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SERVICE IMPLEMENTED
TFA INITIATIVES



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ELEVATED HIGHWAY
PROJECT SIGNED



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INDIA AND NEPAL
AGREE TO SET UP
ENERGY BANK



PUBLICATIONS
INVESTMENT CLIMATE
IMPROVEMENT IN
EAST COAST ECONOMIC
CORRIDOR OF INDIA

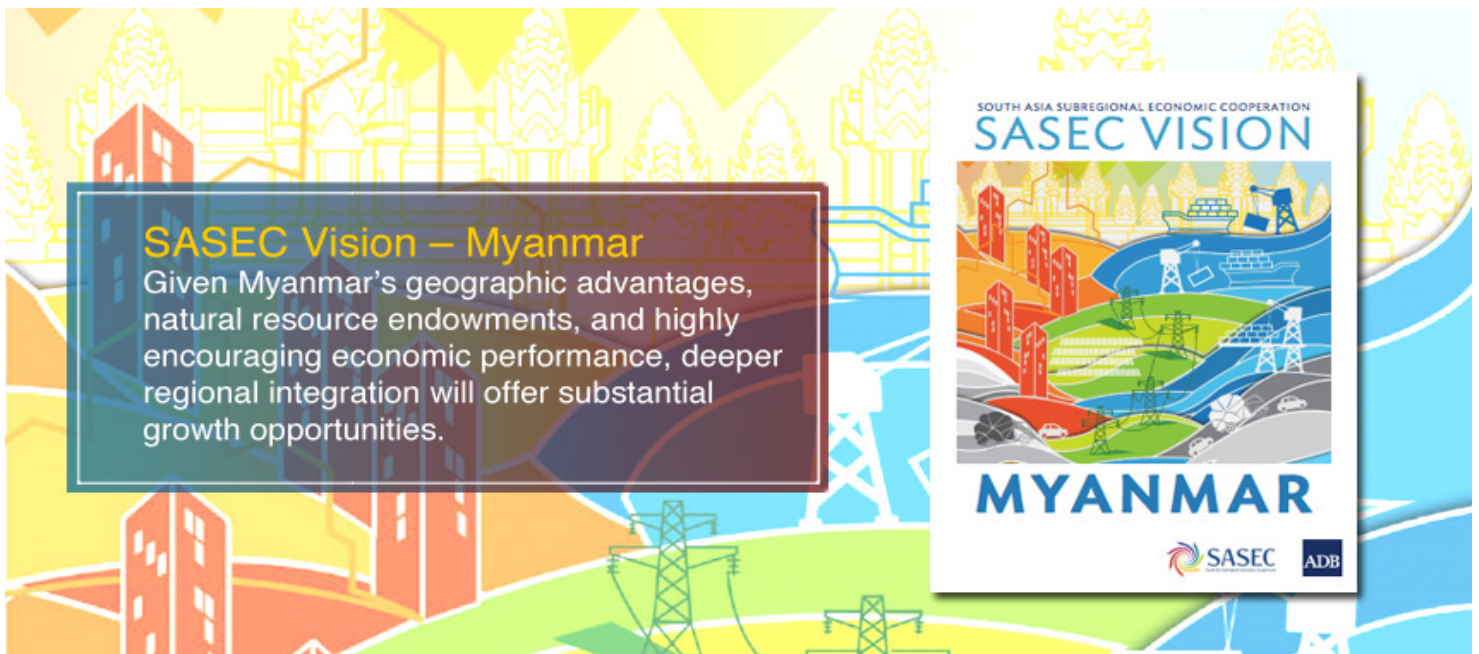


SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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SASEC Vision – Myanmar

10 January 2019: Manila, Philippines

Myanmar serves as a land bridge between South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. This document identifies regional and subregional opportunities for Myanmar to harness natural and human resources, industrial potential, and infrastructure connectivity as part of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program. SASEC Vision – Myanmar serves to supplement the 2017 SASEC Vision document, which articulates shared aspirations of the SASEC countries and sets the path to achieve these through regional collaboration.

