



**SASEC EVENTS**  
SEVENTH SASEC  
CUSTOMS SUBGROUP  
MEETING



**SASEC PROJECTS**  
ADB VP PLEDGES  
CONTINUED SUPPORT  
FOR ECEC



**SASEC NEWS**  
NEPAL CLIMBS 10 SPOTS  
ON LOGISTICS  
PERFORMANCE INDEX



**PUBLICATIONS**  
2017 DEVELOPMENT  
EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW



# SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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## Seventh Meeting of the SASEC Customs Subgroup

30-31 July 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka



## Seventh SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting

**30-31 July 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

The Seventh SASEC Customs Subgroup (SCS) Meeting discussed subregional and national projects implemented by the SASEC countries under the SCS Work Plan 2014-2018, and reviewed ongoing and proposed projects in priority areas of trade facilitation of the SASEC Operational Plan 2016-2025. The Meeting also presented pilot initiatives in electronic cargo tracking systems, and shared findings from the SASEC Coordinated Development of Border Infrastructure Study. In his Keynote Address, Dr. R. H. S. Samararatunga, Secretary of Treasury of Sri Lanka, stressed the importance of Customs reforms in reducing the cost and time for doing trade, and boosting competitiveness of SASEC countries and their integration with global and regional markets.

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# SASEC EVENTS



## EVENT COLOMBO

Seventh SASEC Customs  
Subgroup Meeting



## EVENT FARIDABAD

Workshop for SASEC  
Administrations on Trade  
Facilitation Measures for  
Authorized Operators



## EVENT DHAKA

National Workshop on  
Study on Coordinated  
Development of Border  
Infrastructure and Use of  
ECTS

## National Workshop on the Study on Coordinated Development of Border Infrastructure and Pilot Use of the ECTS

11 July 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

This Workshop in Bangladesh presented the Study on Coordinated Development of Border Infrastructure. The Study recommended ensuring adequate facilities on both sides of the border, developing connectivity behind and across the border, and establishing a National Single Window. The use of the Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS) was also discussed, highlighting its features, findings from various ECTS studies and pilot programs conducted in the region, and benefits of using ECTS.

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## CALENDAR

### Upcoming Events

#### Workshop for SASEC Administrations on Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

12-14 September 2018: Faridabad, India

#### India: Workshop on Coastal Shipping Study

TBA: Mumbai, India

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### Top Tweets

July 2018



SDF supports establishment of a cross-border e-commerce platform for enabling seamless trade [Read](#)

Experts: Implementing BRI, BBIN initiative can benefit smaller countries and help utilize their potentials [Read](#)

Dr. Nishchal Nath Pandey: Smaller countries of the region, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka can directly benefit from connectivity projects via Belt and Road Initiative, Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal initiative [Read](#)

Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant: South Asia's economic progress hinges on intra-regional trade, investments [Read](#)

South Asia continues to be the fastest growing sub-region, led by India [Read](#)



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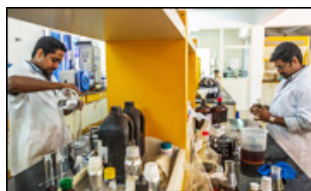
# SASEC PROJECTS



**PROJECT**  
**ADB VP PLEDGES**  
**CONTINUED SUPPORT**  
**FOR EAST COAST**  
**ECONOMIC CORRIDOR**



**PROJECT**  
**INDIA'S FIRST COASTAL**  
**CORRIDOR TO RUN**  
**FROM KOLKATA TO**  
**KANYAKUMARI**



**PROJECT**  
**ADB AND STATE GOVT**  
**TO FAST-TRACK**  
**INDUSTRIAL HUBS**



**PROJECT**  
**ECEC TO TRANSFORM**  
**REGION TO TOP**  
**INVESTMENT**  
**DESTINATION**

## ADB VP Pledges Continued Support for East Coast Economic Corridor

**20 July 2018: Chennai, India**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is committed to supporting the development of India's East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC), according to Mr. Wencai Zhang, Vice President, ADB. The ECEC extends from Kolkata to Kanyakumari and cover 25,000 kilometers through the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and West Bengal.

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# SASEC NEWS



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**NEPAL AWAITS CABINET**  
**GO-AHEAD FOR BBIN**  
**MVA**



**NEWS**  
**FUND TO TAP E-**  
**COMMERCE TO BOOST**  
**INTRAREGIONAL TRADE**

## Nepal to Sign Energy Cooperation Deal with Bangladesh

**31 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Nepal and Bangladesh are set to sign an energy cooperation agreement to oversee electricity trade between the two countries. The agreement will also facilitate Bangladesh investment in hydropower projects in Nepal.

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## **MoU to Boost Myanmar-Nepal Bilateral Consultation Signed**

**30 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Myanmar and Nepal have signed an MoU establishing a bilateral consultation mechanism, and held their first meeting. This meeting reviewed Myanmar-Nepal relations, and discussed how to further boost cooperation between the two nations.

