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**HINTERLAND**  
**CONNECTIVITY STUDY**



**SASEC PROJECTS**  
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**PORT MASTER PLAN**  
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# SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

**ISSUE #91 AUGUST 2021**

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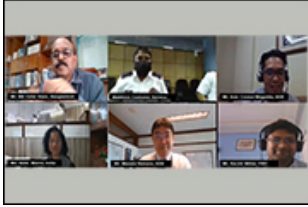


## **SASEC Transmission Line and Substation Inaugurated by Nepal Prime Minister Oli**

**6 July 2021: Kathmandu, Nepal**

A 132-kilovolt (kV) Samundratar-Trishuli transmission line and a 132/33-kV Samundratar substation under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program were inaugurated by Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. The 25.74-kilometer transmission line will be able to transmit up to 270 megawatts of electricity. The transmission line and substation were constructed with funding totaling NPR1.55 billion (approximately \$12.9 million) from the Government of Nepal, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the European Investment Bank. [Read More](#)

# SASEC EVENTS



## EVENT WORKSHOP ON PORT LOGISTICS AND HINTERLAND CONNECTIVITY STUDY

- **Advancing Maritime Cooperation in SASEC: Workshop Port Logistics and Hinterland Connectivity Study**

## Advancing Maritime Cooperation in SASEC: Workshop on Port Logistics and Hinterland Connectivity Study

15 July 2021: Online

A workshop was held virtually to discuss the Study on Port Logistics and Hinterland Connectivity. It presented the findings for addressing inefficiencies identified in the study, and sought stakeholders' feedback. The virtual workshop underscored recommended infrastructure and technological interventions to enhance the efficiency of port logistics and connectivity in the region. The event was attended by 52 participants, including representatives from port authorities, customs, planning, shipping and transport authorities, and other related ministries in Bangladesh, India, and Maldives. This workshop is part of ADB's efforts to advance cooperation and integration in the SASEC maritime sector and promote globally competitive and environmentally sustainable ports in the SASEC subregion.

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# SASEC PROJECTS



## PROJECT SRI LANKA: NATIONAL PORT MASTER PLAN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RATED SUCCESSFUL

- **Benapole, Burimari Ports See Change with SASEC Project Completion**
- **Sri Lanka: National Port Master Plan Technical Assistance Rated Successful**
- **Commentary: Coping with the Pandemic**
- **Contractor Set to Build SASEC Elenga–Rangpur Highway in Bangladesh**

## Benapole, Burimari Ports See Change with SASEC Project Completion

**26 July 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Implementation of the [SASEC Road Connectivity Project](#) for the improvement of Benapole and Burimari Land Port project in Bangladesh has played a key role in improving port activities. Export and import activities at the ports were much more hectic before the completion of the project. The ports have also created new jobs, including those for freight workers and skilled laborers.

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## Sri Lanka: National Port Master Plan Technical Assistance Rated Successful

**23 July 2021: Manila, Philippines**

ADB's Independent Evaluation rated the [Sri Lanka: National Port Master Plan](#) technical assistance "successful" in their overall assessment. This policy and advisory technical assistance identified priority projects that would contribute to scaling up future ADB interventions.

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## Commentary: Coping with the Pandemic

**21 July 2021: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Trade facilitation was already underway in the SASEC countries when the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted transport and core services that support trade. Effective and modern trade facilitation measures will be important to the speedy economic recovery of SASEC countries. This blog post appears on [The Himalayan](#).

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## Contractor Set to Build SASEC Elenga–Rangpur Highway in Bangladesh

**12 July 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Roads and Highways Department of Bangladesh has awarded the project to widen the highway linking the town of Elenga and the city of Rangpur in northeast Dhaka in Bangladesh.

