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**2021**



# SASEC NEWS

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## Bangladesh, ADB Ink Agreement for the First Tranche of the SASEC Dhaka-Sylhet Corridor Road Investment Project

4 October 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed an agreement for the first tranche of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Dhaka-Sylhet Corridor Road Investment Project worth \$400 million. The first tranche will finance widening of approximately 210 kilometers (km) of the Dhaka-Sylhet section of the existing National Highway No. 2 to improve its efficiency, connectivity, and safety.

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## SASEC EVENTS

### **Sri Lanka: Post Clearance Audit for Customs Officials**

**8-12 November 2021: Colombo, Sri Lanka and Online**

ADB organized a training on Post Clearance Audit (PCA) for customs officials of Sri Lanka on 8-12 November 2021 virtually and in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The training is part of the implementation of a PCA system in Sri Lanka being supported by the ADB technical assistance Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the SASEC Program.

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## SASEC PROJECTS



- **ADB Boosts Industrial Corridor Development in India**
- **Bangladesh Projects to Improve SASEC Road and Other Corridors**
- **Bangladesh, ADB Ink Agreement for the First Tranche of the SASEC Dhaka-Sylhet Corridor Road Investment Project**

### **Bangladesh Projects to Improve SASEC Road and Other Corridors**

**24 November 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Bangladesh Planning Commission is aiming to improve the communication network of Benapole, Asian Highway, including Bhomra Land Port and Mongla Sea Port, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Highway Corridor, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Road Corridor, and the SASEC Road Corridor with the northwestern region of the country.

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### **ADB Boosts Industrial Corridor Development in India**

**29 October 2021: Manila, Philippines**

ADB approved the Industrial Corridor Development Program (Subprogram 1) loan support for India worth \$250 million with a \$1 million “Knowledge Services for Industrial Corridor Development Program” technical assistance support.

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- **Economic Cooperation with Bangladesh a Priority for Sri Lanka**
- **Multimodal Container Depot Emphasizing Railways to be Developed in Chattogram**
- **India Turns Over Koshi Corridor Power Transmission Line to Nepal**

## **Bangladesh and Maldives Hold First Bilateral Consultation, Agree to Promote Maritime Connectivity**

**27 November 2021: Malé, Maldives, and Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The first bilateral consultation between Bangladesh and Maldives acknowledged the excellent relations between the two countries and discussed cooperation, with emphasis on deepening linkages by concluding several bilateral instruments, including agreements on trade, connectivity, and tourism for enhancing people-to-people to contact.

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## **Commentary: Bangladesh Needs to Expand Trade with Its Neighbors**

**24 November 2021: Manila, Philippines**

Bangladesh's trade with its neighbors accounts for only 10% of national trade. Mr. Yasushi Tanaka, Principal Transport Specialist, Transport and Communications Division, South Asia Department, ADB, explains how small investments in land customs stations and land ports, trade facilitation policy reforms, and cooperation between government agencies can help make Bangladesh a trade and transport hub in South Asia.

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## **Japanese Economic Zone in Bangladesh Set to Raise \$1 Billion Investment**

**23 November 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

In the Araihasar upazila of the Narayanganj District, Bangladesh, a Japanese Economic Zone is being developed by the Government of Bangladesh and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

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## **Bangladesh, Sri Lanka Aim to Boost Air and Maritime Links**

**15 November 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Mr. Gamini Lakshman Peiris, Foreign Minister of the Government of Sri Lanka, paid a courtesy call to Mr. AK Abdul Momen, Foreign Minister of the Government of Bangladesh, on 15 November 2021. He was in Bangladesh to attend the 21st meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association's Council of Ministers.

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## **West Bengal to Strengthen Subregional Connectivity with 7 Planned ICPs**

**14 November 2021: Kolkata, India**

The Government of West Bengal, India, will set up seven Integrated Check Posts (ICPs), which includes five ICPS on borders with Bangladesh and one each on borders with Bhutan and Nepal, according to the Land Port Authority of India.

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## **Seven Additional Entry/Exit Points for Bhutan-India Trade**

**3 November 2021: New Delhi, India**

The Governments of Bhutan and India agreed to open seven more entry and exit points to further increase trade and connectivity. The two countries formalized the agreement through Letters of Exchange, forming an addendum to the 2016 Protocol of India-Bhutan Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit.

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## **Nepal Gets Nod to Sell Electricity in India's Energy Exchange Market**

**2 November 2021: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Central Electricity Authority of the Government of India gave Nepal the go-ahead to sell its electricity in India's power exchange market, the India Energy Exchange Limited, upon the approval of India's Ministry of Power. Nepal is permitted to sell 39 megawatts (MW) of electricity produced by the 24 MW Trishuli Hydropower Project and the 15 MW Devighat Hydropower Project.

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## **BIMSTEC Nations Urged to Develop a Strategy to Finance the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport**

**25 October 2021: New Delhi, India**

The Government of India has urged BIMSTEC member countries to collectively develop a strategy for financing and implementing the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity. Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Foreign Secretary of the Government of India, noted that work on this matter has already started with the first consultative workshop on financing of the Master Plan organized by ADB.

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## Jaynagar-Kurtha Cross-border Rail Link Converted to Broad Gauge

**23 October 2021: New Delhi, India, and Kathmandu, Nepal**

The Government of India financed the gauge conversion of the Jaynagar (India)-Kurtha (Nepal) cross-border rail link from narrow gauge to broad gauge. On 23 October 2021, India handed over the completed section totaling 34.9 km to Nepal.

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## Multimodal Container Depot Emphasizing Railways to be Developed in Chattogram

**19 October 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

A multimodal container depot will be constructed in Chattogram City to enhance the port's capacity to handle imports and goods bound for export. Saif Logistics Alliance Ltd. will invest around BDT300 crore (around \$35 million) to develop the facility on a design-build-finance-operate-maintain-transfer basis.

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## India Launches Gati Shakti National Masterplan for Multimodal Connectivity

**13 October 2021: New Delhi, India**

The Government of India, led by India Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the "Gati Shakti—National Masterplan for Multimodal Connectivity," bringing together 16 ministries for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects.

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## Economic Cooperation with Bangladesh a Priority for Sri Lanka

**8 October 2021: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Mr. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Sri Lanka, and Mr. G.L. Peiris, Foreign Minister of the Government of Sri Lanka, discussed bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka during a courtesy call. They exchanged views on initiatives such as joint tourism ventures, trade expansion, and sharing intelligence in combating and countering terrorism within the region.

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# Bangladesh's Agricultural Products Receive Trade Facilitation Boost

7 October 2021: Dhaka, Bangladesh

A trade facilitation project of the Government of Bangladesh aims to help expand and diversify the country's exports in food and agricultural products by ensuring their safety and quality and improving institutional systems for agricultural trade.

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# India Turns Over Koshi Corridor Transmission Line to Nepal

6 October 2021: Kathmandu, Nepal

The Government of India completed and handed over the 220 kV double circuit Koshi Corridor power transmission line (Inarwa-Basantapur-Baneshwar-Tumlingtar) to the Nepal Electricity Authority. The 106-km Koshi Corridor transmission line is set to facilitate smooth power evacuation from Arun and Tamor river basins with power output estimated around 2000 megawatts.

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