



**SASEC EVENTS**  
SASEC SUBREGIONAL  
WORKSHOP ON SPS-TBT  
NATIONAL AND  
REGIONAL DIAGNOSTIC  
STUDIES



**SASEC PROJECTS**  
RAILWAY TRANSIT FOR  
CARGO BOUND FOR  
BIRATNAGAR, NEPAL  
VIA JOGBANI, INDIA



**SASEC NEWS**  
INDIA, NEPAL REVIEW  
TRADE AND TRANSIT  
TREATIES



**PUBLICATIONS**  
ADB ANNUAL REPORT  
2017



# SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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## Bangladesh-India-Nepal Conduct Trial Run for Bus Service

**25 April 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Kathmandu, Nepal**

Bangladesh, India, and Nepal conducted a trial bus service run on 24-25 April 2018. Two buses left Dhaka, Bangladesh, for Kathmandu, Nepal, carrying delegates from the three countries and the Asian Development Bank. The Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement enables the bus service.

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# SASEC EVENTS



## EVENT

### REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Workshop drafts tentative agendas for knowledge- and experience-sharing on areas of the WTO TFA



## EVENT

### MALDIVES

National Single Window to improve trade procedures and ease of doing business in Maldives



## EVENT

### SRI LANKA

Final report on the comprehensive development plan for CTEC presented

## Second SASEC ADB-Korea Customs Service

**24-26 April 2018: Busan, Republic of Korea**

Korea Customs Service, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, hosted the Second SASEC Subregional Capacity Building Workshop on Implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). This Workshop reviewed the national action plans drawn up at the first subregional workshop and subsequently approved by respective SASEC Customs administrations, and drafted tentative agendas for national knowledge- and experience-sharing workshops to be held in participating SASEC countries on targeted areas of the WTO TFA.

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## SASEC Subregional Workshop on Sanitary-Phytosanitary and Technical Barriers to Trade National and Regional Diagnostic Studies

**11-13 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

National diagnostic studies on sanitary-phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) measures were prepared for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka under the SASEC trade facilitation platform in 2017. Drawing on the findings of the national studies, a regional diagnostic study is being prepared. This workshop shared findings of national diagnostic studies, solicited participating countries' views and comments on a draft regional SPS-TBT diagnostic study, and reviewed opportunities to include SPS-TBT trade facilitation projects in the SASEC Operational Plan 2016-2025.

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Top Tweets

April 2018



ADB economist Jayant Menon: Low intra-regional trade is sign of ASEAN's success, not failure

[Read](#)

Bangladesh-India-Nepal bus service trial run begins: 2 buses with 45 delegates from the 3 countries and ADB head to Kathmandu from Dhaka [Read](#)

Bangladesh, India, and Nepal decide to operate more cross-border cargo and passenger buses [Read](#)

India, Nepal agree to construct rail link from Raxaul to Kathmandu, open up inland waterways, and partner in agriculture [Read](#)



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# SASEC National Single Window Consultation Workshop

**9 April 2018: Malé, Maldives**

The Asian Development Bank, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development of the Government of Maldives, organized a consultation workshop on the SASEC National Single Window (NSW). The Workshop stressed the importance of an NSW to improve trade procedures and ease of doing business. It also emphasized the need for an NSW in Maldives to benefit traders and attract foreign investors.

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## Workshop on Colombo-Trincomalee Economic Corridor— Dissemination of the Draft Final Report

**6 April 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

The Asian Development Bank, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs of the Government of Sri Lanka, conducted a workshop on the Colombo-Trincomalee Economic Corridor (CTEC). The workshop presented the draft final report on the comprehensive development plan for CTEC. The plan lays out the framework for economic corridor development, and proposes a strategy for CTEC development.

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## CALENDAR

### June-July

#### Coastal Shipping Study Workshop

**20 June 2018: Delhi, India**

#### Seventh SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting

**30-31 July 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka**



# SASEC PROJECTS



**PROJECT**  
THE CONTAINER  
CORPORATION OF INDIA  
FERRIES NEPAL-BOUND  
FREIGHT TO JOGBANI



**PROJECT**  
ECTS TRACKS NEPAL-  
BOUND CARGO FROM  
KOLKATA PORT TO  
BIRATNAGAR  
CHECK POST



**PROJECT**  
BANGLADESH-INDIA-  
NEPAL CONDUCT TRIAL  
RUN FOR BUS SERVICE



**PROJECT**  
CONSTRUCTION  
UNDERWAY FOR THE  
IMPHAL-KANGCHUP-  
TAMENGLONG ROAD  
UNDER SASEC

## Railway Transit for Cargo Bound for Biratnagar, Nepal via Jogbani, India

**25 April 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Government of India launched the test phase for railway movement of goods entering Nepal via the Biratnagar check post. The Container Corporation of India began carrying freight bound for Jogbani in Bihar, the nearest rail station to Biratnagar, on 25 April 2018. This development is in follow-up to implementation of the electronic cargo tracking system.

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## India Highway Authority Signs Agreement for International Highway Project

**12 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

The National Highways Authority of India signed an agreement to widen the Yagyi-Kalewa section of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. Construction is also underway for the Imphal-Kangchup-Tamenglong road under the SASEC Road Connectivity Investment Program. These projects will improve the flow of vehicular traffic and enhance trade, health services, and tourism in India, Myanmar, and Thailand.

