



SASEC EVENTS
INCEPTION MEETING:
SASEC CUSTOMS
SUBGROUP
SUBREGIONAL PROJ 3



SASEC PROJECTS
NEPAL SWITCHES ON ITS
LARGEST WIND-SOLAR
HYBRID POWER SYSTEM



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INDIA FAST-TRACKS
INTERNATIONAL
HIGHWAYS IN
SOUTH ASIA



PUBLICATIONS
TRADE AND TRANSPORT
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MECHANISM IN NEPAL



SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #51 DECEMBER 2017

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SASEC Investment Grows to \$10.74 billion

31 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

The SASEC Program ended 2017 on a high note, having launched the [SASEC Vision](#), welcomed Myanmar as a full member of SASEC, invested almost \$1 billion in three new projects during the year, and seen total program investment rise to \$10.74 billion for 49 loan/grant projects. SASEC projects approved in 2017 include the [Bangladesh: SASEC Dhaka-Northwest Corridor Road Project, Phase 2 - Tranche 1](#); [Nepal: SASEC Customs Reform and Modernization for Trade Facilitation](#); and [Nepal: Regional Urban Development Project](#).

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SASEC EVENTS



EVENT INDIA

Inception Meeting for
SASEC Customs Subgroup
Subregional Project 3



EVENT SRI LANKA

Multi-stakeholder
Workshop for Sri Lanka as
LPG Transshipment Hub



EVENT BANGLADESH

Southwest Bangladesh
Economic Corridor CDP –
Final Report Dissemination
Seminar

Bangladesh: Training for Trainers on Systems-based Post-clearance Audit

18-20 December 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Bangladesh National Board of Revenue held a Systems-based Post-clearance Audit (PCA) Training of Trainers, explaining the international agreements that endorse PCA, highlighting the role of senior managers in a PCA program, and including practical sessions on interviewing, accounting, and auditing for systems-based PCA.

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Inception Meeting for SASEC Customs Subgroup Subregional Project 3

15 December 2017: Siliguri, India

This Inception Meeting on the SASEC Customs Subgroup Subregional Project 3 – "to institutionalize border meetings among Customs authorities at major border crossing points" – agreed to conduct a trial project and convene a subregional meeting for participating Customs administrations every six months and identified a Contact Point at each of the Land Customs Stations.

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Multi-stakeholder Workshop for Sri Lanka as LPG Transshipment Hub

14-15 December 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

This Workshop discussed the potential of developing Sri Lanka as a Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) Transshipment Hub, and small-scale liquefied natural gas (LNG) value chain in the South Asia subregion. Participants agreed to undertake studies on (i) regulatory reforms in Sri Lanka to develop and expand an LPG hub, and (ii) meeting LNG demand in the subregion.

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Top Tweets

December 2017



ADB, UNESCAP SASEC Knowledge Event on Transport Facilitation raises awareness on international best practice in transport facilitation & logistics development [Read](#)

ADB-supported Nepal: Regional Urban Development Project to improve resilience and delivery of urban services and facilities in 8 municipalities in Nepal's southern Terai region [Read](#)

ADB project in Nepal to construct & rehabilitate storm-water drains, roads, footpaths, sanitary landfills, & resource recovery centers & sewers to help reduce flooding in the Terai region [Read](#)

World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018 [Read](#)



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Southwest Bangladesh Economic Corridor Comprehensive Development Plan – Final Report Dissemination Seminar

11 December 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank organized a seminar to present findings of the Comprehensive Development Plan for the envisaged Southwest Bangladesh Economic Corridor (SWBEC). Key findings highlight that developing the SWBEC will enable the region's industrial output to reach \$148 billion by 2050, and employment in the southwest region will increase to 35 million within the same period, with 25 million new jobs to be generated from corridor-induced activities.

[Read More](#)

SASEC SPS-TBT Diagnostic Study for India: National Validation Meeting

11 December 2017: New Delhi, India

This Meeting shared the draft final findings and recommendations of the sanitary-phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) national diagnostic study for India. Outcomes of the validation meeting in India included presentation of patterns of India's trade with other SASEC countries and identification of products with potential for export from India to other SASEC countries, noting SPS and TBT measures applied to the products, and which products fall under the SAFTA Sensitive List; an overview of the legislative environment, of institutional arrangements and capacities, and of infrastructure capacities and constraints, for both SPS and TBT, noting current gaps compared with international best practice; and presentation of India's ongoing efforts and initiatives to address SPS-TBT-related issues and upgrade existing procedures.

