhile, President Sirisena calls his first official visit to India successful and fruitful – a contribution to the developing and ensuing friendship between the two countries. He eagerly awaits Prime Minister Modi's arrival in Sri Lanka in March.

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- [eKantipur.com](#)
- [daily sun](#)

Bangladesh-Nepal Expo 2015 Showcases Potential Areas of Trade **15 February 2015: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The first Bangladesh-Nepal Expo 2015 ran from 11-15 February 2015 in Kathmandu, Nepal, and attracted about 100 private businesses and more than 10,000 visitors. Nepal Minister for Commerce and Supplies, Mr. Sunil Bahadur Thapa, expressed optimism about Bangladesh-Nepal bilateral relations, describing the trade fair as a way of strengthening relations. He added that the Government of Nepal is currently in the process of drafting a new trade agreement with Bangladesh to facilitate trade in products and services between the two countries. [Read More >>](#)



- [Press Release](#)
- [eKantipur.com](#)

Motor Vehicles Deal Underway for Seamless Transport through BBIN Subregion **6 February 2015: Raichak, India**

The linking of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal through a subregional Motor Vehicles Agreement was discussed at a meeting in Raichak, India on 2-3 February 2015 attended by transport secretaries from the four South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation member countries. This agreement will enable seamless transit of passenger and goods along designated key routes in the four South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation countries without the need for transshipment at border-crossing points, reducing costly and time-consuming unloading and loading of people and cargo. The agreement would help transform transport corridors linking the four countries into economic corridors and enhance people-to-people contact.

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India Expands Duty-Free Items to Sri Lanka **4 February 2015: New Delhi, India**

India plans to reduce the number of sensitive items subject to import duty under the South Asia Free Trade Agreement for Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It has already decreased the number of sensitive list items for least developed countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region. According to A.M. Gondane, Joint Secretary, SAARC, this will have Customs revenue implications for both countries.
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- [News.LK](#)
- [SAARC Website](#)



Asian Development Bank to Give \$1 Billion Credit to Improve Nepal's Infrastructure **3 February 2015: Manila, Philippines**

Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Takehiko Nakao called on Nepal Prime Minister Sushil Koirala on 3 February 2015 during a visit to Nepal, and met with Finance Minister Ram Sharan Mahat and National Planning Commission Vice Chairperson Govinda Pokharel. ADB plans to provide about \$1 billion in concessional loans and about \$13 million in technical assistance grants to Nepal over the next three years to support faster and more inclusive growth in the country. An estimated 80% of the \$1 billion credit from ADB will be allocated to improve the country's infrastructure sector, notably on energy and transport.
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- [myRepública](#)
- [ADB News Release](#)

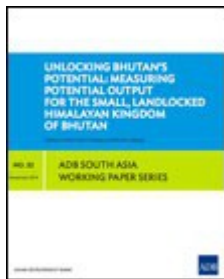


Nepali-language Version of Revised Kyoto Convention Published **26 January 2015: Kathmandu, Nepal**

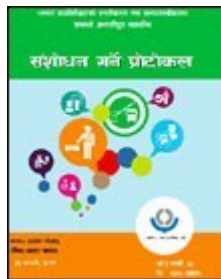
Nepal is currently in an advanced stage of acceding to the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) through submission of its Instrument of Accession to the World Customs Organization. In support of Nepal's accession and future implementation of the provisions of the RKC, a Nepali-language translation has been published under the ADB-financed SASEC Trade Facilitation Program and launched during the 63rd International Customs Day on 26 January 2015. Two thousand copies of the translation are being distributed to Customs posts and offices throughout the nation.
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- [SASEC News](#)

Related Publications



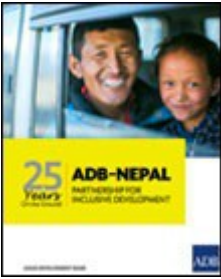
[Unlocking Bhutan's Potential: Measuring Potential Output for the Small, Landlocked Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan](#)



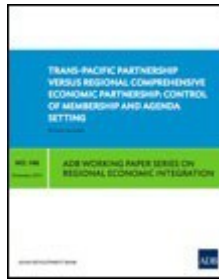
[Revised Kyoto Convention \(Nepali-language Version\)](#)



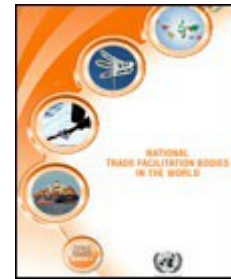
[Climate Proofing ADB Investment in the Transport Sector](#)



25 Years on the Ground:
ADB-Nepal Partnership
for Inclusive Development



Trans-Pacific Partnership versus
Comprehensive Economic Partnership:
Control of Membership and Agenda
Setting



National Trade Facilitation
Bodies in the World

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