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WORKSHOP FOR
CUSTOMS ADMIN



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A GLASS HALF FULL: THE
PROMISE OF REGIONAL
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SASEC NEWS

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ADB Blog: Early Lessons from Using Technology to Ease Trade in South Asia

29 November 2018: Manila, Philippines

Technology helps set the appropriate balance between facilitation and enforcement by border agencies. In this Asian Development Bank (ADB) blog entry, Mr. Ronald Butiong, Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination, South Asia Department, ADB, discusses how the electronic cargo tracking system uses satellite positioning systems and high security seals to allow organizations to monitor the movement of cargo, thereby enhancing trade facilitation in South Asia.

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EVENT INDIA

Workshop for SASEC
Customs Administrations
Was Held in Faridabad



EVENT INDIA

The Workshop Was on
Using Time Release Studies
for Trade Facilitation



EVENT INDIA

The SASEC Workshop Used
Time Release Studies to
Discuss Policy Reforms

Workshop for SASEC Customs Administrations on Trade Facilitation Measures for Time Release Study

26-27 November 2018: Faridabad, India

A capacity building program for SASEC customs administrations on conducting and using time release studies for trade facilitation was held on 26-27 November 2018 in Faridabad, India. It was conducted by the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes, and Narcotics of the Government of India under a multiyear knowledge-sharing program. This program was endorsed by SASEC member countries following the signing of a Memorandum of Intent for Cooperation in Customs Capacity Building with ADB.

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November 2018



Bilateral mechanism to develop cooperation, feasibility for inland waterway connectivity between India and Nepal [Read](#)

Study: Boating Towards Inclusivity: Facilitating short haul cross-border trade between Dhubri (Assam, India) and Chilmari (Kurigram, Bangladesh) through waterways [Read](#)

New passenger train route between India and Nepal to operate by December this year [Read](#)

ADB Working Paper: South Asia has shown significant reduction in poverty and income inequality owing to improved road transport, electricity, and sanitation [Read](#)



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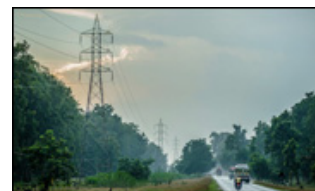
PROJECT
SASEC'S NORTHERN
BYPASS IN FULL SWING



PROJECT
EARLY LESSONS FROM
USING TECH TO EASE
TRADE IN SOUTH ASIA



PROJECT
ADB, NEPAL SIGN
AGREEMENT FOR SASEC
HIGHWAY PROJECT



PROJECT
ADB SUPPORT TO
FULFILL NEPAL ENERGY
PLANS

ADB Increases Financing for the SASEC Power System Expansion Project in Nepal

26 November 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

ADB committed an additional \$20 million to the Nepal: SASEC Power System Expansion Project on 26 November 2018, implemented to help Nepal address its urgent power system needs. This project is building more than 200 kilometers of power transmission lines and substations along Kali Gandaki corridor in the Himalayas and Marsyangdi-Kathmandu route and is building or upgrading more than 1,000 kilometers of power distribution lines in the east, central, and west regions of the country.

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ADB, Nepal Sign Loan Agreement for the SASEC Highway Improvement Project

20 November 2018: Kathmandu, Nepal

ADB committed \$180 million financing to enhance the capacity and improve the quality and safety of the East-West Highway under the SASEC Highway Improvement Project. The Government of Nepal will provide financing worth \$76.4 million. The signing between ADB and the Government of Nepal took place at the Nepal Ministry of Finance on 20 November 2018.

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Northern Bypass Road Construction in Bhutan in Full Swing

14 November 2018: Phuentsholing, Bhutan

Construction of the Northern Bypass Road gains momentum with the start of the dry season in Bhutan. The 2.7 kilometer Northern Bypass Road is being funded by ADB under the SASEC Road Connectivity Project. Work on this road resumed in the last week of September. The project was initially disrupted by underground cables in the project area and monsoon rain.

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Institutional Strengthening of Road Safety and Gender Equality Technical Assistance

27 October 2018: Manila, Philippines

This new technical assistance supports improvement of road safety, road maintenance, gender equality and social inclusion on the 1,027 kilometer-long East-West Highway corridor. It will also help strengthen the capacity of the executing and implementing agencies in road safety and road maintenance.

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INLAND WATERWAY TERMINAL LAUNCHED IN INDIA



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COMMENTARY: ECONOMIC TRENDS IN INDO-BANGLA RELATIONS

BIMSTEC Trade Negotiating Committee Moves Toward Finalizing the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement

19 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Delegates from BIMSTEC Member States met in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to finalize the draft texts of the Agreement on Trade in Goods, Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters, and Agreement on Dispute Settlement Procedures and Mechanisms, which are relevant to the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement.

