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BE HELD IN DELHI



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SASEC NEWS

THE SOUTH ASIA SUBREGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #56

MAY 2018

WWW.SASEC.ASIA



Speech: ADB Vice President at the 12th Informal Meeting of the SAARC Finance Ministers

4 May 2018: Manila, Philippines

Mr. Wencai Zhang, Vice President, Asian Development Bank (ADB) discusses how ADB can help realize a more prosperous South Asia through its assistance to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. He mentions ADB's support for South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation, whose vision provides a strategic framework to unleash the subregion's economic potential.

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SASEC PROJECTS



**PROJECT
PARTICIPATION IN
SASEC TRADE
FACILITATION
PROGRAM IS HELPING
CONNECT BHUTAN TO
THE GLOBAL MARKET**



**PROJECT
SUBREGIONAL
TRANSPORT
FACILITATION
PROJECT REMOVED
ROADBLOCKS TO
NEPAL'S TRADE**



**PROJECT
BANGLADESH
NATIONAL ECONOMIC
COUNCIL APPROVES
SASEC ROAD PROJECT
REVISIONS**

Ministerial Meeting of LLDCs Emphasize Need to Address Trade and Transport Issues

16-17 May 2018: Astana, Kazakhstan

The 9th Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) on Trade and Transport was held to assess key issues in transport, transit cooperation, trade, and trade facilitation among LLDCs. Bhutan and Nepal sent delegations to the Meeting. They highlighted initiatives being taken to connect their countries to the global market, including bilateral agreements in the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal subregion and the SASEC Trade Facilitation Program.

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Case Study: Removing Roadblocks to Trade

14 May 2018: Manila, Philippines

A case study published on the website Development Asia reviews how the Subregional Transport Facilitation Project removed roadblocks to Nepal's trade. The project, approved on 4 November 2004 and completed on 21 September 2010, made flow of import and export goods to Nepal easier, faster, and smoother. By updating the customs administration software, constructing a new inland clearance depot, and rehabilitating border access roads, the project lowered the cost of capital for cargo in Nepal by 12% annually and made the country better connected to the subregional economy.

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May 2018



ADB reaffirms its support for the economic development and prosperity of the SAARC region
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Bangladesh to get an additional 500MW of electricity from India beginning June to help meet the country's energy demand [Read](#)

India a key development aid partner for Myanmar [Read](#)

ADB blog: Let's empower women-led businesses to grow and reach their enormous potential [Read](#)

ADB VP Zhang: SASEC Program & CAREC Program are project-based partnerships effectively improving cross-border connectivity, and enabling faster and more efficient trade among SAARC countries [Read](#)



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Republic of Maldives: Preparing the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation National Single Window Project

9 May 2018: Manila, Philippines

This technical assistance will support the processing of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation National Single Window (NSW) project. The NSW project aims to provide an efficient environment for streamlined international trade procedures between private sector stakeholders and border control agencies in Maldives.

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Bangladesh Executive Committee of the National Economic Council Approves SASEC Road Project Revisions

8 May 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council of the Government of Bangladesh approved revisions to the project to upgrade the Joydevpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elenga Road into a four-lane highway. Revisions include extension of deadline and increase in funding. The Asian Development Bank will provide financing support through the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) road connectivity project.

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CALENDAR

June-July

Coastal Shipping Study Workshop

20 June 2018: Delhi, India

Workshop on Special Economic Zones and Economic Corridor Development

25-29 June 2018: Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Seventh SASEC Customs Subgroup Meeting

30-31 July 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka



NEWS

**BANGLADESH-NEPAL
MEETING HELD TO
NARROW DOWN THE
TRADE IMBALANCE**



NEWS

**MYANMAR AND NEPAL
PLAN MOU TO BOOST
THEIR ECONOMIC TIES**



NEWS

**INDIA AND NEPAL
PRIME MINISTERS
GENERATE MOMENTUM
FOR IMPLEMENTATION
OF AGREEMENTS**



NEWS

**REGIONAL
COOPERATION AND
IMPORT OF LNG CAN
HELP SRI LANKA
ACHIEVE ENERGY GOAL**

Bangladesh-Nepal Meeting Agrees on Measures to Boost Trade, Transit, and Economic Cooperation

31 May 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

The fourth Bangladesh-Nepal Commerce Secretary Meeting on Trade, Transit, and Economic Cooperation focused on enhancing bilateral trade and narrowing the trade imbalance between the two nations. The delegations agreed to prioritize reviewing the operational modality for transit cargo, committed concluding the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, and agreed to review non-tariff barriers hindering growth of Nepal's key export products to Bangladesh.

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Bangladesh Approves Substation for Importing 500 MW from Tripura, India

30 May 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh's Executive Committee of the National Economic Council has approved a project to install a high-voltage direct-current back-to-back substation at Comilla in Bangladesh for importing 500 megawatts of electricity from Tripura, India.

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Nepal Eminent Persons' Group Seeks to Further Boost Vizag Port Trade Efficiency

24 May 2018: Visakhapatnam, India

A delegation of Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) members from Nepal visited the Visakhapatnam (Vizag) port. The team met with Mr. Movva Tirumala Krishna Babu, Chairperson, Vizag Port Trust. The Meeting recommended measures to boost efficiency of cargo shipment from Vizag port to Nepal, including setting up electronic messaging, and streamlining procedures to lessen delays.