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## NEWS

**GOVERNMENTS OF INDIA AND NEPAL DISCUSS BILATERAL TRADE, TRANSIT, AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS**



## NEWS

**INDIA PILOTS CONTAINER TRAIN TO BANGLADESH**



## NEWS

**INDIA PRIME MINISTER MODI AND NEPAL PRIME MINISTER OLI ISSUE JOINT STATEMENTS**



## NEWS

**BANGLADESH TO SET UP A NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW FOR TRADE FACILITATION**

## India, Nepal Review Trade and Transit Treaties

**30 April 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Governments of India and Nepal held an India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Committee Meeting on Trade, Transit, and Cooperation to Control Unauthorized Trade, led by Commerce Secretaries of the two Governments. They discussed bilateral trade, transit, and economic relations, and agreed to conclude measures to further improve bilateral trade and investment ties.

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## Bangladesh to Sign Free Trade Agreement with Thailand

**24 April 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Government of Bangladesh will sign a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Government of Thailand, according to Commerce Minister of the Government of Bangladesh Tofail Ahmed. The FTA promises to boost trade between the two countries, which stands around \$2 billion.

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## Sri Lanka Finalizes National Export Strategy, Appoints Advisory Committees

**22 April 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

The National Export Strategy of the Government of Sri Lanka has been finalized by the Export Development Board and is ready for submission to the Cabinet. The strategy aims to boost the performance of the country's focus sectors and improve the business environment by developing trade support functions in logistics, trade information and promotion, and national quality infrastructure.

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## **Bangladesh to Set Up a National Single Window for Trade Facilitation**

**20 April 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Bangladesh National Board of Revenue (NBR) will act as lead agency for the planned National Single Window for trade facilitation in Bangladesh, shared NBR Chairman Md. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan. This initiative is another Government undertaking in line with the implementation of the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

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## **Bangladesh Prime Minister: Strive for Connectivity, Invest in Youth and Women**

**19 April 2018: London, United Kingdom**

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said Asian countries should strive for connectivity and invest in youth and women to address inequality that helps stabilize the region. She was addressing Asian leaders at the Commonwealth Business Forum in London.

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## **Bilateral Talk between Nepal Minister of Foreign Affairs and People's Republic of China State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs**

**18 April 2018: Beijing, People's Republic of China**

Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal, and Mr. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China (PRC), held official bilateral talks during Mr. Gyawali's official visit to PRC. The Meeting discussed speedy implementation of all agreements and understandings, and establishment of a coordination and implementation mechanism to assist in the effective implementation of PRC-supported projects in Nepal.

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## **Nepal Secures More Oil Tankers from India**

**18 April 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Around 375 oil tankers bringing in fuel to Nepal from Indian Oil Corporation depots in Gonda in Uttar Pradesh, and Banthara, to the Nepalgunj and Bhairawa border points will be required to install a security locking system to eliminate pilferage in transit, shared Nepal Oil Corporation spokesperson Mr. Birendra Kumar Goit.

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## Commentary: Let's Set Sail

**18 April 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

This commentary by Ms. Dikshya Singh, Research Officer at South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment, puts forward that the decision to connect India and Nepal via inland waterways is a "landmark decision" that is worth pursuing. While modalities have yet to be set by the two Governments, the option to connect Nepal to India's waterways promises to further boost Nepal's trade facilitation and make India's inland waterways infrastructure project more financially viable.

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## Bangladesh Cabinet Approves Proposals to Import More Energy from India, Build Railway

**12 April 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Government of Bangladesh's Cabinet Committee on Purchase approved a proposal to import 500 megawatts of electricity from India from June 2018 to May 2033 to help meet the country's energy demand. The Committee also cleared a proposal appointing Texmaco Rail and Engineering from India to build the dual gauge rail line from Akhaura to Agartala.

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## India and Nepal to be Linked by Railway

**7 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

India and Nepal are set to be linked by rail with the agreement by the Governments of both countries to connect Raxaul, a border city in India, to Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city. Preparatory survey work will be conducted by the Government of India, in consultation with the Government of Nepal, for a new electrified rail line within one year.

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## Inland Waterway Connectivity to be developed between India and Nepal

**7 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

India and Nepal are set to develop the inland waterway linkage between their countries to promote efficient and more cost effective movement of goods. India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli issued a joint statement on forging this new route—which will also open additional sea access to landlocked Nepal—between the two countries on 7 April 2018, during Prime Minister Oli's state visit to India.

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# India Prime Minister Modi and Nepal Prime Minister Oli Inaugurate ICP, Issue Joint Statements

**7 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli emphasized the high importance Nepal places upon its relationship with India, and Nepal's desire to further strengthen this bilateral partnership, in a meeting with India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Prime Minister Oli visited India on 6-8 April 2018, upon the invitation of India's Prime Minister. The two Prime Ministers jointly inaugurated the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Birgunj, Nepal, and issued three joint statements of cooperation.

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## India Pilots Container Train to Bangladesh

**4 April 2018: New Delhi, India**

India led a test run of the first container freight train from Kolkata, India, to Dhaka, Bangladesh on 3-4 April 2018. The rail service will be the first container train service between the two countries. It will reduce cost and transport time, thereby improving trade between India and Bangladesh.

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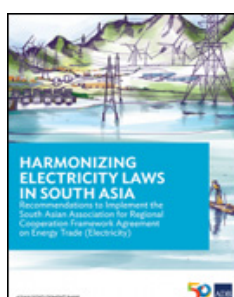
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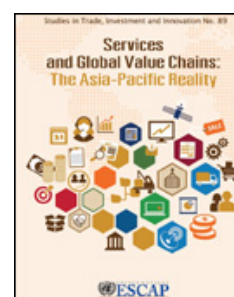
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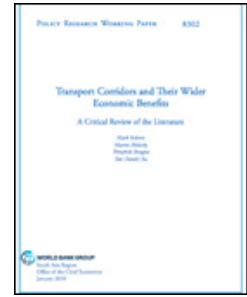




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