



SASEC News



- Economic Times
- First Post India
- Deccan Chronicle

Prime Minister Modi Affirms SAARC as a Strong Regional Block

28 September 2014: New York, USA

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held separate bilateral meetings with Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and Nepal Prime Minister Sushil Koirala. The neighboring leaders discussed their support for the 'neighborhood first' policy and affirmed their commitment to South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation as a regional block that can solve common problems. Modi also inquired about the status of bilateral projects in Nepal with Koirala, and discussed various bilateral issues with Rajapaksa, including a power project.

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- eKantipur

Government of Nepal Requests Financing for Bridges

27 September 2014: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Government of Nepal has requested financing from the Government of India for construction of bridges across the Terai as part of the second phase of a road project linking the East-West Highway to several border points. Around 62 bridges are required for the project, with each bridge estimated at US\$1.6 million, a total estimated cost of US\$100 million. The total length of the road project is 1500km. It will run from north-south and east-west of Nepal, strengthening road connectivity within the country, and boosting linkages with India.

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- News Release
- ADB Nepal Resident Mission Facebook Page

Nepal Signs Energy+ Cooperation Framework Agreement

25 September 2014: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Government of Nepal signed the Framework Agreement for Energy+ Cooperation with the Government of Norway, the Government of Denmark, the Asian Development Bank and United Nations Development Program to contribute toward the actual implementation of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative. This agreement will help improve coordination and assist Nepal in achieving universal access to sustainable energy.

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SASEC Calendar

October 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	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

Second WCO-ADB Joint Subregional Train-the-Trainer Workshop on Customs Valuation
21-24 October 2014
Male, The Maldives

SASEC Trade Facilitation and Transport Working Group Meeting
4 November 2014
Kathmandu, Nepal

SASEC Energy Working Group Meeting
5 November 2014
Kathmandu, Nepal

Upcoming Regional Events

Gender Dimensions of Regional Cooperation
28-29 October, 2014
Manila, Philippines

Visit sasec.asia to see recent event updates.

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- [News Release](#)
- [Final Program](#)
- [APTFF Schedule](#)

Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2014 focuses on Trade Facilitation for Inclusive Development

24-25 September 2014: Bangkok, Thailand

The Asian Development Bank, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand, jointly organized the 6th Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum on 24-25 September 2014. Over 200 delegates from governments across Asia Pacific, private sector, scholars and researchers from universities and think-tanks, and experts from international organizations joined the knowledge and experience sharing forum, which aimed to inspire trade facilitation reforms.

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- [Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project](#)
- [Business Standard](#)

Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project Sparks Hope for Nepal-India Energy Cooperation

23 September 2014: Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal and India agreed to resume the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project, a bilateral project signed in 1996, by endorsing the charter creating the Pancheshwar Development Authority. This move sparks hope that the bi-national hydropower project—to be developed in Mahakali River bordering Nepal and India—will finally be implemented. This project is expected to generate 6,720 MW energy, and irrigate 93,000 hectares of land in Nepal and 1.6 million hectares in India.

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- [The Daily Star](#)
- [BdNews24](#)

Bangladesh to Sign MOU for Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

18 September 2014: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh has agreed in principle to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank established by China in early 2014 to invest in infrastructure construction in Asia and promote economic cooperation. Bangladesh Bank recommended Dhaka's membership in the new regional development bank to improve the country's poor infrastructure and regional connectivity. Economic Relations Division Secretary Mohammad Mejbahuddin will sign the MOU in October.

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- [Business Standard](#)
- [Economic Times](#)
- [The Daily Star](#)

Indian Prime Minister Receives Foreign Minister of Bangladesh

18-19 September 2014: Delhi, India

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali visited Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in New Delhi for the 3rd Meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission on 19 September 2014. The joint statement issued after the meeting noted the creation of special economic zones, cooperation in the power sector, removal of barriers to trade facilitation, promotion of trade facilitation, progress in establishment of border haats, and improved connectivity.

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- [News Release](#)
- [Business Mirror](#)

Transport Forum 2014: Transport in the Asian Century

16 September 2014: Manila, Philippines

In the largest gathering of transport officials and industry and sector professionals in Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank's bi-annual Transport Forum 2014 discussed project updates, transport policies, and best practices, including new innovations in sustainable transport. Over 400 industry leaders, transport professionals, and policymakers attended the forum sessions to debate various environmental and social challenges that impact transport systems in the region. Panel discussants on cross-border transport in Asia featured customs as the biggest challenge in regional growth transport.

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Bhutan's Accession to the Revised Kyoto Convention **15 September 2014: Brussels, Belgium**

The Kingdom of Bhutan acceded to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention [RKC]) on 15 September 2014. It is the ninety-sixth contracting party to the RKC. World Customs Organization (WCO) Secretary General, Mr. Kunio Mikuriya welcomed His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bhutan in Brussels, Mr. Sonam Tshong, and urged other WCO members to accede to the RKC. Bhutan's accession further benefits its anti-corruption initiatives by promoting integrity and professionalism of the Customs administration. Accession will enter into full force on 15 December 2014.

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- [The Revised Kyoto Convention](#)
- [National Council of Bhutan](#)
- [WCO News](#)



BIMSTEC Secretariat Inaugurated in Dhaka **13 September 2014: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Secretariat headquarters was formally opened on 13 September 2014 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leading the inaugural ceremonies. An alliance of countries that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, BIMSTEC plays a key role in alleviating poverty and achieving economic progress by providing a platform for member nations to cooperate in facing challenges. Prime Minister Hasina noted that the BIMSTEC Secretariat ushers in a new era of cooperation among its member states.

