



SASEC EVENTS
NEPAL: ELECTRONIC
CARGO TRACKING
SYSTEM WORKSHOP



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BANGLADESH ON TRACK



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TRANSCENDING THE
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CHALLENGE



SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

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SASEC's New Vision to Transform Subregion

31 March 2017: Manila, Philippines

Endorsement of the new SASEC Vision by Finance Ministers of SASEC member countries will transform this partnership from a simple blueprint into an engine to drive an annual estimated \$70 billion in additional subregional gross domestic product by 2025. Mr. Hun Kim, Director General, South Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB), highlights how the SASEC Vision will help take the SASEC partnership to another level of economic growth.

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SASEC EVENTS



EVENT NEPAL

Electronic Cargo Tracking
System Workshop



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Electronic Cargo Tracking
System Workshop



EVENT NEPAL

Electronic Cargo Tracking
System Workshop

Nepal: Electronic Cargo Tracking System Workshop

6 March 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Government of Nepal organized a national consultation on the Electronic Cargo Tracking System (ECTS), in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank. The Consultation discussed the current status of Nepal-India transit; the features, advantages, and best practices of the ECTS, as well as other countries' experience of implementing the ECTS. Participants also discussed options for a pilot application of the ECTS, including the schedule, types of cargo, and necessary Customs processes and documentation.

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CALENDAR

April-May

SASEC Nodal Officials Meeting

6 May 2017: Yokohama, Japan

Colombo-Trincomalee Economic Corridor Workshop

26-27 April 2017: Colombo and Trincomalee, Sri Lanka

Bangladesh Southwest Economic Corridor Joint ADB-KSP Inception Workshop

6 April 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

SASEC Finance Ministers Meeting

3 April 2017: Delhi, India

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Top Tweets

March 2017



ADB supports cross-border & regional power connectivity in South Asia under the SASEC Program [Read](#)

BIMSTEC to conclude trade and trade facilitation negotiations, incl. the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement [Read](#)

Pilot application of the Electronic Cargo Tracking System discussed at ADB-supported stakeholders consultation [Read](#)

13th Round Table Meet discusses Bhutan's last mile toward graduating from LDC to lower middle income country status [Read](#)

ADB, India ink \$375 million loan/grant agreement to develop the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor [Read](#)



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SASEC PROJECTS



**PROJECT
SASEC'S NEW VISION
TO TRANSFORM
SUBREGION**



**PROJECT
SASEC'S NEW VISION
TO TRANSFORM
SUBREGION**



**PROJECT
SASEC ROADS
DEVELOPMENT IN
BANGLADESH ON TRACK**



**PROJECT
ADB TO PREPARE
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
FOR ECEC**

ADB to Prepare Development Plan for the East Coast Economic Corridor

27 March 2017: New Delhi, India

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will prepare the feasibility study and conceptual development plan for India's East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC), in collaboration with the Government. The joint work of ADB and India on the ECEC has led to useful lessons on economic corridor development.

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SASEC Roads Development in Bangladesh on Track

1 March 2017: Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

A delegation from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development was in Bangladesh to review progress of two of its development projects. Work for both the Sikalbaha Power Station and the SASEC Road Connectivity Project are proceeding as planned. Road development and transportation infrastructure works under the SASEC Road Connectivity Project began in March 2016 and are now 22% complete.

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NEWS

**BANGLADESH, BHUTAN
COMMERCE
SECRETARIES DISCUSS
TRADE PROMOTION**



NEWS

**INDIA-MYANMAR
CONNECTIVITY TO
ENHANCE LINKS TO
SOUTHEAST ASIA**



NEWS

**NEPAL MINISTRIES
URGED TO
COLLABORATE TO
MANAGE EXPORT GAP**



NEWS

**BIMSTEC ROUNDTABLE
STRESSES NEED TO
RESOLVE TRADE
BARRIERS**

Bangladesh, Bhutan Commerce Secretaries Discuss Trade Promotion

24 March 2017: Thimphu, Bhutan

The Commerce Secretaries of the Government of Bhutan and the Government of Bangladesh met on 23-24 March 2017 in Thimphu, Bhutan, to discuss the promotion of trade and commerce. The Secretaries agreed to negotiate an inland water transit protocol, and initiate a memorandum of understanding for mutual recognition of standards and classifications.

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India-Myanmar Connectivity to Enhance South Asia-Southeast Asia Linkages

23 March 2017: New Delhi, India

Several initiatives have been undertaken to build connectivity between India, through its northeast region, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) region, through Myanmar, including the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. Myanmar joined the SASEC partnership as a full member in February 2017, a move that is expected to further promote and accelerate inter-subregional cooperation between South Asia and Southeast Asia.

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SASEC Program Is Now on Facebook

22 March 2017: Manila, Philippines

SASEC is now on Facebook, connecting followers to the most up-to-date news on regional cooperation in South Asia, SASEC events, project information, and publications that are all featured daily on www.sasec.asia. To follow SASEC on Facebook, simply click [here](#); then click “Like” at the top of the Facebook page.

