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Maldives-ADB Sign \$10 million National Single Window Project

18 June 2019: North Male Atoll, Maldives

The Government of Maldives has signed a \$10 million project with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for its [National Single Window Project](#). The agreement was signed by Finance Minister Ibrahim Ameer and Mr. Ronald Butiong, Director for Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination, South Asia Department, ADB, at the sidelines of the Maldives Partnership Forum.

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EVENT

SAARC-ADB Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II)

- **SAARC-ADB Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II)**
- **Sri Lanka: National Workshop on Developing a PCA System**
- **ADB-NACIN Workshop on Customs Valuation and Database Systems**

SAARC-ADB Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II)

24–25 June 2019: Kathmandu, Nepal

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and ADB hosted the Fourth Special Meeting on Regional Economic Integration Study (Phase-II) on 24–25 June 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The meeting reviewed progress on the implementation of recommendations in the areas of energy cooperation, trade facilitation, investment cooperation, and transport connectivity and discussed the future course of action.

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Sri Lanka: National Workshop on Developing a PCA System

19–20 June 2019: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka Customs and ADB organized a 2-day workshop to finalize the action plan for the initial implementation of a post-clearance audit (PCA) system in Sri Lanka. The Workshop, attended by officials from Sri Lanka Customs, agreed on actionable items to ensure the initial implementation of PCA in Sri Lanka by September 2019. The Workshop discussed details for finalizing standard operating procedures and the conduct of training courses.

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ADB-NACIN Workshop on Customs Valuation and Database Systems

11–12 June 2019: Faridabad, India

Senior Customs officials from South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) countries attended a 2-day training program on customs valuation and databases at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) training center of the Government of India in Faridabad. The workshop, held in collaboration with ADB, builds on the experience of SASEC customs administrations in implementing customs valuation law, consistent with the World Trade Organization Agreement on Customs Valuation.

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- **Commentary: Improving Facilitation through the Use of Electronic Seals**
- **ADB Funds Feasibility Study on Setting Up an LNG Hub in Sri Lanka**
- **Sri Lanka's New National Port Master Plan Emphasizes Boosting Efficiency and Infrastructure**

Commentary: Improving Facilitation through the Use of Electronic Seals

26 June 2019: Brussels, Belgium

Replacing mechanical seals with electronic sealing devices has enabled Indian Customs to reduce the risk of fraud and security threats while extending higher levels of facilitation to traders. The electronic seals have allowed India to improve its ranking in World Bank's Doing Business Report 2019, particularly in the category "trading across borders."

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ADB Funds Feasibility Study on Setting Up an LNG Hub in Sri Lanka

24 June 2016: Malé, Maldives

ADB is financing a technical assistance that supports a feasibility study and survey on adopting liquefied natural gas (LNG) power generation in Sri Lanka. The study will identify the optimal LNG facility, and the most suitable location for the development of new LNG-fired power plants and its associated facilities. This potential LNG facility could also supply fuel to Maldives.

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Sri Lanka's New National Port Master Plan Emphasizes Boosting Efficiency and Infrastructure

21 June 2016: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The new national port master plan developed for the Government of Sri Lanka urged Colombo Port to boost its efficiency and fast track its infrastructure development to keep the port competitive. According to the plan, improving administration and procedures can better the container logistics chain. This should be complemented with upgrades and/or development of infrastructure in port and hinterland connections.

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- **Nepal to Welcome Bangladesh Hydropower Investments**
- **Conference on India-Myanmar Relations Emphasizes Need for MVA**
- **Bangladesh-Sri Lanka Trade Ties to Grow**

Bangladesh-Sri Lanka Trade Ties to Grow

30 June 2019: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are set to sign a free trade agreement, which is expected to increase bilateral trade between the two countries. Trade is expected to grow at a steady pace with the planned agreement, says Bangladesh High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Mr. Riaz Hamidullah.

