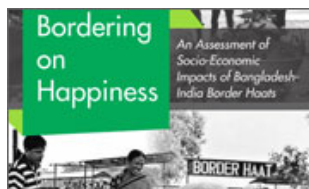




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SASEC Projects in 2019 Build Economic Connectivity

28 May 2020: Manila, Philippines

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) helps foster regional cooperation and integration through its support of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program. In 2019, ADB committed \$495 million to reduce travel times along regional corridors connecting Nepal with India and Bangladesh and improve connections to Sri Lanka's international port under the SASEC Program, according to the ADB Annual Report 2019.

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- **Bangladesh, India Add Water Routes for Trade**
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Commentary: Fostering Indo-Bangla Trade relations, Connectivity is the "Mantra"

30 May 2020: New Delhi, India

This commentary emphasizes the importance of connectivity in enabling trade. Amid the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, railways and waterways made trade of essential goods possible between Bangladesh and India. The Trans-boundary Rivers of South Asia project of CUTS International and its development partners have recommended these connectivity options. The feature also mentions the SASEC program, which aims to further widen the reach of subregional cooperation.

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Temporary Jetty Soon to Enable Ferrying Goods along Tripura, India, and Daudkandi, Bangladesh

29 May 2020: Agartala, India

Vessels carrying goods by waterway between Tripura (India) and Daudkandi (Bangladesh) may soon be possible along the Sonamura-Daudkandi stretch of Gumati River. The route is included in the second addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between India and Bangladesh. It is set to increase the connectivity of Tripura and its adjoining states with Bangladesh's economic centers.

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Bangladesh, India Add Water Routes for Trade

21 May 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh, and Agartala, India

Bangladesh and India signed the second addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade to add 2 new water routes and 10 ports of call between the two countries. The new routes and ports will improve connectivity, facilitate trade, and spur economic development.

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Bangladesh, India Resume Cross-border Trade via Rail

20 May 2020: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh and India resumed trade of essential commodities through existing rail links. The first freight train was loaded with around 1,000 tons of onions on 9 May 2020. It used the Gede (India) - Darsana (Bangladesh) interchange point. As of 20 May 2020, news reports noted that 10,924 tons of onions have been transported to Bangladesh. Ginger and turmeric, as well as fly ash, are also now being transported by rail.

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Commentary: South Asian Least Developed Countries: The Rocky Path to Sustainable Graduation

18 May 2020: Geneva, Switzerland

Least developed countries (LDCs) receive support in the form of international support measures (ISMs), including trade-related ISMs. Once a country graduates from LDC status, they lose their ISM benefits. This commentary examines how graduating countries in South Asia—Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal—will be affected, and makes recommendations how they can better prepare. It also considers the impact of the COVID-19 on trade and tourism.

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ADB Trade Finance Program to Help Sri Lanka against COVID-19

6 May 2020: Manila, Philippines

An ADB trade finance program is supporting a loan to the State Pharmaceuticals Corporation of Sri Lanka to purchase medical supplies as part of the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program provides a guarantee for a \$25 million trade loan for personal protective equipment and medicines for people who have tested positive for COVID-19.

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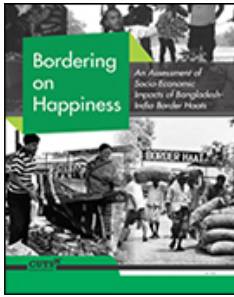
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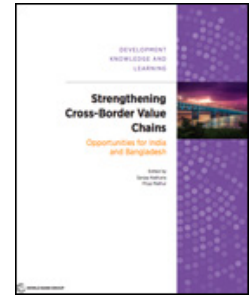
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