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SASEC EVENTS



EVENT

BANGLADESH

Forum discussed implementing international good practices in Customs



EVENT

THAILAND

Workshop to discuss findings of the preliminary study on SASEC Maritime Cooperation



EVENT

BANGLADESH

Workshop to identify areas in the national action plan on trade facilitation that requires assistance

National Workshop on Capacity Building for Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

29-31 January 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The National Board of Revenue, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Korea Customs Service (KCS), held a workshop for the implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The Workshop highlighted how KCS implemented the various TFA initiatives; and presented and discussed the current status of Bangladesh's existing customs practices, and sought recommendation from workshop participants, and from KCS experts, to help implement international good practices in Bangladesh. In his opening remarks, Mr. Manmohan Parkash, Country Director, ADB, highlighted the importance of advanced technologies, capacity building, and regulatory reforms in improving trade.

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Top Tweets
January 2019



Indo-Nepal Railway Project likely to be completed by February [Read](#)

Gov't of India agrees to provide Nepal with additional 50-100 megawatts of electricity [Read](#)

India's waterway projects to boost connectivity of its northeastern region, incl. linkages to Bangladesh and Nepal [Read](#)

Renewing the Bangladesh-India-Nepal Trilateral Transit Agreement to pave way for BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement success [Read](#)

BIMSTEC sets 2019 deadline to make free trade agreement operational [Read](#)



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CALENDAR

February–March

Workshop on Maritime Cooperation in SASEC

7 February 2019: Bangkok, Thailand

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

10-11 February 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

SASEC Nodal Officials and Working Group Meetings

18-19 March 2019: Seoul, Republic of Korea

SASEC PROJECTS



PROJECT
NEW TRANSSHIPMENT
PROCEDURE FOR NEPAL-
BOUND CARGO
TRANSITING VIA
KOLKATA/HALDIA



PROJECT
SASEC PORT ACCESS
ELEVATED HIGHWAY
PROJECT SIGNED



PROJECT
NEPALESE TRADERS
EXPRESS SATISFACTION
WITH THE ELECTRONIC
CARGO TRACKING
SYSTEM



PROJECT
PROMOTING SASEC AS A
TOURIST DESTINATION
—A FLAGSHIP
INITIATIVE IN THE
SASEC VISION

ECTS to be Implemented on Nepal-bound Cargo Transiting via Kolkata and Haldia

28 January 2019: Kolkata, India

The Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) will be rolled out on pilot basis to facilitate the movement of Nepal-bound cargo transiting via Kolkata/Haldia. The new transshipment procedure will be implemented beginning 15 February 2019, announced the Office of the Commissioner of Customs (Port) of the Government of India in a circular. This move is in response to the Government of Nepal's request to the Government of India for privileges to move cargo via Kolkata/Haldia without having to seek permission and file transit declaration.

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Bangladesh Signs Deal for Elenga–Hatikumrul–Rangpur Highway under SASEC Program

25 January 2019: Manila, Philippines

The Government of Bangladesh has signed an agreement to upgrade 190 kilometers of the Elenga–Hatikumrul–Rangpur section of the Dhaka-Northwest Corridor, under the SASEC program.

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SASEC Elevated Port Highway in Sri Lanka Gets ADB Support

17 January 2019: Manila, Philippines

Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena and Mr. Takehiko Nakao, President, ADB, signed the \$300-million loan to construct about 5.3 kilometers of an elevated toll highway linking Colombo's international port and the country's expressway network under the [SASEC Port Access Elevated Highway Project](#).

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Promoting SASEC as a Tourist Destination

10 January 2019: Kathmandu, Nepal

The promotion of SASEC as a tourist destination is a flagship initiative identified in the SASEC Vision document. In line with this, ADB initiated a study that aims to design a framework for SASEC cooperation in tourism to fully harness this sector's immense potential and to lay down the groundwork for such cooperation.