[Read More](#)

SASEC SPS-TBT Diagnostic Study for Maldives: National Validation Meeting

7 December 2017: Male, Maldives

This Meeting shared the draft final findings and recommendations of the sanitary-phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT) national diagnostic study for Maldives. Outcomes of the meeting included presentation of patterns of Maldives' import and export trade with other SASEC countries, identification of potential export and import products for India and Sri Lanka, noting their respective SPS-TBT measures, as well as discussion on wider potential export diversification; an overview of the legislative environment, of institutional arrangements and capacities, and of infrastructure capacities and constraints, for both SPS and TBT in Maldives; and identification of various and specific standards, regulations, and procedural obstacles that impede trade of the identified potential export commodities from Maldives with India and Sri Lanka, and clarification whether these obstacles are SPS-TBT-related, or due to other non-tariff measures and barriers.

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CALENDAR

January-February

Meeting to Implement the BBIN MVA

10-11 January 2018: Bengaluru, India

Bhutan: Training on Intelligence, Information Gathering, and Investigation

5-9 February 2018: Phuentsholing, Bhutan

India: Workshop on the Electronic Cargo Tracking System

6 February 2018: Kolkata, India

Nepal: Workshop on the Electronic Cargo Tracking System

TBD: Kathmandu, Nepal

SASEC PROJECTS



PROJECT
BHUTAN CUSTOMS
RULES AND
REGULATIONS 2017
LAUNCHED



PROJECT
ADB-FUNDED PROJECT
IS ENHANCING NEPAL'S
POWER DISTRIBUTION



PROJECT
NEPAL SWITCHES ON ITS
LARGEST WIND-SOLAR
HYBRID POWER SYSTEM



PROJECT
SASEC PROJECT HELPS
SUPPLY POWER TO 83
RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN
NEPAL

Bhutan Launches Customs Rules and Regulations 2017

27 December 2017: Thimphu, Bhutan

Bhutan's Ministry of Finance launched the Customs Rules and Regulations (CRR) of Bhutan 2017, defining provisions including classification of goods, Customs valuation, temporary admission, clearance procedures, and authorized compliant traders. SASEC assisted Bhutan's Department of Revenue and Customs in developing the Customs Act and the CRR of Bhutan 2017, under a national technical assistance project, financed by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction and administered by the Asian Development Bank.

[Read More](#)

SASEC Project to Increase Capacity of Nepal Transmission Lines

18 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

An ADB-funded project is upgrading power lines and substations in 49 locations in Nepal to enhance the country's electricity distribution system. The \$191 million SASEC Power System Expansion Project aims to increase the load-bearing capacity of transmission lines in Nepal.

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Nepal Switches on its Largest Wind-Solar Hybrid Power System

12 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

Nepal switched on its largest wind-solar hybrid power system in Hariharpurgadi village, Sindhuli district. The subproject, funded by an ADB grant under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Power System Expansion Project, produces 110 kWh of electrical energy per day, to help meet Hariharpurgadi's electricity demand of 87 kWh per day.

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SASEC NEWS



NEWS

**INDIA TO CONSTRUCT
2,000 KMS OF ROADS
LINKED TO TRADE
POINTS IN SOUTH ASIA**



NEWS

**ADB TO LEND
BANGLADESH \$6
BILLION DURING 2018-
2020**



NEWS

**SOUTH ASIA STILL
FORECAST TO REMAIN
THE FASTEST GROWING
SUBREGION**



NEWS

**INDIA MOVES TO BOOST
SEA, AIR, AND ROAD
CONNECTIVITY WITH
THE ASEAN**

Greetings from SASEC

31 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

The SASEC Secretariat wishes peace, prosperity, and joy to all this 2018.

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Speech: BIMSTEC at 20—Priorities for the Future

29 December 2017: Colombo, Sri Lanka

In her keynote address at the dialogue on BiMSTEC at 20—Priorities for the Future, Ms. Grace Asirwatham, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka, reflects on the prospects for connectivity and prosperity among BIMSTEC member countries and explores the organization's priorities, including trade, transport, energy, and climate change.

[Read More](#)

Power Purchase Agreement between India and Nepal Extended

27 December 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

The power purchase agreement between the Nepal Electricity Authority and the NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam of India was extended by three months, from 1 January to end of March 2018. This allows Nepal to import up to 160 megawatts of electricity through the Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur cross-border transmission.

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Myanmar Launches Authorized Economic Operators Program

23 December 2017: Yangon, Myanmar

Myanmar Customs Department met with import and export companies, freight forwarders, and government departments to raise public awareness for its Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program, initiated in line with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Trade in Goods Agreement, the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement, and World Customs Organization international standards.

[Read More](#)

River Dredging Planned for Development of Year-round Bangladesh-India Waterway Navigation

18 December 2017: New Delhi, India

India's Ministry of Shipping reported planned dredging works in the Zakiganj-Ashuganj section of the Kushiya river and in the Sirajganj-Daikhowa section of the Jamuna river to help develop year-round navigation. Dredging will be executed by the two countries, subsequent to the decision taken in the meeting of the Shipping Secretaries in December 2016.

