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PUBLICATIONS
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SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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SASEC Road Reaches 75% Completion in Bangladesh

6 July 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Road Connectivity (SASEC) Project Road Connectivity Project, which will connect Bangladesh with regional and international transport networks, is 75.48% completed. The Government of Bangladesh is also upgrading the Elenga-Hatikumrul highway to include four lanes with service lanes on both sides.

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August-October

SASEC Nodal Officials' Meeting

19 August 2020: Online

SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting

30 September 2020: Online

SASEC Transport Sector Working Group Meeting

7 October 2020: Online

SASEC Cross-Border Power Trade Working Group Meeting

14 October 2020: Online

SASEC PROJECTS



- **SASEC Projects in Bangladesh Slowed by Pandemic**
- **SASEC Road Reaches 75% Completion in Bangladesh**
- **Agreement for Preparatory Facility to Improve Bangladesh's Transport Connectivity Inked**

SASEC Projects in Bangladesh Slowed by Pandemic

14 July 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh; Manila, Philippines

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has slowed the implementation of Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded projects in Bangladesh, including the SASEC Road Connectivity Project-1 and 2 and the SASEC Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Railway Project. As the country proceeds to lift lockdown restrictions, implementing agencies are preparing plans for the full resumption of work on construction sites.

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Agreement for Preparatory Facility to Improve Bangladesh's Transport Connectivity Inked

30 June 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh; Manila, Philippines

The Government of Bangladesh and ADB signed the agreement for the Transport Connectivity Improvement Preparatory Facility. This project readiness financing (PRF), worth \$57.23 million, will support the preparation of priority transport projects in Bangladesh.

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- **Increased Connectivity to Help BBIN Face Post-COVID Shocks**
- **Commentary: India-Bangladesh Expanded River Trade Opens Up Opportunities for Locals**
- **Direct Shipping Service between Kolkata and Chattogram Commences**

10 Broad Gauge Railway Locomotives to Further Ramp Up Bangladesh-India Links

28 July 2020: New Delhi India

The Government of India turned over 10 broad gauge railway locomotives to Bangladesh as part of a grant assistance on 27 July 2020. The two nations are committed to ramp up initiatives in connectivity and infrastructure to boost bilateral trade and promote the creation of new supply chains amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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Railway Initiatives Support Bangladesh-India Supply Chain amid the Pandemic

24 July 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh; New Delhi, India

Bangladesh Railways and Indian Railways rolled out initiatives to support importers and exporters through the current COVID-19 health crisis and minimize the disruption in the supply chain. They rolled out a container train service and parcel train service, after reaching the milestone of recording the most number of freight trains interchanged within a month.

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Nepal Electricity Authority Receives Nod to Conduct Trade with Bangladesh and India

23 July 2020: New Delhi, India

The Government of Nepal gave the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) approval to sell electricity to Bangladesh and India. Approval of Nepal Cabinet allows NEA to fix the price on the basis of competition, according to a report on the Himalayan Times. NEA can engage in electricity trade when domestic production is high and/or when production is low.

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India, Bhutan Open Temporary Trade Route in Pasakha

15 July 2020: Thimphu, Bhutan

The Government of India has opened an additional Land Customs station at Ahlay, Pasakha, in response to a request from the Government of Bhutan. The temporary alternate trade route hopes to decongest vehicular traffic along the Jaigaon-Phuentsholing route, and boost bilateral trade and commerce between the two nations.

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Increased Connectivity to Help BBIN Face Post-COVID Shocks

8 July 2020: New Delhi, India

Extensive connectivity in the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) subregion is needed to respond to economic vulnerabilities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased connectivity through trade and transport infrastructure, such as those under the SASEC program, help ADB in its work to reduce poverty and promote gender equality.

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Commentary: India-Bangladesh Expanded River Trade Opens Up Opportunities for Locals

4 July 2020: London, United Kingdom

The second addendum to the Protocol of Inland Water Transit and Trade, which was signed on 20 May 2020 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, added 2 new water routes and 10 new ports of call to the protocol to facilitate bilateral trade. With the signing of the addendum, new opportunities are opening up for small producers and marginalized communities, according to this commentary by Mr. Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director, CUTS International.

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Direct Shipping Service between Kolkata and Chattogram Commences

3 July 2020: New Delhi, India

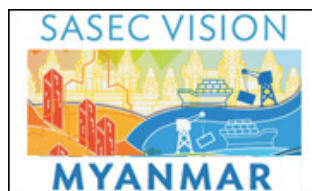
A new direct shipping service was introduced between the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port in Kolkata, India, and the Chattogram (Chittagong) Port in Bangladesh, through the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route. It promises to reduce time and cost of transit of goods, as well as lessen dwell time and bring more predictability in shipments.

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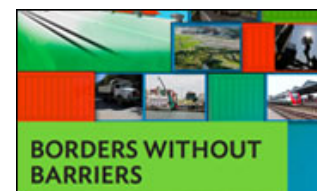
SASEC VISION



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**BORDERS WITHOUT
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IN SASEC COUNTRIES**



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Reduction in India



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Substantial potential for India–Sri Lanka cooperation in various areas, including energy, infrastructure, and connectivity projects [Read more](#)

ADB Approves \$200 Million Loan to Modernize Power Supply, Distribution System in Nepal [Read more](#)

India and Bhutan have opened a new trade route between Jaigaon in West Bengal and Pasakha in Bhutan [Read more](#)

India's trade with its neighbourhood has ranged between 1.7% and 3.8% of its global trade [Read more](#)

The first trial container ship from Kolkata to Agartala and Karimganj through Chittagong port has opened up huge opportunities not just for Indo-Bangladesh trade but also #BBIN subregional cooperation [Read more](#)

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