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Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority to Launch a Single Window for Investors

15 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority plans to launch a "One Stop Service" (OSS), a single window to help investors fulfill requirements in economic zones, beginning March 2019. The OSS will usher in a new era for investors in the country, and will ensure modern and swift services for investors, highlighted Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Principal Coordinator, Sustainable Development Goals Affairs, Prime Minister's Office of the Government of Bangladesh.

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SAARC Council of Experts of Energy Regulators (Electricity) Hold Third Meeting

14 November 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka

The Third Meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Council of Experts of Energy Regulators (Electricity) discussed ways to initiate regional power trade through the implementation of the SAARC framework agreement. The Council aims to provide an enabling regulatory environment to realize the SAARC Energy Ring.

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India's First Inland Waterways Terminal Inaugurated in Varanasi

12 November 2018: Varanasi, India

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first inland waterways terminal on the Ganga River, and received the first inland container vessel which journeyed from Kolkata. The Prime Minister heralded the arrival of the container as 'historic' for India. The inland waterways terminal is part of a planned multimodal terminal on the Ganga in Varanasi. The waterway route links eastern Uttar Pradesh to the Bay of Bengal. It promises to save time and money, lessen road traffic, and reduce the cost of fuel and vehicular pollution.

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Lecture Highlights Need for Sri Lanka to Boost Competitiveness, Enter into Comprehensive Economic Partnerships

11 November 2018: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Mr. Thilan Wijesinghe, Chairman, National Agency for Private Public Partnership of the Ministry of Finance and Media, highlighted the need for Sri Lanka to put in place trade facilitation measures, efficient and transparent transport and logistics policies, and market liberalization measures to be able to tap into the global value chains. He also urged Sri Lanka to sign and enforce mutually beneficial free trade agreements. According to Mr. Wijesinghe, though Sri Lanka takes pride over its 'strategic' location and port facilities, it has yet to fully develop its competitiveness.

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Transport Linkages to Turn Manipur into a Gateway to Southeast Asia

8 November 2018: Manipur, India

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh expressed optimism that expansion of National Highway 39 as part of Asian Highway 1 and rail connectivity will bring investments into Manipur. These upcoming transport linkages will facilitate connectivity with Myanmar, and onwards to Thailand, Lao PDR, and Cambodia, turning Manipur into a gateway to Southeast Asia. An integrated check post is also being built in Moreh, in anticipation of the increase in trade volume.

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Bangladeshi Firm to Manage and Operate India's River Terminals

5 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Inland Waterways Authority of India awarded the contract to operate three river terminals to a Bangladeshi company, the Summit Alliance Port East Gateway (SAPEGIL). SAPEGIL will operate and manage India's river terminals—the Garden Reach Terminal in Kolkata, and the Gaighat and Kalughat Terminals in Patna—under a public-private partnership with India's Inland Waterways Authority.

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Commentary: Economic Trends in Indo-Bangla Relations (Part II)

5 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

This commentary from the Dhaka Tribune discusses initiatives between Bangladesh and India that have improved relations between the two nations. These include actions to improve Bangladesh-India trade linkages to balance the trade deficit between the two nations, invite more foreign direct investment from India to Bangladesh, as well as financial assistance from the Government of India. It also discusses the hallmark cooperation in the power and energy sector between the two countries. Part 2 of 2.

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Commentary: Economic Trends in Indo-Bangla Relations (Part I)

4 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

This commentary from the Dhaka Tribune examines connectivity initiatives by Bangladesh and India on road, rail, and sea. It focuses on regulatory measures, such as the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade and the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement, that are being put in place to increase the two countries' economic engagement through better transit routes. Part 1 of 2.

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Bangladesh ECNEC Approves Dual Gauging of Joydebpur-Ishwardi Railway Route

4 November 2018: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The 13th meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) of the Government of Bangladesh headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina approved construction of the Joydebpur-Ishwardi dual gauge railway. Worth around \$1.7 billion (Taka 14,250.61 crore), double tracking of the 162.03 kilometer will enhance Bangladesh Railway's line capacity to service more passengers and increase trains carrying cargo. This line is part of the proposed trans-Asian railway network.

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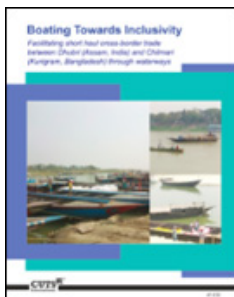
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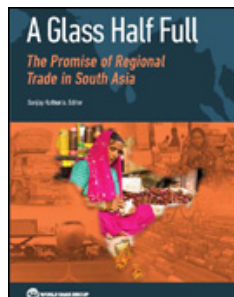
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Boating Towards Inclusivity



A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia



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