Explainer: How Blockchain Can Improve Supply Chain Transparency in Maldives
28 April 2020: Manila, Philippines

Maldives is studying the use of high-level technologies to support a national single window system to make international trade easier and more efficient. Through the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) National Single Window Project, Maldives is introducing blockchain technology to improve trade facilitation and management of local and regional supply chains.

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SAARC Senior Trade Officials Discusses impact of COVID-19 situation on intra-regional trade

BBIN Energy Secretaries Evaluate State of Energy amidst the Pandemic
17 April 2020: Kathmandu, Nepal

Energy Secretaries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN) held a virtual meeting to evaluate the state of energy amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. They discussed issues related to energy generation, demand and distribution. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the demand and supply balance, and ongoing construction projects in the subregion. Mr. Dinesh Kumar Ghimire, Secretary of Energy of the Government of Nepal discussed possible solutions with his counterparts in the subregion.

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India CBIC Allows Paperless Customs Clearances, E-Submission of Documents for Imports
15 April 2020: New Delhi, India

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) of the Government of India has allowed paperless customs clearances and electronic submission of documents to speed up imports beginning 15 April 2020. These include raw materials used in manufacturing medicines against the new coronavirus. These reforms will expedite customs clearances and reduce the transaction cost, as well as promote physical distancing.

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India, Nepal to Continue Close Coordination for Smooth Facilitation of Essential Supplies
10 April 2020: New Delhi, India

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli held a phone call to discuss policy measures against the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The two leaders reiterated their agreement for Indian and Nepalese experts and officials to continue close consultations and coordination on all issues arising out of the COVID-19 situation. This includes facilitation of essential commodities across the border.

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SAARC Senior Trade Officials Talk Trade amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic
8 April 2020: New Delhi, India

A video conference among SAARC senior trade officials discussed the impact of travel restrictions and the larger impact of COVID-19 situation on intra-regional trade. The meeting acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have a considerable adverse effect on trade in the SAARC region. It also recognized the need to have a bigger discussion on the impact of health issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic on regional trade and possible measures to mitigate it.

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