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Bangladesh and Nepal Convene JWG and JSC Meetings to Advance Energy Cooperation

21 June 2019: Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Energy secretaries of the Governments of Bangladesh and Nepal held the second Joint Working Group (JWG) and Joint Steering Committee (JCS) meetings. These meetings discussed bilateral energy cooperation by the two neighbors. It deliberated on matters concerning power trade, proposed interconnections of transmission lines, and potential hydropower development investment in Nepal.

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Nepal to Welcome Bangladesh Hydropower Investments

18 June 2019: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Nepal will welcome private and public sector investments from Bangladesh, said Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Secretary, Nepal, Mr. Dinesh Kumar Ghimire. He said Nepal and Bangladesh are looking to boost trade and business with each other and should explore new areas of cooperation.

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Conference on India-Myanmar Relations Emphasizes Need for MVA

13 June 2019: Imphal, India

A conference was held in Imphal, India, to discuss how to deepen India-Myanmar ties and boost bilateral cooperation. Speakers recommended implementing a motor vehicle agreement (MVA) to facilitate vehicular movement between the two neighbors and enable seamless trade. They also suggested reduction of visa fees to boost tourism and mutual recognition of educational degrees.

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Commentary: Putting Sri Lanka on Map as a Regional Energy Hub

12 June 2019: Colombo, Sri Lanka

This editorial explains the region's need for a land-based liquid petroleum gas (LPG) storage facility that could also act as a transshipment terminal. Sri Lanka's strategic location on the East-to-West shipping route and its proximity to growing markets in South Asia makes the country well-placed to become a hub for energy, logistics, and trade. Written by Mr. W.K.H. Wegapitiya for the Daily Mirror, this brief urges public and private sectors to join together into making Sri Lanka the region's energy hub. Mr. Wegapitiya is chairman of Laugfs Holdings, which is building an LPG terminal in Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port.

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India's CBIC and Maldives Customs Service to Collaborate on Customs Capacity Building

9 June 2019: Malé, Maldives

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) of the Government of India and Maldives Customs Service (MCS) signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in capacity building. The agreement aims to help boost the capacity of MCS to undertake and sustain customs reforms and modernization initiatives.

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SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators Holds Fourth Meeting

8 June 2019: Malé, Maldives

The SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators held its fourth meeting in Male, Maldives, on 8 June 2019. The meeting discussed finalizing the draft roadmap of the SAARC Framework Agreement for Energy Cooperation (Electricity).

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India's External Affairs Minister Visits Bhutan

8 June 2019: Thimphu, Bhutan

Mr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of the Government of India, visited Bhutan. He called on His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Prime Minister Lotay Tshering. He also met with Mr. Tandi Dorji, Foreign Minister of the Government of Bhutan. In the meeting with the Foreign Minister, development partnership and hydropower cooperation were emphasized.

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India, Maldives Sign Agreements/MoUs Boosting Bilateral Cooperation

7 June 2019: Malé, Maldives

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih held discussions on boosting India-Maldives bilateral ties. They signed six agreements and MoUs, which expands India and Maldives' cooperation across sectors and includes an MoU for the establishment of passenger and cargo services by sea. They also [noted](#) the importance of regional cooperation in advancing development and remarked on the mutual benefit it brings to both countries.

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India-Nepal Meeting Agrees to Amend Trade and Transit Treaties, Railway Service Agreement

7 June 2019: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Governments of India and Nepal have agreed to update the Trade and Transit Treaties and the Railway Service Agreement on a reciprocal basis in a joint commerce secretary-level meeting held in India. Proposed amendments include adding inland waterways as a means of transport for Nepal-bound freight, and allowing rail operators from Nepal and private rail operators from India to transport Nepal-bound cargo.

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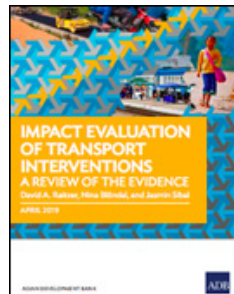
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