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## **World Bank Releases Logistics Performance Index; Nepal Climbs 10 Spots**

**28 July 2018: Washington, D.C., U.S.A.**

This year, Nepal garnered an LPI score of 2.51, placing 114th in its overall ranking. It climbed 10 spots compared to its showing in 2016, when it received an LPI score of 2.38. Improvements in customs efficiency, customs clearance procedures, trade-related infrastructure, and ease of doing cross-border trade account for the improved score for Nepal.

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## **Government of Nepal Awaits Cabinet Go-Ahead for BBIN MVA**

**26 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Government of Nepal is awaiting Cabinet approval of the draft protocol of the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA). Cabinet approval will allow Nepal to sign an agreement with India and Bangladesh, and commence passenger and cargo vehicle services in the BBIN subregion.

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## **Bangladesh and India Plan to Increase Number of Border Haats**

**23 July 2018: Tripura, India**

The Governments of Bangladesh and India are considering development of "border haats" (border markets) in six new locations to further boost Bangladesh-India trade. A joint committee meeting highlighted the positive impact of border haats to the livelihoods of people in border communities. The meeting emphasized the need to draft an MoU and provide a timeline for setting up new border haats in the northeastern region of India.

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## Sri Lanka Launches Trade Information Portal

**20 July 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

The Government of Sri Lanka's Department of Commerce launched the Sri Lanka Trade Information Portal, a one-stop gateway for information on trading to/from Sri Lanka. The portal provides information on laws and tariff, non-tariff measures, procedures and forms for license application, and international, regional, and bilateral trade agreements that Sri Lanka is a party to.

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## Nepal's Dry Port Sees Growth in Imports

**18 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Nepal's third country imports is growing with more importers tapping railway cargo for transport, according to data from Nepal's Dry Port Customs Office. The Sirsiya Dry Port in Birgunj accommodated 25% more import cargo in Fiscal Year 2017-2018. The Sirsiya Dry Port is close to the Indian border, with links to the Raxaul railway junction. It is the first and only rail-linked terminal in Nepal that facilitates third-country trade through India.

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## 6th Meeting of India-Nepal Oversight Mechanism Held

**18 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The 6th Meeting of India-Nepal Oversight Mechanism reviewed progress of ongoing bilateral projects between India and Nepal. This included cross-border rail projects, integrated check posts, Terai roads project, cross-border transmission lines, and the Arun-III hydropower project. The Meeting discussed measures to be undertaken by specific Government agencies to achieve early or on-time completion of projects within the specified time frame.

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## Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India Relations Finalizes Report

**17 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India relations has finalized its report, with recommendations on updating bilateral treaties and agreements between India and Nepal, in line with the present reality of the two countries. The recommendations concern trade, commerce, water resource, people-to-people contact and cultural ties. The joint report, prepared in consensus by representatives of the two nations, lays a strong groundwork for furthering India-Nepal relations.

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## **Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Promote Bilateral Connectivity and Regional Participation**

**16 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Government of Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs will take a more proactive role in the implementation of Nepal's treaties and agreements, including connectivity projects between Nepal and India, and Nepal and People's Republic of China. An action plan drafted by the Ministry highlights active facilitation of bilateral connectivity projects between Nepal and India, and participation in regional institutions, such as SAARC and BIMSTEC.

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## **SAARC Development Fund to Tap E-Commerce to Boost Intraregional Trade**

**10 July 2018: New Delhi, India**

The SAARC Development Fund (SDF) is supporting establishment of an online platform that will enable seamless trade of services across member states. Mr. Sunil Motiwal, Chief Executive Officer, SDF, reported that this e-commerce system is under finalization. SDF called on stakeholders to work on developing common facilities for logistics, warehousing, and transportation.

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## **Bilateral Meeting Focuses on Implementation of India-Nepal Cross-border Rail Links**

**9 July 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Governments of India and Nepal convened the 6th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee for the Implementation of India-Nepal Cross Border Rail Link Projects. The Meeting highlighted the early finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding for the preliminary engineering/traffic survey of the Raxaul (India)-Kathmandu (Nepal) rail line.

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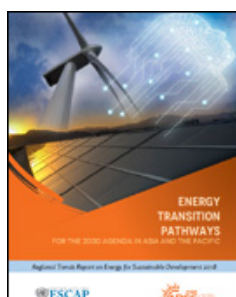
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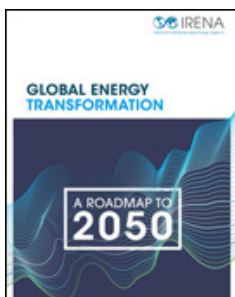
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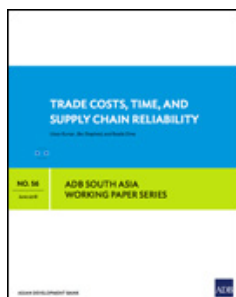
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