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- [Dhaka Tribune](#)
- [BIMSTEC Transport Infrastructure and Logistics Study \(BTILS\)](#)
- [BTILS: Project Data Sheet](#)

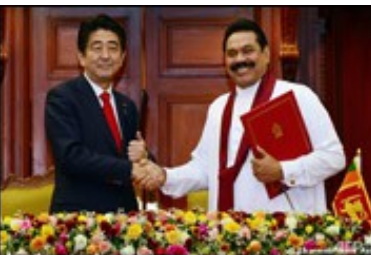


11th Asia-Europe Finance Ministers' Meeting **12 September 2014: Milan, Italy**

Finance Ministers and representatives from 49 Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Member Countries and the European Commission attended the ASEM Finance Ministers' Meeting in Milan, Italy on 12 September 2014. The ministers renewed their commitment to increased inter-regional investment and trade flows, protectionism resistance, and a successful conclusion to the World Trade Organization Doha Round. In their final statement, the ministers encouraged European and Asian private sector investors to continue their contributions to economic growth and enter a new path of economic cooperation.

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- [ASEM Infoboard](#)



Japan Assists Sri Lanka to Become Regional Hub **9 September 2014: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's recent visit to Sri Lanka recognized the country's promise as a future regional hub. As maritime and agro-based nations, both Japan and Sri Lanka have advantages in developing bilateral trade. Japan will extend its technologies and skills to Sri Lanka, improve infrastructure, and reduce power shortages in the country. Sri Lanka will provide maritime access to huge markets and ensure freedom and safety of navigation in the region.

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- [Daily News](#)
- [Asian Tribune](#)
- [The Diplomat](#)



- [Final Program](#)

Regional Energy Trade Workshop Held at ADB 8-9 September 2014: Manila, Philippines

ADB held a Regional Energy Trade Workshop at its headquarters in Manila, Philippines on September 8-9, 2014 that was attended by policy makers, regulators, and key stakeholders from the energy sector of ADB member countries. As a platform for knowledge-sharing, the workshop aimed to equip decision makers with key knowledge on regional power trade through discussions on infrastructure, policy, and regulation, as well as regional electricity trade and design. Seven sessions were spread out over a two-day period, with three key presentations covering energy trade in South Asia.

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- [India Today](#)
- [Times of India](#)

Single Permit System Proposed for SAARC Road Transport 6 September 2014: Rajasthan, India

A single permit system facilitating easy movement of goods and people through road transport within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region may soon be a possibility, as SAARC member states consider this proposal during a meeting of SAARC officials in Rajasthan, India. SAARC member countries are expected to finalize an umbrella and multilateral agreement on transport vehicles at the 18th SAARC summit scheduled for Kathmandu, Nepal in November.

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- [News Release](#)
- [Bloomberg Businessweek](#)

Bhutan Prime Minister Extends Gratitude to ADB for 3 Decades of Partnership 5 September 2014: Manila, Philippines

Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay visited ADB on 5 September 2014 to thank the organization for contributing to Bhutan's development throughout its 30-year partnership. He spoke to the Board of Directors, ADB staff, and the Bhutanese community as part of ADB's Eminent Speaker Forum, "Bhutan's Economic Vision: Prosperity for All," and launched the book, "20th by 2020: Bhutan Drive for Improved Governance". ADB recently approved a loan and grant package worth \$50.35 million in support of the South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Road Connectivity Project. Mr. Tobgay said, "ADB's support over these years is very much appreciated, including its work to develop eco-friendly transport".

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- [Indian Express](#)
- [SASEC Power System Expansion Project](#)

Power Trade Agreement between Nepal and India Inked 4 September 2014: Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal and India signed a landmark Power Trade Agreement (PTA) on 4 September 2014, around two weeks ahead of the deadline set by India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This PTA paves the way for bilateral trade of electricity between the two countries, and is foreseen to boost their energy security, as well as bring in added revenues to Nepal's economy. The signed PTA allows both sides to import and export electricity, without affecting Nepal's existing agreements with other countries. The signing took place in New Delhi, India, with energy authorities from India and a seven-member Nepali team led by Energy Secretary Rajendra Kishore Chettri. The agreement is now awaiting ratification by Cabinets of the two countries.

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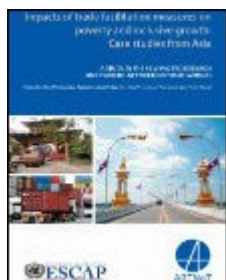
- [SAARC Energy Centre](#)

Eighth Meeting of SAARC Energy Working Group 25-26 August 2014: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Eighth Meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Energy Working Group was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 25-26 August 2014 to discuss regional energy cooperation in South Asia. The meeting requested the Asian Development Bank to provide technical assistance in the conduct of a regional transmission master plan study, including a detailed scenario on regional power transmission interconnections. These requests were endorsed by the SAARC Council of Ministers in February 2014.

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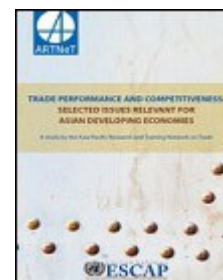
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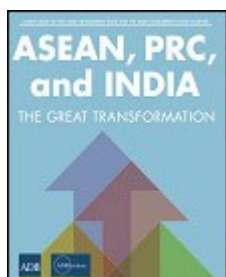
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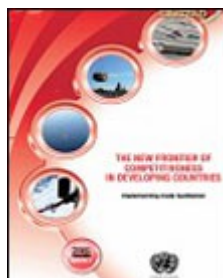
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