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India Fast-tracks International Highways in South Asia

18 December 2017: New Delhi, India

India's Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) will prioritize plans to construct 2,000 kilometers of roads linking India's major highway corridors to international trade points in South Asia. MoRTH Minister Nitin Gadkari highlights that this plan, worth Rs 25,000 crore, will facilitate export/import trade with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Nepal. The Ministry also took steps to operationalize the BBIN MVA.

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ADB to Lend Bangladesh \$6 Billion in Three Years

14 December 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will lend Bangladesh \$6 billion during 2018-2020, in support of 43 projects to generate inclusive growth and help the country achieve its Sustainable Development Goals. ADB affirmed its long-term development partnership with Bangladesh on 12 December 2017 as it marked 50 years of operations.

[Read More](#)

Asian Development Outlook Cites South Asia as Fastest Growing Subregion

13 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

Trade is lifting developing Asia's growth, according to the Asian Development Bank Outlook (ADO) Supplement: A Firmer Growth Outlook for Asia. Despite downward revisions from previous projections, South Asia is still forecast to remain the fastest growing subregion in Asia and the Pacific.

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Trade Facilitation Must Remain a WTO Priority

13 December 2017: Buenos Aires, Argentina

Trade facilitation must remain a priority for the WTO and its members, said WTO Deputy Director-General Yi Xiaozhun at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference, adding that the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement will especially benefit least developed countries. WTO members vowed to continue negotiations in all areas, and issued joint ministerial statements on investment facilitation, small and medium size enterprises, and e-commerce.

[Read More](#)

India Proposes \$1 Billion LoC to Boost Connectivity with ASEAN

11 December 2017: New Delhi, India

India has proposed a \$1 billion line of credit (LOC) to strengthen sea, air, and road connectivity with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), according to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, India. India and Myanmar are working together to upgrade infrastructure in the border areas, including the India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway, and the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project.

[Read More](#)

ADB Blog: Taking Power Trading to the Next Level in South Asia

7 December 2017: Manila, Philippines

Expanding power trading among SASEC countries can pave the way to developing a single interconnected power market. This would be a clear win for the subregion, where smaller countries such as Nepal and Sri Lanka could lower their investment costs, while Bangladesh and India would have access to cleaner hydropower from Bhutan and Nepal. Mr. Priyantha Wijayatunga, Director (Energy Division), South Asia Regional Department, ADB, asks what it takes to take the energy trade to the next level.

[Read More](#)

Second India-Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Motor Rally Held

3 December 2017: Bangkok, Thailand

The second India-Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Motor Rally successfully completed a journey from India to Thailand. The rally was flagged off from Guwahati, India, and proceeded toward Myanmar, passing through Kalay, Bagan, Mandalay, Yangon, and Mawlamyine. The rally then crossed the border to Mae Sot, Thailand, and reached Bangkok via Sukhothai.

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BIMSTEC Working Group Discusses Coastal Shipping to Strengthen Trade

1 December 2017: New Delhi, India

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) member countries met to discuss the promotion of coastal shipping in the BIMSTEC region. The working group representing Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Nepal held its first meeting to discuss an agreement on coastal shipping, drafted by the Ministry of Shipping, Government of India.

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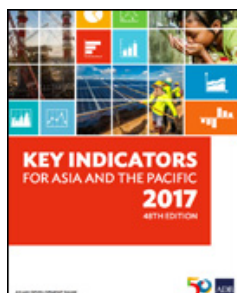
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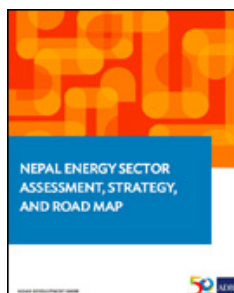
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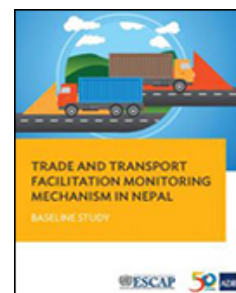
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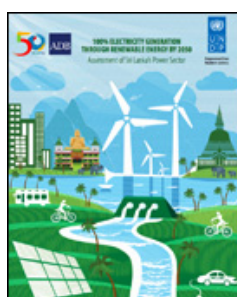
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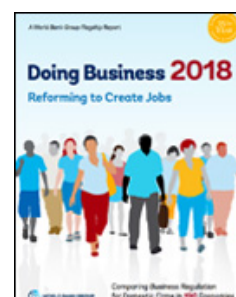
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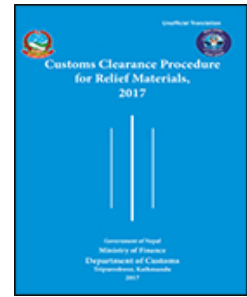
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