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Nepal Importers Express Satisfaction with ECTS

12 December 2018: Visakhapatnam, India

Mr. Bharat Kumar Regmi, Nepal Ambassador to India, communicated the satisfaction of Nepalese importers with the ECTS to the Customs House in Visakhapatnam. He stated that Nepal trade from the port of Visakhapatnam would increase in the future as a result.

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BBIN Customs' Officials Hold First Border Coordination Meeting

4 December 2018: Burimari, Bangladesh

Customs officials of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal held their first border coordination meeting, organized by ADB, under the SASEC program. The Meeting discussed enhancing communications among the subregions' Customs, promoting business prospects, and increasing regional trade.

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NEWS
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MINISTER LOTAY
TSHERING UNDERTOOK
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NEWS
**SRI LANKA PROMOTES
ECONOMIC RELATIONS
WITH NEPAL**



NEWS
**COMMENTARY:
SMART BORDERS TO
BOOST TRADE IN
SOUTH ASIA**

Private Sector Urged to Tap into Bangladesh-Nepal's Full Trade Potential

27 January 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted a discussion on exploring Bangladesh-Nepal trade potential, with Bangladeshi importers and exporters, industrialists and businesspersons, and an 11-member Nepalese business delegation. The meeting discussed prospects and barriers in bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Nepal. Mr. Dhan Bahadur Oli, acting Nepalese ambassador to Bangladesh, urged business leaders of Bangladesh and Nepal to take advantage of enormous prospects in bilateral trade and commerce.

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Improvements in Cross-border Trade Lauded in CBIC's International Customs Day Celebration

25 January 2019: New Delhi, India

India's momentous leap to rank 77 in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business rankings was highlighted at the International Customs Day celebrations of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). In his address, Chief Guest Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Finance, Government of India, congratulated the CBIC for their efforts to help improve India's rank on the "Trading Across Borders" metric – jumping from 146 in 2018 to 80 in 2019, an achievement that enabled India to take the quantum leap in the Ease of Doing Business rankings.

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India, Nepal Agree to Set Up Energy Bank

24 January 2019: Pokhara, Nepal

The Governments of India and Nepal have agreed to establish an energy banking mechanism that will enable both countries to trade electricity based on demand/supply of power, following recommendations of electricity authorities of both nations. The recently-held secretary-level Joint Working Group Meeting recommended forming a joint technical team that will explore and make arrangements for bilateral energy banking.

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Commentary: Smart Borders to Boost Trade in South Asia

24 January 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

This commentary from the Daily Star discusses how Bangladesh is working to ensure seamless connectivity in the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, and Nepal subregion. It also makes a case for the importance of enforcing regional transit agreement in South Asia to promote efficient movement of the goods, and reduce transaction costs and time.

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Backgrounder: Border Haats Boost Ties between India-Bangladesh

23 January 2019: Agartala, India

Border haats or rural markets along the border of Bangladesh and India help to strengthen ties between the two countries, both culturally and economically. These border haats benefit local communities by providing opportunities for livelihood and social interaction.

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Inland Waterways to Strengthen Connectivity Between India and Southeast Asia

14 January 2019: New Delhi, India

India is working to develop its inland waterways to increase economic connectivity with Southeast Asia. The project will connect India's northeastern region with Bangladesh and Nepal and boost trade in the region as part of India's Act East Policy.

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India to Begin Operating Myanmar's Sittwe Port

8 January 2019: New Delhi, India

Mr. Mansukh L. Mandaviya, Minister of State for Shipping, Road Transport and Chemical and Fertilizer, Government of India, informed the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) that the Sittwe Port in Myanmar is ready to operate. India will take over the operations of Sittwe Port, as agreed in the bilateral memorandum of understanding signed by the Governments of India and Myanmar. The Sittwe Port is part of the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project, and was constructed with assistance from the Government of India.

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New Indo-Nepal Railway Line nears Completion

31 December 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

The broad-gauge railway line on the new Indo-Nepal railway route running from Janakpur to Kurtha has been laid down, according to Mr. Aman Chitrakar, Senior Engineer, Department of Railways, Government of Nepal. The Government of India supported construction of the 35 kilometer-long railway route. Building of railway stations, terminal buildings, bridges and culverts along the route is approaching completion.