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## NEWS

INDIA CBIC, MALDIVES  
CUSTOMS SERVICE INK DATA  
SHARING DEAL

- **Bhutan's Customs Amendment Act 2021 Takes Effect**
- **India Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Maldives Customs Service Ink Data Sharing Deal**
- **India, Nepal Revise Railway Service Agreement**
- **Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project Starts Power Generation**

## Bhutan's Customs Amendment Act 2021 Takes Effect

**23 July 2021: Thimphu, Bhutan**

Bhutan's Customs Amendment Act 2021 has been put into effect on 23 July 2021. The Ministry of Finance issued a notification that it will refund the customs duty levied in excess of the new rates from the day the bill was presented in Parliament on 31 May 2021 in compliance with the Public Finance Act.

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## India Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Maldives Customs Service Ink Data Sharing Deal

**22 July 2021: New Delhi, India, and Malé, Maldives**

India's Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs signed a data sharing agreement with the Maldives Customs Service that will enable automatic exchange of customs data between the two countries in real time. This deal with Maldives allows the exchange of information on consignments before their arrival. It aims to reduce the time for customs clearance and discourage misdeclaration of trade and/or smuggling.

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## India to Export Rice to Bangladesh through Essar Shipping

**20 July 2021: New Delhi, India**

India will export 150,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh as agreed in the recent bilateral trade agreement signed by Bangladesh and India. Essar Shipping has been contracted to ship the rice.

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## **Joint Efforts Opening New Avenues of Cooperation in Central, South Asian Countries**

**16 July 2021: Tashkent, Uzbekistan**

Combined efforts by countries to establish good connectivity has opened new avenues of cooperation in Central Asia and South Asia, according to Mr. AK Abdul Momen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh. Mr. Momen was speaking at the plenary session of the conference "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity—Challenges and Opportunities."

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## **Interim Arrangement Enables Import of Vegetables from Bhutan to India**

**14 July 2021: Thimphu, Bhutan, and New Delhi, India**

The Government of India has implemented an interim arrangement to allow the import of seven types of vegetables—chilli, beans, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, peas, and soybean—from Bhutan that were not included in the Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Order, 2003, and facing the hurdle of a required customs clearance. According to the notification issued by the Indian Embassy in Thimphu, the crops could be imported through the plant quarantine station in Jaigaon, India. A plant protection officer will be posted by the Government of India in Jaigaon to facilitate the plant quarantine works.

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## **India, Nepal Revise Railway Service Agreement**

**9 July 2021: New Delhi, India, and Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Note Verbales and Letter of Exchange for the revision of the Railway Service Agreement between India and Nepal was signed and took effect on 9 July 2021. This move is set to boost rail transport between the two neighboring countries. The revision (i) authorizes all cargo train operators, including public and private container train operators, automobile freight train operators, special freight train operators, and/or any other operator authorized by the Indian Railways, to utilize the Indian railway network to carry Nepal-bound freight; (ii) allows different categories of wagons to carry cargo to and from Nepal; and (iii) authorizes wagons owned by the Nepal Railway Company to carry Nepal-bound freight over the Indian Railways network as per standards and procedures of Indian Railways.

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## **Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project Starts Power Generation**

**5 July 2021: Kathmandu, Nepal**

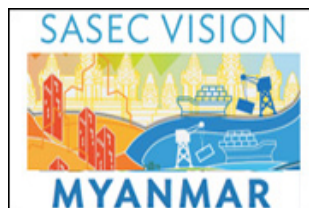
Nepal's largest hydropower project, the 456-megawatt Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project, began operating one of its six 76-megawatt units. The project is set to turn Nepal into a power surplus country during the wet season once it starts generating power from all its six units to the national grid. As a power surplus country, it will be capable of exporting electricity.

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## RELATED PUBLICATIONS



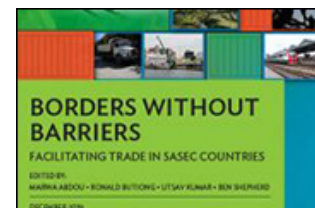
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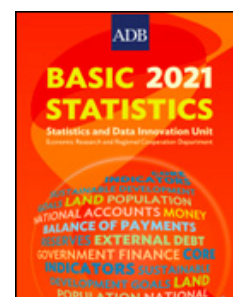
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### Top Tweets for July 2021

Nepal starts operating the 456 MW Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project [Read more](#)

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