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Myanmar Seeks to Increase Export Volume to Nepal

17 May 2018: Yangon, Myanmar

The Governments of Myanmar and Nepal are planning to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to boost their economic ties and increase trade. According to Myanmar Vice President U Myint Swe, Myanmar is seeking to increase its export volume to Nepal. Demand for imported beans and pulses from Myanmar is on the rise in Nepal.

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India and Nepal PMs Vow to Strengthen Cooperation

12 May 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in Nepal for a state visit at the invitation of Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. The meeting aimed to strengthen ties between India and Nepal and generate momentum for the implementation of agreements between the two countries.

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BIMSTEC Working Group on Customs Cooperation Holds First Meeting

10-11 May 2018: New Dehi, India

The BIMSTEC Working Group on Customs Cooperation discussed progress in customs cooperation among BIMSTEC countries. It also finalized the draft text of the 'Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters' for the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area.

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India, Myanmar Sign Agreement on Land Border Crossing

10-11 May 2018: Naypyidaw, Myanmar

The Governments of India and Myanmar inked the Agreement on Land Border Crossing during the visit to Myanmar of Ms. Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of the Government of India. The landmark agreement allows people from both countries to cross the land border with passport and visa, for purposes such as availing health and education services, pilgrimage, and tourism.

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India to Develop India-Bhutan Railway Connectivity

10 May 2018: New Delhi, India

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India is reviewing feasibility studies for potential railway linkages between India and Bhutan. The studies include five possible routes.

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India Moving Ahead with TIR Implementation

10 May 2018: New Delhi, India

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry is fast-tracking implementation of the United Nations TIR Convention, following the Indian government's initiatives to promote trade expansion, particularly along the international North-South Transport Corridor.

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India, Japan, and People's Republic of China to Build LNG Terminals in Sri Lanka

8 May 2018: Colombo: Sri Lanka

The Government of India signed an agreement to build two liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Government of Japan. These were approved by the Government of Sri Lanka, along with an LNG project in Hambantota by the People's Republic of China. In total, the three LNG power plants will generate up to 1,400 megawatts.

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Double Rail Track Project in Bangladesh to Increase Connectivity with India, Bhutan, and Nepal

8 May 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council of the Government of Bangladesh approved the double laning of the railway track from Khulna to Darshana. Darshana, a rail transit point, lies on the Bangladesh-India border. Spanning around 217 kilometers, the double rail line will establish rail connectivity with India, with links toward Bhutan and Nepal. It will also provide access to Mongla Port.

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ADB Advisor: Renewables, Regional Cooperation, LNG Import can Help Boost Sri Lanka's Energy Security

8 May 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Dr. Yongping Zhai, Technical Advisor (Energy), Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and Mr. David Elzinga, Senior Energy Specialist, ADB, advised the Government of Sri Lanka to keep their options open in securing the country's energy future. Reiterating ADB's support for Sri Lanka's energy security, Dr. Zhai urged the country to opt for renewables over coal to fast-track its commitment to the Paris agreement. He also recommended regional cooperation and import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) as further alternatives to help Sri Lanka achieve its energy goals for 2030 and 2050.

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Bhutan Holds First National Standards Conclave

5 May 2018: Thimphu, Bhutan

The Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB) hosted the first National Standards Conclave in Thimphu to highlight the importance of standardization among different stakeholders. BSB is in the process of finalizing its 12th Plan, and the Conclave aimed to help chart the direction and objectives of standard setting in the country. According to Mr. Sonam Phuntsho, Director General, BSB, the Conclave was the first step toward gathering information and understanding the needs of standard-setting entities.

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Nagaland Chief Minister Emphasizes Need to Develop Roads

5 May 2018: New Dehi, India

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio highlighted the need to develop road infrastructure along India's eastern corridor to improve people's lives. Speaking at session chaired by India External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Mr. Rio urged fast-tracking transformation of connectivity corridors into economic corridors, and resolving issues related to increasing maritime and air connectivity between ASEAN countries and India.

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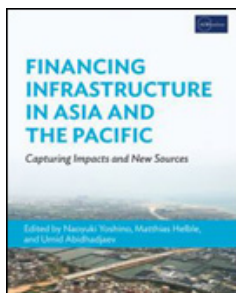
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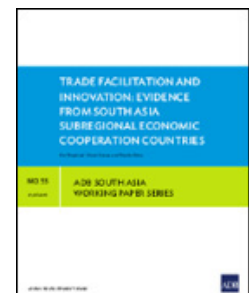
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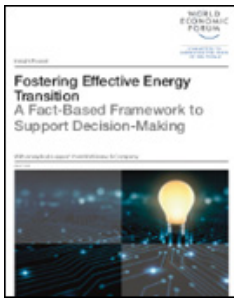
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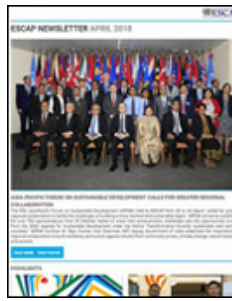
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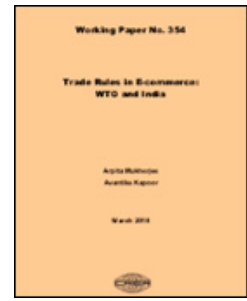
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