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Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering Calls on India Prime Minister Narendra Modi

29 December 2019: New Delhi, India

Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering undertook his maiden visit to India at the invitation of India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two Prime Ministers discussed a wide range of bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest, including the Government of India's development assistance package for Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan; importance of further expanding economic cooperation; and progress of the 720 MW Mangdechhu hydropower project in Bhutan.

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Sri Lanka Promotes Economic Relations with Nepal

28 December 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

An event promoting economic relations between Nepal and Sri Lanka was organized by the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Nepal. Ms. Swarna Perera, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Nepal, underscored the need to boost economic relations between the two countries. The Nepal-Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce and Industry remarked the importance of regular bilateral consultations and high-level meetings and visits to build strong and long-lasting trade and economic relations between the two nations.

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New Indian Guidelines on Cross-border Trade of Electricity to Promote Regional Energy Trade

18 December 2018: New Delhi, India

The Ministry of Power of the Government of India released the Guidelines on Import/Export (Cross Border Trade) of Electricity – 2018, replacing the Guidelines issued in 2016, following consultation with its stakeholders. Stakeholders in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal have welcomed the update. The revised provision on trade agreements could pave the way for the regions' power producers to conduct electricity trade with India, as well as with third countries.

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Bangladesh and Bhutan to Sign SOP Promoting Trade through Waterways

17 December 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Governments of Bangladesh and Bhutan plan to sign a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the promotion of bilateral trade and commercial operation of vessels. This SOP follows the Memorandum of Understanding on the Use of Inland Waterways for Transportation of Bilateral Trade and Transit Cargoes signed by the two governments. The proposed SOP aims to further enhance bilateral trade and commerce, as well as increase credibility, accuracy, efficiency, and transparency in the trade between the two nations.

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India President Ram Nath Kovind: India and Myanmar Can Leverage on Each Others' Competencies

15 December 2018: Yangon, Myanmar

India President Ram Nath Kovind delivered the inaugural address at the 5th Enterprise India – Myanmar. In his speech, he expressed delight in the presence of a high level business delegation from India, as well as the more than 50 companies present in the event. Remarking on the relationship between India and Myanmar, President Kovind emphasized the two neighbors' abiding friendship, but admitted that their trade and investment partnership remains 'modest.'

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Trade and Investment between Bangladesh and India on the Upswing

11 December 2018: Kolkata, India

Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla, former High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh (now Ambassador of India to the United States), highlighted the growth in trade between Bangladesh and India. Mr. Shringla credited cordial relations between the two neighbors as a key reason for the booming relations.

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Nepal-Bangladesh to Build Cross-border Transmission Lines

4 December 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal and Bangladesh have agreed to build cross-border transmission lines between the two countries, to supply electricity generated in Nepal to Bangladesh.

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Myanmar State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi Stresses Expanding Myanmar-Nepal Cooperation

3 December 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

Myanmar State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi undertook her first state visit to Nepal. She paid a courtesy call to Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli where they explored how to further expand their bilateral ties. At the Nepal Chamber Expo 2018, she delivered a speech urging both countries to improve economic relations. She also emphasized both countries' membership to the SASEC program.

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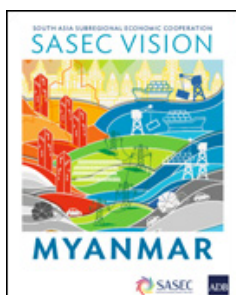
SASEC TRADE FACILITATION STRATEGY



SASEC WEBSITE BROCHURE



SASEC OPERATIONAL PLAN 2016-2025



SASEC Vision – Myanmar



Asian Development Outlook 2018 Supplement: The Outlook Firms as Trade Conflict Pauses



Investment Climate Improvement in East Coast Economic Corridor of India: Regulatory, Institutional, and Policy Reforms Support to Tamil Nadu



Asian Economic Integration
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