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SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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Construction World

Road Project to Connect SASEC Corridors with Bhutan and Bangladesh

6 December 2022: Mumbai, India

State highways in Assam, India, are set to be upgraded through a loan approved by the Asian Development Bank. The project will connect South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) corridors with Bhutan's and Bangladesh's borders. It is expected to improve transport and increase the volume of trade across borders.

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SASEC PROJECTS

Road Work for SASEC Dhaka-Sylhet Highway to Begin in December

17 November 2022: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Road expansion work for the SASEC Dhaka-Sylhet Corridor Road Investment Project is set to begin in December 2022. Work to expand the highway from two to six lanes aims to reduce travel time and improve road safety.

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SASEC NEWS



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- **Nepal to Boost Electricity Transmission and Distribution System to Promote Energy Export**
- **Bhutan Discusses Trade Linkages via Railway with Indian Railways Officials**

Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project Handed Over to Bhutan Druk Green Power Corporation

27 December 2022: Thimphu, Bhutan

The 720-megawatt Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project was handed over to Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation on 27 December 2022. The commissioning of the project has increased Bhutan's Electrical Power Generation Capacity by 44% to 2,326 megawatts.

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India, Sri Lanka to Launch Passenger Ferry Services

18 December 2022: New Delhi, India

An India–Sri Lanka passenger ferry service is set to be launched between Kankesanthurai port in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, and Pondicherry, India, in January 2023.

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Bhutan and India Add Two More Trade Routes

13 December 2022: Thimphu, Bhutan

Two new formal trade points between Bhutan and India have been approved—in Bhutan's Lhamoidzingkha, Dagana, and in Chhuchungsa, Samtse. These would be operational after their official inauguration. Bhutan also recently inaugurated a new north-south road corridor with links to Lhamoizingkha.

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India's Northeast Frontier Railway Conducts Survey for Bhutan Railway Link

12 December 2022: Siliguri, India

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) unit in Siliguri, with the assistance of the Government of Bhutan, is conducting a survey to extend railway linkages to Bhutan. NFR and Bhutan are studying the potential for a rail track from Kokrajhar, Assam, to Gelephu, Bhutan. The planned route will be 57.5 kilometers long.

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India, Sri Lanka Reopen Chennai–Jaffna Flights

12 December 2022: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Direct flight services between Chennai, India, and Jaffna, Sri Lanka, resumed on 12 December 2022, after being halted for close to three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Resumption of flights is expected to boost tourist arrivals between the two countries.

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Ports to Improve Connectivity between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh

27 November 2022: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Sri Lanka Port Authority officials met with Chittagong (Bangladesh) Port officials to improve connectivity for imports and exports transshipped through Singapore and Sri Lanka.

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Benefits of Further Developing Bangladesh–India Rail Freight Transport

27 November 2022: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The COVID-19 pandemic brought a shift to cross-border trade via rail between Bangladesh and India. An article by Dr. Munshi Muhammad Abdul Kader Jilani, assistant professor of the Bangladesh Institute of Governance and Management, underscores the benefits of developing rail freight transport to further grow bilateral trade, as well as contribute to achieving a sustainable and inclusive development for the SASEC subregion.

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Energy Connectivity, Trade to be Game Changer for India

20 November 2022: Guwahati, India

Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla, chief coordinator of G20 Presidency of India, highlighted the importance of energy connectivity and increasing regional trade. Noting that energy connectivity can be a game changer for the country, he underscored the new cross-border energy trading policy, which will allow power to be traded between Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and India through corridors in India and Bangladesh.

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Bhutan Discusses Trade Linkages via Railway with Indian Railways Officials

9 November 2022: Alipurduar, India

A delegation from the Government of Bhutan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, trade bodies, and chamber of commerce, met with officials of India's Northeast Frontier Railway in Alipurduar Railway Division, North Bengal, India, to explore trade collaboration via railway. This could provide Bhutan with a link to Bangladesh to transport automobiles, cement, and stone commodities.

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Trial Runs to Link India's Northeastern Region via Bangladesh Ports Conclude

7 November 2022: New Delhi, India

The fourth and final trial run to connect Bangladesh's Chattogram and Mongla ports to India's northeastern states via the India–Bangladesh Protocol Route concluded on 7 November 2022, ahead of its December schedule. The trial runs were conducted to iron out issues related to the transshipment of goods, and align the immigration and customs arrangements in both countries.

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Nepal to Boost Electricity Transmission and Distribution System to Promote Energy Export

1 November 2022: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) plans to further expand and strengthen the country's transmission and distribution system to make the country's electricity supply smooth and reliable, increase domestic consumption, and promote the export of surplus power to Bangladesh and India.

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India, Sri Lanka Discuss Implementation of Grant to Promote Buddhist Ties, Support the Jaffna Cultural Center

1 November 2022: Colombo, Sri Lanka

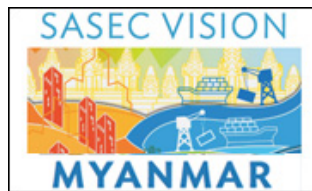
Mr. Gopal Baglay, Indian High Commissioner, and Mr. Vidura Wickramanayaka, Minister of Buddhasasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs of Sri Lanka, met to discuss the implementation of a \$15 million grant by the Government of India to promote Buddhist ties and support the operations of the Jaffna Cultural Center (JCC) in Sri Lanka.

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