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Nepal Government Ministries Urged to Collaborate to Manage Widening Export Gap

21 March 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

Low exports and rising imports are causing exponential growth in Nepal's trade deficit, according to Nepal's Minister of Commerce, and he urged ministries, agencies, and the private sector to collaborate to bridge Nepal's widening export gap. The Ministry of Commerce has prioritized initiatives to promote Nepal's productive capacity.

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Commentary: Development of Ports and Transportation for Trade Facilitation

10 March 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Trade facilitation that ensures fast and safe transportation of goods directly affects economic growth in Bangladesh. Mr. Md Shafiqul Islam, former Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh, writes how ports and economic corridors, by facilitating international trade, play a pivotal role in strengthening the economy. He also discusses the need to frame comprehensive action plans that could be used to shape policies on efficient port operation.

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India-Myanmar Border 'Haats' Performing Well

8 March 2017: New Delhi, India

Informal trading in the northeast region's border 'haats' (rural markets) between India and Myanmar is doing very well, reported Mr. Najib Shah, Chairman of India's Central Board of Excise and Customs. The Government of India is considering opening more border haats to promote trade ties with its neighbors.

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India Moves Ahead with Multi-Modal Transport Plan

8 March 2017: New Delhi, India

India approved the signing of the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR, or International Road Transport) Convention on 6 March 2017. The approval takes India forward in its bid to establish seamless trade connectivity with Southeast Asian and Eurasian countries, and harmonize its transport with global standards. India will be the 71st signatory of the multilateral transit treaty.

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BIMSTEC Roundtable Stresses Need to Resolve Trade Barriers

7 March 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The BIMSTEC Roundtable Meeting tackled "Rewriting the Rulebook of Regional Connectivity," emphasizing the need to resolve border-related trade barriers through coordination of government policies across Asia, including Customs procedures and clearance of goods, to unlock the vibrancy of the Asian Highway and reduce the cost of doing business.

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India to Demo Freight Train from Dhaka to Istanbul

3 March 2017: New Delhi, India

Indian Railways plans to conduct a freight train trial run through the Dhaka-Kolkata-Delhi-Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul railway route. The route is part of the Trans-Asian Railway Southern Corridor, a 6,000-kilometer section of the Trans-Asian Railway network, which aims to promote cultural exchanges and trade within Asia, and between Asia and Europe.

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India Ready to Invest in Nepal Hydropower

3 March 2017: Kathmandu, Nepal

India is committed to being Nepal's development partner in development, according to Mr. Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister, India. Speaking at the Nepal Investment Summit, Mr. Jaitley pledged more Indian investment in Nepal hydropower and rail network, as well as in transmission lines, roads and bridges, irrigation, health, and education.

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Three Common Standards for SAARC Finalized

1 March 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Three common standards—Biscuits Specification, Refined Sugar Specification, and Code of Hygienic Practice for Dairy Industry—for the SAARC region were approved at the South Asian Regional Standards Organization's (SARSO) Fifth Governing Body Meeting. These common standards will help reduce SAARC intra-regional trade costs. According to SARSO Director General, Dr. Syed Humayun Kabir, member countries' national standardization bodies will be in charge of their implementation.

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International River Port to be Developed in Tripura

1 March 2017: Agartala, India

India's Ministry of Shipping will set up an international river port in Sonamura, connecting Gomati River in Tripura, with Meghna river in Bangladesh. India's Inland Waterways Authority approved the proposal to enable small ferries and boats to transport goods through river transit, according to the Minister of State for Industries and Commerce.

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India-Myanmar Trade Increases to \$22 Million

25 February 2017: Delhi, India

Bilateral trade between India and Myanmar increased from nearly \$11.9 million in 2013-2014 to around \$22.2 million in 2015-2016, according to India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry. India's Act East Policy was instrumental in promoting trade growth between the two countries, deepening economic cooperation and expanding trade through India's Northeast region.

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Commentary: An Emergent Urgency for Bangladesh

23 February 2017: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Good connectivity reduces the cost of doing business and increases the competitive strengths of trading partners. In this commentary, Dr. Mustafizur Rahman, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, highlights how a sanitary and phytosanitary agreement and an effective Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement would promote South Asian integration and step up Asia-wide cooperation.

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NACEN Holds Capacity Building Program for Bangladesh Customs Officers

13 February 2017: Faridabad, India

The National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics (NACEN) in Faridabad, India organized a capacity building program for Bangladesh Customs officers, where topics focused on modern clearance processes, Customs valuation, post-clearance audit, use of risk management systems, and the role of Customs in economic corridors.

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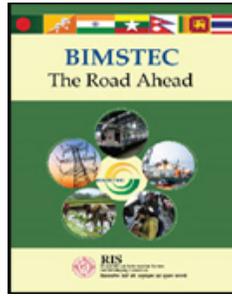
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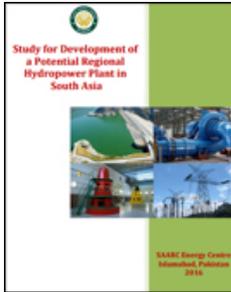
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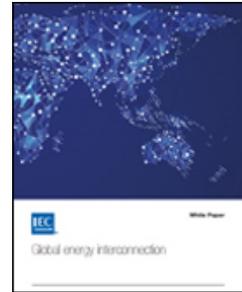
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