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THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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SASEC-financed Mini Dry Port in Phuentsholing Ready for Use

14 February 2019: Phuentsholing, Bhutan

The mini-dry port in Phuentsholing, Bhutan, built with loan/grant financing support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Road Connectivity Project, is ready for use. Constructed on 5.4 acres of land, the port will help promote regional connectivity with neighboring countries.

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- **Bangladesh: National Workshop on Capacity Building for Implementation of the WTO TFA**
- **Workshop on Maritime Cooperation in SASEC**

Bangladesh: National Workshop on Capacity Building for Implementation of the WTO TFA

10-11 February 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) of the Government of Bangladesh, in collaboration with ADB and the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics of the Government of India, held a Workshop to review activities undertaken by NBR for the implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). It was attended by officials of the Government of Bangladesh and private sector stakeholders.

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Workshop on Maritime Cooperation in SASEC

7 February 2019: Bangkok, Thailand

ADB held a Consultation Workshop on Maritime Cooperation for SASEC member countries. The workshop discussed the current maritime environment in the SASEC subregion, identified issues affecting the efficient development of the maritime sector in the SASEC subregion, discussed measures to address these issues, and agreed on priority cooperation initiatives in the maritime sector for the subregion.

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March

SASEC Nodal Officials and Working Group Meetings
18 March 2019: Seoul, Republic of Korea

SASEC PROJECTS



- **ECTS Enhances Nepal-bound Rail Transshipment from India's Kolkata and Haldia Ports**
- **SASEC-financed Mini Dry Port in Phuentsholing Ready for Use**

ECTS Enhances Nepal-bound Rail Transshipment from India's Kolkata and Haldia Ports

15 February 2019: Kolkata, India

Cargo containers using the Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) bound for Nepal by rail was flagged off from the Kolkata Port on 15 February 2019. Mr. Vinit Kumar, Kolkata Port Trust Chairman, and Mr. Manish Chandra, Commissioner of Customs, Kolkata, led the ceremony. A pilot program using the ECTS modality is being implemented on rail routes originating from Kolkata and Haldia ports, to Birgunj via the Raxaul land customs station.

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SASEC NEWS



- **7th Bhutan-Bangladesh Commerce Secretary-level Meeting Explores Promotion of Trade and Commerce**
- **Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Minister Visits India**
- **Maldives-Sri Lanka Similarities Make it Easier to Do Business**

Government of India to Support Construction of Arun-3 Hydropower Project Transmission Line

28 February 2019: New Delhi, India

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs of the Government of India, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the proposed investment for the transmission line of the Arun-3 Hydropower Project in Nepal worth Rs 1236.13 crore (around \$177.48 million).

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7th Bhutan-Bangladesh Commerce Secretary-level Meeting Explores Promotion of Trade and Commerce

12 February 2019: Thimphu, Bhutan

Mr. Md. Mofizul Islam, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce of the Government of Bangladesh, and Mr. Yeshi Wangdi, Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Government of Bhutan, headed the Bangladeshi and Bhutanese government officials at the 7th Bhutan-Bangladesh commerce secretary-level meeting held in Thimphu, Bhutan. The meeting exchanged ideas and explored new areas of cooperation for the promotion of trade and commerce.

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Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Minister Visits India

8 February 2019: New Delhi, India

Mr. Abdul Momen, Foreign Affairs Minister of the Government of Bangladesh, undertook a four-day visit to India. He co-chaired the 5th India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Committee Meeting with Ms. Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of the Government of India. They discussed progress in trade and connectivity, and water, power, and energy sectors. During his trip, Mr. Momen also called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Pranab Mukherjee.

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Maldives-Sri Lanka Similarities Make it Easier to Do Business

4 February 2019: Malé, Maldives

Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih said Sri Lanka's similarities with Maldives make it easier for the two countries to do business with each other. He noted how trade between Maldives and Sri Lanka has prospered in the last two decades.

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Trincomalee Port to be Developed into Export Hub

29 January 2019: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Development of Trincomalee harbor into a highly competitive port is a key pillar of the Government of Sri Lanka's export strategy. Plans to boost its facilities for 24/7 operation and increase the volume of cargo it handles are underway. Galle harbor in Sri Lanka's southwestern coast will also be upgraded to handle night navigation.

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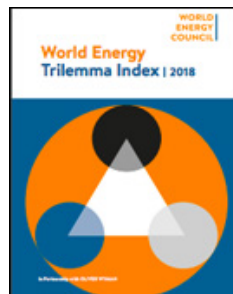
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World Energy Trilemma Index 2018



Realizing the Potential of Bangladesh through Economic Corridor Development



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Top Tweets for February 2019

Improved inter-ministerial cooperation in pursuance of various trade facilitation measures, including single window and time release studies, have made significant and positive changes in perception of trade and international analysts. -Mr. Pranab K. Das, Chairman, CBIC, Government of India [Read more](#)

Nepalese traders express satisfaction with the Electronic Cargo Tracking System [Read more](#)

Commentary: Smart Borders to Boost Trade in South Asia [Read more](#)

The Electronic Cargo Tracking System would benefit Nepalese traders by ensuring safe and secure transit, simplifying border formalities, reducing transit time and transaction cost, and improving shipment visibility [Read more](#)

Nepal wants more hybrid wind-solar [Read more](#)

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